

Investigating ELT Teacher Professional Learning Practice in Cambodian Higher Education

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ABSTRACT

Teacher Professional Learning (TPL) has been the subject of scholarly inquiry for over six decades (Hallinger & Kulophas, 2019). Research highlights the potential of TPL to foster teachers' growth and improve learner outcomes (Kyndt et al., 2016; Smet et al., 2022; Ventista & Brown, 2023); however, studies lack consensus on context-appropriate strategies for effective TPL, locally or globally (Chea, 2022; Vermunt et al., 2019). Researchers continue to investigate various factors, such as contextual, institutional, and managerial aspects, that shape TPL (Koffeman & Snoek, 2019; Pedder & Opfer, 2019; Vermunt et al., 2019). Despite sustained research efforts (e.g., Bruce et al., 2010; Cirkony et al., 2024; Dudley et al., 2019; Timperley et al., 2008; Wilson & Berne, 1999;), significant gaps remain, such as the inconsistencies in understanding how teachers gain knowledge and incorporate new ideas into their teaching practices (Cirkony et al., 2024) and the lack of a comprehensive theory of professional learning (Asterhan & Lefstein, 2024; Kennedy, 2014).

This thesis thoroughly examines the landscape of TPL practices of Cambodian English language teachers in higher education institutions (HEIs), framing this as its overarching research question. Through this investigation, it explores their perceptions about professional learning, the activities they engage in, and the motivational and contextual factors influencing their growth. Additionally, it investigates how the process affects their teaching practices and provides insights on promoting TPL within this context. The study addresses the geographical imbalance in TPL research noted by Hallinger and Kulophas (2019) and underscores the need for developing an overarching framework for TPL (Kennedy, 2014; Asterhan & Lefstein, 2024).

Guided by a social constructivist framework, the project adopts a qualitative case study design to collect primary data from seven participants—three from urban Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and four from provincial HEIs—through semi-structured interviews, classroom observations followed by recall interviews, weekly voice memos recorded by the participants, and institutional documentation. The data were analysed using a hybrid coding approach (Bazeley, 2009; Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006).

The findings from this research provide insights into Cambodian English language teachers' perspectives on professional growth and the factors influencing their professional learning process. The study also highlights teachers' aspirations and motivations for professional

growth, the strategies and activities they adopt, their perceptions of effective facilitation in professional learning processes, and the impact of TPL on classroom practice.

A key theoretical contribution of this research is the development of a Comprehensive Model for Teacher Professional Learning. This framework integrates teacher cognition, professional identity, and agency (Bandura, 2001, 2006; Beijaard et al., 2004; Biesta et al., 2015; Borg, 2003; Emirbayer & Mische, 1998; Flores & Day, 2006; Hallinger et al., 2019) as *Pillars of Teacher Professionalism*, emphasising their interplay with TPL opportunities to form educators' *Professional Learning Repertoire* (Caffarella, 1993; Ermeling, 2010; Farrell, 2011; Freire, 1970; Garrison, 1997; Meirink et al., 2007; Meirink et al., 2009; Schön, 1983; Timperley et al., 2014). It highlights the transformative impact of TPL on instructional practices, particularly in fostering creativity, adaptability, and innovation in the classroom (Bandura, 1991, 1997; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001).

This study not only addresses the socio-cultural and educational nuances of TPL in Cambodia but also enriches global understanding by presenting actionable recommendations for stakeholders, in addition to the Comprehensive Model for Teacher Professional Learning. Institutional leaders and policymakers are encouraged to foster collaborative, context-sensitive, and *Professional Learning Opportunities*. By successfully achieving its aim of providing an in-depth understanding of the TPL process, this thesis offers a theoretical advancement and a foundation for further research in underrepresented settings.

ATTESTATION OF AUTHORSHIP

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person (except where explicitly defined in the acknowledgements), nor used artificial intelligence tools or generative artificial intelligence tools (unless it is clearly stated, and referenced, along with the purpose of use), nor material which to a substantial extent has been submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution of higher learning.

The research study presented in this thesis was approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee (AUTEC) on 10 March 2023, under reference number 23/8 (APPENDIX A).

Theara CHEA

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On a personal level, this journey has also been a testament to my persistence and perseverance—the two qualities I have come to understand deeply throughout this experience. I have persevered through the long, often emotionally challenging path of completing a PhD, and I have been persistent in making progress and seeking support whenever necessary. These qualities, learnt through hard-earned lessons, were crucial in seeing my project through to completion.

I hope that this thesis not only contributes to the body of knowledge on professional learning among English language teachers, particularly in the Cambodian ELT context, but also serves as evidence of what can be achieved through persistence and perseverance.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AI	Artificial Intelligence
AUTEC	Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee
CamTESOL	Cambodia's Conference Series on English Language Teaching
CEFR	Common European Framework of Reference for Languages
CHAT	Cultural-Historical Activity Theory
CLT	Communicative language teaching
CoP	A Community of Practice
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
ELT	English Language Teaching
HE	higher education
HEIs	Higher Education Institutions
MoEYS	Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport
MRes	Master of Research
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OSTES	Ohio State Teacher Efficacy Scale
PD	Professional development
SDL	Self-Directed Learning
TESOL	Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages
TPD	Teacher Professional Development
TPL	Teacher Professional Learning
TSES	Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale
UNTAC	The United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

This introductory chapter lays the groundwork for the subsequent research report. First, it introduces the background of the study to establish the context for the project. Following this, the chapter outlines the rationale for the current investigation, highlighting the specific research gap that this study aims to address. In recognition of the breadth of the field of Teacher Professional Learning (TPL), the chapter also defines the scope and area of investigation. Likewise, to ensure clarity and a shared understanding of key concepts, essential terminology employed throughout the thesis is also defined in this part. Furthermore, the significance of this research project and its potential contributions to the field are also articulated in this section. Finally, the chapter concludes with a brief overview of the entire thesis structure to enhance reader navigation.

1.1 Background to the Study

The core impetus of my doctoral research project is my personal view on Teacher Professional Learning (TPL), which, in addition to more formal professional development, encompasses the broad range of learning experiences that occur primarily outside formal settings. These informal TPL processes are often unstructured, experiential, and non-institutional, and develop through teachers' day-to-day tasks and interactions in the classroom. This form of learning can effectively help educators build the competencies required to meet both their current needs and future professional demands. It unfolds organically as teachers engage with their work, collaborate with colleagues, and reflect on their practice, distinguishing it from traditional, institutionally mandated professional development programmes. Therefore, in this thesis, I refer to TPL as a process that, in addition to formal professional development

activities, involves unstructured, experiential, and teacher-driven activities that teachers engage in while performing their day-to-day tasks, serving as a pathway to their professional growth.

My profound interest in TPL has been deeply influenced by my personal experiences and the challenges I have encountered as an English language teacher. There have been numerous instances where I was mandated to participate in prescribed professional development sessions organised by the institutions I worked for. While I genuinely appreciated the good intentions of management in offering these workshops, I found that these training sessions did not often align with my specific professional needs at the time. Instead, I frequently discovered that meaningful interactions with my colleagues in the staffroom, where we could share teaching materials and insights, proved to be more effective in addressing my classroom challenges. Similarly, I observed that my peers would often informally seek assistance from their colleagues to tackle their respective classroom difficulties. It was these moments that sparked my curiosity about the impact of TPL on day-to-day classroom practice and how the process could be better facilitated to maximise its potential in promoting teachers' professional growth.

My enthusiasm for Teacher Professional Learning grew even further when I transitioned into the role of an English language teacher educator. While I was discussing strategies for enhancing teachers' professional growth with my teacher trainees, I was inspired by Farrell's (2013) perspective on the limitations of initial teacher education programmes. Farrell (2013) argued that while pre-service teaching qualifications provide a foundational basis for educators, it is through continuous professional learning that they become equipped to navigate daily classroom challenges and build confidence in their practice. This passion led

me to make a deliberate commitment to dive deeper into this subject by enrolling in a Master of Research (MRes) programme at Macquarie University in order to conduct a preliminary study on the topic.

In my MRes thesis project, I explored teachers' preferences for informal professional learning activities and their perceptions of institutional support for this approach to professional growth in the workplace. The research focused on Cambodian teachers who taught English as a Foreign Language (EFL) at two institutions. My initial investigation of TPL suggested that Cambodian EFL teachers actively engage in various informal professional learning activities within their schools (Chea, 2022). Furthermore, the study indicated that the interviewed participants highly valued the benefits and convenience of these practices.

While the quality of the research for my master's thesis resulted in a publication in an international peer-reviewed journal, *Second Language Teacher Education* (Chea, 2022), the limited scope of the MRes project meant that it was unable to fully explore a wide range of professional learning activities adopted by Cambodian English language teachers. For instance, the design of the study precluded any consideration of the motivational and contextual factors driving teachers' professional learning and the examination the influence of the institutional context on this process. To address these limitations, the current project was conceived to expand upon the initial study and advance TPL research further. Thus, the aim of this study was to build upon my previous research by considering other important factors when further examining the current state of TPL for EFL teachers in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in Cambodia.

1.2 Rationale of the Study

This section offers rationale for the research. Firstly, this study responds directly to the international research community's call for more contributions to the existing body of knowledge on TPL. Being conducted in this area, the project was aimed at enriching the knowledge of TPL's effectiveness and its potential to improve English language learning and teaching.

Building upon this first rationale, the section below justifies why this research has explored TPL through the specific lens of Cambodia's English language teaching context. By examining how TPL is practised within this unique cultural and educational environment, the report on this project provides valuable insights into the factors influencing the TPL process. In addition, this current investigation presents findings that may be applicable to Cambodian universities exploring TPL facilitation now and in the future.

1.2.1 Why "Teacher Professional Learning"?

The notion of Teacher Professional Learning (TPL) has been a subject of exploration in the field of education for over six decades. According to an historical analysis by Hallinger and Kulophas (2019), early scholarly investigations into TPL and the various interconnected factors that influence teaching practice can be traced back to the pioneering work of Gross in 1965. Moreover, there have been persistent calls for research on and attention to teacher learning for many years, as highlighted by Wilson and Berne in 1999. This sustained attention has resulted in numerous research projects aimed at examining the outcomes and impact of teacher learning on classroom practice, as well as the specific learning activities that educators have adopted. Notable studies in this regard include the works of McCormack et

al. (2006), Timperley (2008), Bruce et al. (2010), Opfer and Pedder (2011a, 2011b), and Dudley et al. (2019).

Researchers have shown a sustained and increasing level of interest in studying TPL, evidenced in more recent investigations such as those by Bergmark (2023), Taylor (2023), Asterhan and Lefstein (2024) and Cirkony et al. (2024). Additionally, the scope of research has been broadened to encompass not only the TPL processes but also the wider contexts, institutional environments, and management support systems that shape and influence how teachers learn and develop (Koffeman & Snoek, 2019; Pedder & Opfer, 2019; Vermunt et al., 2019). Furthermore, there is a growing recognition of the importance of TPL in fostering teachers' professional growth, as well as in potentially promoting learners' engagement in the classroom and student learning outcomes (Ventista & Brown, 2023; Vescio et al., 2008). This evolving body of research contributes significantly to the understanding of the multifaceted nature of teacher professional development and its impact on educational practice.

However, substantial gaps in this area of research remain to be filled. For example, Marsick and Watkins (2015) argue that informal and incidental learning play a significant role in how teachers acquire knowledge and skills in the workplace; however, this practice is often overlooked. Additionally, considerable discrepancies persist in understanding how teachers integrate new concepts into their pedagogical practices (Cirkony et al., 2024). Likewise, a comprehensive theory of professional learning has yet to be established (Asterhan & Lefstein, 2024; Cirkony et al., 2024; Kennedy, 2014; Timperley et al., 2008). Given these unresolved gaps in understanding how teachers learn and how professional learning translates to

practice, the current study seeks to contribute to the existing body of research in Teacher Professional Learning.

This current body of research, however, has not yet yielded a conclusive answer regarding a context-appropriate approach to facilitating effective TPL, whether in international or local settings. Consequently, there is an ongoing demand for further research and support for TPL (Chea, 2022; Koffeman & Snoek, 2019; Hallinger et al., 2019; Vermunt et al., 2019). For example, Vermunt et al. (2019) advocated for more experimental studies on TPL, whereas Koffeman and Snoek (2019) explicitly called for research that examines the active and explicit support provided by institutions to nurture teachers' interest in and commitment to their professional development. These scholars contend that such investigations could potentially identify complementary methods for promoting TPL within the workplace. Hence, one of the foundations of this research project lies in the pursuit of effective strategies to facilitate the TPL process, both in local and global contexts. This pursuit is driven by the need to address the gaps in current knowledge and contribute to the development of more effective TPL practices.

1.2.2 Why TPL in Cambodia's higher education sector?

To contribute to a deeper understanding of how educators acquire knowledge and develop professionally, researchers have been urged to consider the diverse social and economic contexts in which teachers operate (Kyndt, et al., 2016; Kwakman, 2003; Margalef & Roblin, 2018; Postholm, 2012; Opfer et al., 2011a, 2011b). Starting with historical perspectives and the lack of support for TPL, this section justifies the importance of conducting a study on Teacher Professional Learning in higher education in Cambodia, a context where a

“geographical imbalance” in research on TPL persists, as noted by Hallinger and Kulophas (2019, p. 1).

Since gaining independence from French colonisation in 1953, Cambodia has navigated through various political regimes, including the periods of King Sihanouk (1953–1970), the Khmer Republic (1970–1975), and the devastating regime of Democratic Kampuchea, commonly known as the Khmer Rouge (1975–1979), before stabilising with the establishment of the Kingdom of Cambodia in 1993.

Despite enduring political turbulence, Cambodia has witnessed remarkable growth in its higher education sector over the past eight decades. Beginning with just three tertiary educational institutions in the late 1940s, the country now hosts a total of 128 higher education institutions (HEIs). Among these, there are 48 public institutions and 80 private institutions, distributed across 20 of the country’s 25 provinces, including the capital city Phnom Penh (MoEYS, 2021; Williams et al., 2016). This exponential growth underscores the significant strides Cambodia has made in expanding access to higher education opportunities for its people, as well as building a foundation for its students to pursue overseas studies.

However, the growth of HEIs has also brought to the forefront several challenges. The rapid expansion of HEIs has not been proportionately matched by an increase in academic staff. To exemplify this, as of the academic year 2017–2018, student enrolments surged more than five-fold, while the number of instructors only doubled (Un & Sok, 2018). This trend, partly attributed to the privatisation and commercialisation of public HEIs since 1997 (Sam, 2017; Un & Sok, 2018), has resulted in larger class sizes and higher teacher-student ratios. Consequently, teaching and learning experiences have been compromised, hindering efforts to improve the overall quality of higher education in Cambodia (Sam, 2017; Un & Sok, 2018).

Furthermore, inadequate professional development opportunities for faculty members exacerbate the challenges facing Cambodian HEIs. Despite the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport's (MoEYS) Education Strategic Plan 2019-2023, which aimed to enhance educational quality, the lack of clear policies and strategies for upgrading academic proficiency remains a pressing concern (Ros & Oleksiyenko, 2018; Sam, 2017). This deficiency in teachers' growth initiatives contributes to insufficient professional learning opportunities and a limited research culture among Cambodian academics (Nhem, 2022; Ros & Oleksiyenko, 2018).

Although Cambodia is now experiencing rapid economic development, significant challenges remain in raising higher education (HE) standards, particularly in academic research (Keuk, 2015; Nhem, 2022; Ros & Oleksiyenko, 2018). Research on Teacher Professional Learning and the availability of institutional support in the Cambodian English Language Teaching (ELT) context is notably scarce, leaving gaps in the understanding of these areas. For instance, HE institutions often face resource constraints, such as poorly equipped libraries, limited access to prestigious journals and databases, and inadequate digital infrastructure, hindering Cambodian scholars from producing internationally recognised, high-quality research. Thus, exploring TPL in Cambodia's HE context is essential to gain deeper insights into teachers' engagement in professional learning processes.

1.3 Aim and Research Questions

The core aim of this project is to provide a comprehensive picture of Teacher Professional Learning (TPL) by examining the landscape of TPL undertaken by English language teachers within Cambodian Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). Through this approach, the study sought to explore the various aspects and contexts that shape TPL in the research context.

First, the research set out to explore participants' perspectives on their professional learning experiences. It aimed to illuminate the breadth of learning activities they undertake and to examine the aspirational and motivational, as well as contextual factors influencing their commitment to continuing professional learning. Furthermore, the project investigated the participants' perceptions of the impact of professional learning on their teaching methodologies. Additionally, it aimed to provide insights into their views on strategies for promoting effective TPL within the specific context of Cambodian HEIs. This study seeks to answer the following questions:

1. What are Cambodian English language teachers' views about "Teacher Professional Learning"?
2. What are the contextual factors that Cambodian English language teachers perceive to influence their professional learning engagement?
3. What are the aspirational and motivational factors that propel the teachers' engagement in professional learning?
4. What are the learning activities the participating teachers adopt for their professional growth?
5. What are the teachers' perceptions of the impact of professional learning activities on their classroom practice?
6. According to Cambodian English language teachers, how can teacher professional learning be fostered in their teaching context?

In pursuit of these research objectives, this study is methodologically grounded within an interpretive paradigm, adhering to a foundational framework rooted in social constructivism in order to guide the process of data collection. In alignment with the principles of social

constructivism, this project employed a qualitative case study design, which allowed for an in-depth exploration of the phenomena under investigation.

1.4 Scope of the Study and Key Terminology

This section establishes the project's scope and defines key terminology used throughout this document. The project acknowledges that an overarching notion of teacher learning within schools is a broad topic, encompassing examinations of both formal and informal learning, as well as learning that may not relate to professional knowledge for classroom teaching. To exemplify different views of teacher learning, Field (2015, p.113) conducted a study that investigated how "academic learning results from tensions and incompatibilities between individual interests and those of employing institutions." Likewise, Zembylas (2003, p. 225) observed that "teachers learn to [internalise] and enact roles and norms assigned to them by the school culture through what are considered 'appropriate' expressions and silences."

Furthermore, the investigation of Teacher Professional Learning (TPL) can specifically focus on the learning approaches adopted in certain teaching disciplines and contexts (Kyndt et al., 2016; Le Clus, 2011). For example, Hallinger et al. (2023) identified nine professional learning activities for teachers situated within the workplace context in Vietnam, encompassing both external and school-based activities. Likewise, research in TPL may broaden the scope to cover other variables closely associated with changes in teaching behaviour. For instance, Taylor (2023) examined the difference and connection between how teachers learn and how they improve their teaching over time. In a different research context, Szelei et al. (2020) advocate for a teacher professional development programme that prepares them to address students' cultural diversity.

This research focuses specifically on the informal, teacher-led dimensions of TPL. In particular, it examines how Cambodian university English language teachers engage in unstructured, experiential learning processes driven by their own professional needs and daily teaching challenges. This emphasis reflects a bottom-up perspective on professional learning, prioritising individual initiative and context-responsive growth. While this focus deliberately foregrounds teacher-led practices such as peer learning, reflection, and experimentation, it does not deny the importance of formal professional development (PD)—including workshops, training programmes, and academic qualifications—as professional learning that also contributes to teachers’ professional growth. Figure 1 illustrates the possible pathways to teachers’ professional growth as assumed in this study.

Figure 1

Assumption of Teachers’ Professional Growth



Given the focus of my thesis, when I use the term Teacher Professional Learning I am mainly referring to the informal, teacher-led dimensions of TPL—unstructured, experiential, and

contextually responsive learning that occurs through teachers' everyday practices, peer interactions, self-reflection, and experimentation. There is no intention to redefine the term TPL, it is simply that the more formal TPL activities are not within the scope of my study. To maintain clarity and conceptual focus, TPL is capitalised throughout the thesis when referring to this study's central construct.

Likewise, the term 'professional growth' is used to describe the teachers' self-evaluation and perception about improvement in their teaching skills, rather than mere hierarchical career advancement. It is, however, noted that the scope of this project precluded the adoption of triangulation methods to measure teachers' professional growth beyond their self-reported confidence in performing their teaching duties, stemming from their perceived self-efficacy as a result of their professional learning. To exemplify this, the phrase 'perception of professional growth' is used to refer to an individual's subjective understanding or awareness of his or her own improvement in professional or career-related skills, knowledge, and responsibilities.

In addition, the term '*Professional Learning Repertoire*' is used in this thesis in its everyday, non-technical sense to refer to the collection of strategies, practices, resources, and experiences that teachers draw upon in their professional learning. It is not intended as a redefinition of existing terminology, but rather as a descriptive phrase that captures the variety and flexibility of teacher learning approaches as observed in the study. The use of this term aligns with the broader goal of illustrating how teachers engage with both formal and informal learning opportunities in contextually responsive ways.

The term 'teacher' and its plural form are used to denote academics working within the targeted research venues. From the Cambodian social perspective, 'teacher' is the commonly

used term by Cambodian students to address their instructors (e.g. *Teacher Bunchhoeun*) across all levels of educational institutions, from pre-school to doctoral programs. This is despite an announcement by Cambodia's Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (MoEYS) dated August 28, 2020, and a recent Royal decree defining 'professor' as the official title for academics working in tertiary education in Cambodia (refer to Appendix B for the Royal Decree). Furthermore, the term 'teacher' has also been employed in other research studies examining professional learning among university academics in different contexts, such as those in Turkey, Colombia, Austria and Hong Kong (see Dogan & Kirkgoz, 2022; Herreño-Contreras & González, 2023; Irie et al., 2018; Kohnke, 2021). Therefore, adopting this term in the present study is due to its practicality in the research field both locally and internationally.

In the investigation of the TPL process, various types of learning approaches have been identified. While acknowledging the grammatical soundness of the phrase 'learning from others *through* interaction,' this thesis adopts 'learning from others *in* interaction' to specifically highlight learning occurring during exchange or back-and-forth communication with others (Meirink et al., 2007; Meirink et al., 2009). Rather than viewing interaction as the tool or channel for learning, this phrase emphasises the contextual aspect of learning, which aligns with the objectives of the research.

These same studies by Meirink et al. (2007) and Meirink et al. (2009) also identified 'reflection' as another type of professional learning approach. The term, however, had been previously used as a concept by other scholars; for example, Richards and Farrell (2005, p. 7) refer to 'reflection' as "the process of critical examination of experiences, a process that can lead to a better understanding of one's teaching and routines." This thesis uses the term 'reflection' interchangeably with 'self-reflection' to describe the act of thinking back on an experience

(teaching a lesson, interacting with a student) to analyse it. Meanwhile, reflective practices are the frameworks and strategies teachers use to engage in regular, purposeful reflection (Farrell, 2013). This could involve journalling, peer discussions, using specific reflection models, or analysing student feedback (Farrell, 2013, 2024; Pokhrel, 2022; Warsi & Khurshid, 2022).

Another key concept that needs to be defined is 'reflective teaching.' As Calderhead (1989) pointed out, it has been difficult to agree on a single definition of this notion, and the debate appears to be ongoing. For example, Pollard and Collins (2005, p. 14) view reflective teaching as a "cyclical or spiralling process." This notion can be used as a means of professional development, involving a cyclical process of reflection, planning, action, data collection, analysis, and evaluation (Pollard & Collins, 2002, 2005). However, reflective teaching is also described as a mindful practice that purposefully considers influential factors such as goals, values, assumptions, and institutional and cultural contexts (Zeichner & Liston, 2014). Building upon the definition put forward by Zeichner and Liston (2014), this thesis refers to 'reflective teaching' as a concrete change a teacher makes in their classroom as a result of their reflection and other professional learning activities, including reflective practice. This could involve adjusting instructional methods, adapting the curriculum, or trying new classroom activities.

In this thesis, there are subtle differences drawn between the terms 'sponsored Community of Practice (CoP)' and 'informal CoP.' In the research context, a 'sponsored CoP' refers to a platform initiated, maintained, and funded by the institution concerned. This type of CoP involves set agendas for each meeting with designated times and rooms within the university

campus. An ‘informal CoP,’ on the other hand, refers to ad hoc gatherings initiated by teachers. These casual meetings can take place either on or off campus.

1.5 Significance of the Study

This project attempts to fill the identified gaps in the literature by making the following contributions. First, the research has illuminated the state of TPL in the Cambodian ELT context, in which TPL is presently under-investigated. This knowledge may contribute to alleviating the “geographical imbalance” in TPL enquiry (Hallinger & Kulophas, 2019, p.1). In addition, this thorough examination of the current state of TPL may lead to conclusions and insights into an effective way the practice can be fostered in the Cambodian ELT context. This research is projected not only to be applicable in Cambodia but also to provide a possible template to be used in other countries.

The second contribution foreseen from the study is an outline for good practices in enhancing and optimising TPL in the local context. Effective guidelines that promote TPL are fundamental for HEIs and relevant stakeholders to boost teachers’ professional growth in their respective organisations. Therefore, the insights into teachers’ engagement in the professional learning process gained during the research may serve as the foundation for a practical framework for classroom practitioners, administrators and policymakers to effectively facilitate the practice in their own institutions.

Thirdly, the immediate impact of the study has been on the teachers who participated in the project. These participants have become aware that they need to take full responsibility in identifying resources, professional requirements, and their needs in order to engage in necessary professional learning. Furthermore, they have had opportunities to discuss, observe and reflect on which professional learning activities they should undertake in direct

response to their daily professional needs, as well as the impacts of TPL on their classroom practice. Likewise, participating in the research should have raised their awareness of the importance of motivational and contextual contexts for their professional learning. Finally, this experience may have helped the teachers to build their confidence in TPL practice, as well as to appreciate the difference between traditional PD sessions and TPL that is teacher led.

1.6 Overview of the Thesis

Following the guide put forward by Bitchener (2010), this thesis is presented in seven chapters. In *Chapter I*, the current chapter, I offer a survey of the research report by introducing the background of the study in order to establish the context for the project and providing the rationale for the investigation in order to highlight the specific research gap this study aims to address. The chapter also defines the scope and limitations of the research, key terminology employed throughout the thesis, and the significance of the research project and its potential contribution to the field. The chapter concludes with a brief overview of the entire thesis structure.

In *Chapter II – Literature Review*, I examine the key concepts of Teacher Professional Learning (TPL) and propose a conceptual framework to guide this study. In addition to this theoretical analysis, I examine empirical studies to pinpoint the key factors shaping TPL, address gaps in the current research landscape, and highlight the need for more context-specific inquiries, particularly in less-explored regions like Cambodia. Lastly, I identify notable gaps in the existing literature, establishing a foundation for the research presented in this thesis.

Chapter III provides a description and justification for the research design. It commences with an introduction to the research questions alongside a description of the research objectives. Following that, the chapter presents the research paradigm that guides the framework of the

investigation (Section 3.2). The justification for the research method is provided in Section 3.3, leading into an in-depth exploration of the study's design in Section 3.4. The remaining parts cover a positionality statement and ethical considerations.

Given the number of research participants ($n=7$) in this qualitative case study, the results are presented across two chapters: *Chapter IV* and *Chapter V*. Splitting the findings into two chapters helps make the information more manageable for readers. In each chapter, participants are grouped based on their observable commitment to professional growth and the common sub-themes they shared. *Chapter IV - Narratives of Engaged Practitioners* – includes three participants who shared similar views on the significance of deliberate, continuous learning to foster professional growth, a perspective supported by their active engagement in TPL, as evidenced throughout the interviews. They also highlighted their sense of achievement, personal satisfaction, values, and responsibility as motivations for their professional learning.

Meanwhile, the remaining four participants presented in *Chapter V - Narratives of Teachers with Limited Evidence of TPL* - emphasised the importance of formal qualifications and expressed a strong commitment to continuous professional growth. However, during the interview, there was little evidence to suggest that they actively engaged in professional learning themselves, citing a lack of adequate time and support. This group of teachers also described feelings of loneliness in their profession, a reliance on established teaching methods in their practice, and the importance of understanding students' backgrounds to enhance instruction.

Both chapters are structured similarly, with the names (i.e., pseudonyms, see Section 3.4.1) of participants presented in alphabetical order as the main headings. *Kong Bunchhoeun* (4.1),

Nou Hach (4.2), and *Ven. Som* (4.3) are covered in *Chapter IV*. *Chuon Nath* (5.1), *Keng Vansak* (5.2), *Queen Indradevi* (5.3), and *Krom Ngoy* (5.4) are listed in *Chapter V*. Under these headings, the themes of (1) perceptions of professional growth, (2) opportunities and challenges, (3) strategies and activities in TPL, (4) professional learning and classroom practice, and (5) perspectives on TPL facilitation are presented as sub-headings.

In *Chapter VI*, I discuss the research outcomes presented in *Chapters IV* and *V*. The results are examined thematically by taking into account the Cambodian social and cultural contexts through the lens of social constructivism analysis. The discussion also explores the interrelated factors influencing teachers' engagement in professional learning, leading to the proposal of a Comprehensive Model of Cambodian Teacher Professional Learning, in order to provide better understanding of the process. The chapter begins with a revisiting of the research objectives, an overview of the methodology used to gather and analyse the data, and a summary of the key findings. It then addresses the thematic headings: (1) the participations' perspectives on professional growth, (2) teachers' perceptions about the contextual conditions influencing professional learning, (3) the aspirational factors driving their engagement in the process, (4) the strategies and activities for professional learning employed by the teachers, (5), the teachers' views about how TPL could be better facilitated in the research context, (6) the teachers' perspectives on the impact of professional learning on classroom practice, and (7) the Comprehensive Model of Cambodian Teacher Professional Learning.

In *Chapter VII*, the concluding chapter, I synthesise the findings of my research, highlighting its contributions to the field of Teacher Professional Learning. In addition to the empirical insights gained, a key contribution of this study has been the development of the

Comprehensive Model of Cambodian Teacher Professional Learning, alongside the conceptual framework, which takes into account the interrelated factors that contribute to a deeper understanding of the TPL process. This chapter also discusses the implications of my research, the limitations of the current study, and my concluding remarks which detail how other researchers could investigate any other gaps identified by this research project.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

In this chapter, I provide an overview of the literature related to Teacher Professional Learning (TPL), which serves as the foundation for this thesis. I begin by offering background information on the concept, clarifying the way TPL expands on traditional views of teacher professional development. Specifically, I highlight the focus on sustained, teacher-driven growth as opposed to top-down, one-off training events. This distinction is essential for understanding the evolving nature of professional learning in contemporary educational contexts.

To guide this study, I explain my definition of Teacher Professional Learning as introduced in Section 1.4. This definition captures its multifaceted and context-dependent nature, providing a conceptual lens through which my research is framed. In exploring this concept further, I examine nine key theoretical constructs that contribute to understanding TPL: (1) teacher cognition, (2) teacher professional identity, (3) teacher agency, (4) community of practice, (5) reflective practice, (6) teaching as inquiry, (7) self-directed learning, (8) transformative learning, and (9) teacher efficacy.

In addition to theoretical discussions, I review existing studies to identify key factors influencing Teacher Professional Learning. These factors include motivation for professional learning, learning approaches, the learning environment, and available support. I also address criticisms of the current research landscape, dedicating attention to the limitations of existing studies and emphasising the need for more context-sensitive investigations.

I also propose a conceptual framework that integrates key elements from the theoretical constructs reviewed. This framework underscores my argument that no single construct, when considered in isolation, provides a comprehensive understanding of Teacher Professional Learning. Instead, the integration of these elements offers a more robust structure to on which to base the research. Finally, I identify important gaps in the literature, particularly in under-researched contexts such as Cambodia. By addressing these gaps, I aim to contribute valuable insights to the field, advancing both theoretical understanding and practical applications of Teacher Professional Learning.

2.1 Conceptualising Teacher Professional Learning

Recognising the continued need for a comprehensive theoretical model that adequately encompasses the complexities of Teacher Professional Learning, in this section I propose a working definition of TPL. To begin with, a review of the literature suggests that a range of researchers have used similar terminology to refer to the act of learning that occurs within the work environment to fulfil professional requirements. For instance, Lave and Wenger (1991) pioneered the concept of “situated learning,” which emphasises the way in which learning happens through social interaction and participation in a community of practice. Their construct of “situated learning” aligns closely with the term “workplace learning,” which Jacobs and Park (2009, p. 134) define as “the process used by individuals when engaged in [...] some type of experiential learning activity for the purpose of acquiring the competence necessary to meet current and future work requirements.” Similarly, Marsick and Watkins (2015) note that informal learning in the workplace, which often happens outside of structured training programmes, could involve learning through experience, collaboration with colleagues, self-directed exploration, or even trial and error.

Workplace learning and professional learning share a common purpose in supporting individuals' professional development. In Jacobs and Park's (2009) definition, the "purpose" of workplace learning aligns with Prestridge's (2019, p. 144) description of "professional learning" as being "self-directed and based on an individual's professional needs or interests." This suggests that "workplace learning" and "professional learning" can be used interchangeably, as both aim to help individuals meet professional requirements in their roles. Moreover, Marsick and Volpe (1999, p. 4) define "informal learning" as "learning that is predominantly unstructured, experiential, and non-institutional [that] takes place as people go about their daily activities at work [and that] is driven by people's choices, preferences, and intentions." For the purpose of this thesis, "Teacher Professional Learning" is referred to as "learning that is largely unstructured, experiential, and non-institutional, occurring as teachers carry out their day-to-day tasks to develop the competence needed to meet both current and future professional demands" (Jacobs & Park, 2009; Marsick & Volpe, 1999; Marsick & Watkins; 2015; Prestridge, 2019).

2.2 Key Debates in Teacher Professional Learning

Teachers' professional growth can result from participation in activities such as traditional professional development workshops, short training courses, or formal degree programmes, as well as from self-initiated Teacher Professional Learning. There are three interrelated debates that inform the conceptual foundations of this study: Teacher Professional Development versus Teacher Professional Learning, formal versus informal learning, and teacher agency versus structural constraints.

The first debate concerns the role of Teacher Professional Development (TPD) versus more informal Teacher Professional Learning (TPL). TPD often involves external interventions (e.g., those from supervisors or the workplace) and is viewed as a process of delivering prescribed

training programmes to teachers offered by their respective institutions (Roseler & Dentzau, 2013; Shirrell et al., 2019). These schemes typically include institutionally mandated short courses or in-service workshops, often with predetermined content. It may also encompass formal academic qualifications such as postgraduate diplomas, master's degrees, or PhD programmes, which provide deep theoretical grounding and support professional advancement. However, the effectiveness of traditional forms of professional development for teachers has been questioned, as it is unclear how well these prescribed training opportunities cater to the specific needs of individual teachers (Clarke & Hollingsworth, 2002; Fullan, 2001; Knight, 2002; Richards, 2008; Roseler & Dentzau, 2013).

Furthermore, Opfer and Pedder (2011b) highlight a gap between theory and practice in teacher professional development programmes, noting that sessions which appear to have all the hallmarks of effectiveness often fail to produce the desired learning or change in teachers. Similarly, Proudfoot and Boyd (2024) argue that some professional development programmes might be designed solely to fulfil a requirement or achieve a specific outcome, rather than to truly help individuals learn and grow in their professions. When the focus is on rewards and performance, these programmes might not be engaging or relevant, leading to minimal impact on actual learning (Proudfoot & Boyd, 2024). On the other hand, Bergmark's (2023) study highlights the significance of a professional growth approach that adopts a teacher-driven, bottom-up model, promotes collaboration, addresses specific contexts, and integrates into teachers' daily work.

In contrast to the traditional, top-down process of Teacher Professional Development, the informal, bottom-up aspect of Teacher Professional Learning (TPL) is referred to as a teacher-driven approach initiated in response to their professional needs (Avalos, 2011). It is an ongoing process of acquiring new knowledge, skills, and attitudes to enhance their teaching

practices, with an aim to ultimately improve the student learning outcomes. Examples of professional learning activities in TPL include experimentation, reflection on experiences, and interactions with colleagues (Meirink et al., 2007, 2009). In TPL, teachers take ownership of their learning by deciding on meaningful content and activities, and by actively seeking out resources to address their specific needs (Kvam, 2018; Lantz-Andersson et al., 2018; Patahuddin & Logan, 2019; Prestridge, 2019; Vrikki et al., 2017). The positive influences of TPL on teachers' professional growth and classroom practices have been evidenced in various empirical studies (Belay et al., 2021; Nguyen & Newton, 2021; Shirrell et al., 2019). This study aligns with the view that meaningful and sustained learning is more likely to occur when teachers have ownership over their learning trajectories.

The second debate relates to the continuum between formal and informal learning. Formal learning occurs in highly structured environments, such as degree programmes or certified workshops, and typically follows a predetermined syllabus. Informal learning, by contrast, is embedded in everyday professional activities, often occurring through observation, conversation, experimentation, or reflection without formal instruction or assessment (Marsick & Watkins, 2015; Eraut, 2000). Informal learning is especially relevant in contexts like Cambodia, where access to formal TPD opportunities is inconsistent, and where teachers must often rely on peer learning, self-directed inquiry, and context-sensitive adaptations to support their growth.

The third debate focuses on the relationship between teacher agency and institutional structures. Increasingly, research recognises teachers as active agents who exercise judgement, make instructional decisions, and shape their own professional development paths (Biesta et al., 2015; Emirbayer & Mische, 1998). This view is consistent with constructivist approaches to professional learning that position teachers as co-constructors

of knowledge. However, teacher agency does not operate in a vacuum. It is often constrained or enabled by institutional norms, policies, school leadership, and broader socio-political conditions (Opfer & Pedder, 2011a; Coldron & Smith, 1999). In low-resource or highly hierarchical contexts, such as many parts of Cambodian higher education, understanding how teachers navigate these structures is crucial for assessing the viability and sustainability of professional learning models.

In addition, at the time of writing this thesis, it is acknowledged that there remains a need for a comprehensive theoretical model that sufficiently captures the complexities of Teacher Professional Learning (Asterhan & Lefstein, 2024; Cirkony et al., 2024; Kennedy, 2014; Timperley et al., 2008). This Literature Review chapter aims to comprehensively examine key constructs in the field and explores interrelated factors influencing the TPL process, such as professional learning strategies, the school environment, the role of social interactions, and motivational factors. Additionally, the chapter reviews the approaches that teachers commonly adopt to engage in their daily professional learning process and synthesises existing research on TPL to identify the gaps in knowledge that this project was designed to address.

2.3 A Review of Key Theoretical Constructs in Teacher Professional Learning

To develop a comprehensive and context-sensitive lens for analysing TPL, this study draws on nine key constructs selected from the international literature: teacher cognition, teacher professional identity, teacher agency, community of practice, reflective practice, teaching as inquiry, self-directed learning, transformative learning, and teacher efficacy. These constructs were purposefully chosen not only for their relevance to the research questions and their established presence in the field of TPL, but also for their ability to reflect the complex, multifaceted nature of professional learning in Cambodian higher education, where formal

structures are often limited, and much of the learning takes place informally and autonomously. Table 1 offers a summary of each presented key construct relevant to TPL. The nine constructs are grouped into four interrelated components that collectively form the conceptual framework (Section 2.3.11):

- *Pillars of Teacher Professionalism*: Teacher cognition, Teacher professional identity, and Teacher agency
- *Professional Learning Opportunities*: Community of practice
- *Professional Learning Repertoire*: Reflective practice, Teaching as inquiry, Self-directed learning, and Transformative learning
- *Outcome of Teacher Professional Learning*: Teacher efficacy

By combining these constructs, the study aims to offer a holistic understanding of how teachers experience, make sense of, and enact their professional learning journeys within the unique conditions of Cambodian English language teaching in higher education institutions.

2.3.1 Teacher cognition

The notion of teacher cognition can be traced back to Shulman's (1987) influential work, which significantly advanced the understanding of teacher knowledge. Emphasising the importance of comprehension, transformation, and reflection in teaching, Shulman (1987) proposed seven categories of teacher knowledge, including content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and the crucial concept of pedagogical content knowledge (PCK). Building on this foundation, Borg (2003, p. 81) later conceptualised teacher cognition as "the unobservable cognitive dimension of teaching – what teachers know, believe, and think."

Table 1*Key Constructs in Teacher Professional Learning*

Construct		Key Theorists and Contributors	Components/ Characteristics	Links to Teacher Professional Learning
Pillars of Teacher Professionalism	Teacher cognition	- Shulman L. (1987) - Borg, S. (2003, 2019) - Burns et al., 2015	- Beliefs, knowledge, attitudes, thought processes	- Enhances understanding of how teachers think, learn, and make instructional decisions. - Informs the process of facilitating TPL.
	Teacher professional identity	- Beijaard, D., Meijer, P. C., & Verloop, N. (2004) - Flores, M. A., & Day, C. (2006)	- Values, beliefs, and commitments about teaching roles	- Professional identity as a foundation for professional growth. - Identity formation and professional learning are intertwined, requiring teachers to take control of their learning to achieve professional growth.
	Teacher agency	- Bandura, (2001) - Biesta, G., Priestley, M., & Robinson, S. (2015) - Emirbayer, M., & Mische, A. (1998)	- Ownership and decision-making - Personal, relational, contextual factors for professional growth	- Enables teachers to take control of their professional development and adapt to changes. - Provides teachers with the capacity to act purposefully and constructively in their professional growth.
TPL Opportunity	Community of practice	- Lave, J., & Wenger, E. (1991) - Wenger, E. (1999)	- Mutual engagement, joint enterprise, shared repertoire - Continuous learning and innovation	- Facilitates shared learning and collective growth among teachers, enhancing professional learning communities - Focuses on the importance of social interactions in the TPL process
Professional Learning Repertoire	Reflective practice	- Dewey, J. (1933) - Farrell, T. S. C. (2011) - Kolb, D. A. (1984) - Mezirow, J. (1998) - Schön, D. A. (1983)	- Systematic thinking - Reflective cycle (description, analysis, action) - Reflection-in-action; reflection-on-action; critical reflection	- Encourages continuous improvement and self-assessment in teaching practices. - Enhances teaching effectiveness through instructional modifications and the development of teacher efficacy.
	Teaching as inquiry	- Ermeling, B. A. (2010); - Poekert, P. (2011) - Timperley, H., Kaser, L., & Halbert, J. (2014)	- Spiral of inquiry model - Inquiry process - Focus on student learning outcomes	- Provides teachers with structured steps in the inquiry process through the Spiral of Inquiry model. - Encourages teachers to continuously assess their practices, refine their approaches, and foster an environment of lifelong learning and adaptability.
	Self-directed learning	- Caffarella, R. S. (1993) - Garrison, D. R. (1997) - Knowles, M.S. (1975) - Tough, A. (1978)	- Learner autonomy - Self-management - Self-monitoring - Motivation - Resourcefulness and learner control	- Offers teachers a process in which individuals take initiative in diagnosing their learning needs, formulating their goals, identifying necessary resources, and evaluating their outcomes. - Promotes lifelong learning habits and enables teachers to take charge of their own professional learning.
	Transformative learning	- Freire, P. (1970) - Mezirow, J. (1997) - Cole & Duffy (2024)	- Disorienting dilemmas, - Critical reflection on one's beliefs, values, and assumptions - Perspective transformation	- Encourages teachers to engage in critical reflection about their teaching practices, beliefs, and assumptions. - Promotes significant changes in beliefs and practices, leading to more effective teaching and learning
Outcome of TPL	Teacher efficacy	- Bandura, A. (1991, 1997) - Tschannen-Moran, M., & Hoy, A. W. (2001)	- Personal efficacy - Collective efficacy - Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES)	- To understand and enhance teachers' confidence in their instructional abilities, which is linked to better teaching practices and student achievement.

Since then, teacher cognition has emerged as a significant area of inquiry that investigates teachers' thought processes, decision-making, and the relationships between their beliefs, knowledge, and identities, and how these influence their classroom practice. This trend has led to numerous studies exploring these connections (Borg, 2003, 2015, 2019; Cheng & Zhang, 2022; Dhanavel, 2022; Cheung & Hennebry-Leung, 2023; Yap & Gurney, 2023; Yan et al., 2022). Additionally, research on teacher cognition in general education has expanded across various disciplines, including arts, mathematics and science education, in order to examine how teachers develop subject-specific pedagogical knowledge and instructional strategies (Bastian et al., 2024; Blackley et al., 2021; Strat et al., 2024).

Meanwhile, within the field of English language teaching, teacher cognition has emerged as a distinct subfield, with research highlighting the unique cognitive processes that shape language teachers' beliefs, knowledge, and instructional practices. Couper (2021), for example, examined the cognition of native and non-native English teachers in relation to issues in English pronunciation teaching across two contexts: Uruguay and New Zealand. Likewise, several other academic works have built upon Borg's (2003) conceptualisation of teacher cognition and revealed a range of perspectives. Dhanavel (2022), for example, shared insights from India by applying the construct to explore English language teachers' professional growth, connecting teacher cognition research with classroom-based practices. Similarly, Yan et al. (2022) investigated Chinese primary school EFL (English as a Foreign Language) teachers' conceptions of classroom-based assessment, demonstrating how their beliefs influence assessment practices. Cheng and Zhang (2022) also examined Chinese EFL teachers' beliefs about improving students' writing through written feedback. In other contexts, East (2022) explored changes in teachers' beliefs and practices during pedagogical innovation in language classrooms, mediated through language teacher education

programmes. Likewise, Yap and Gurney (2023) investigated the use of multiliteracies pedagogy with digital technologies by teachers at an intermediate school in New Zealand.

Teacher cognition has long been a central focus in educational research, with its conceptualisation evolving significantly over time, most likely due to its controversial nature. Burns et al. (2015) trace this evolution, illustrating how early views of language teacher cognition were largely individualistic, concentrating on cognitive elements such as decision-making and mental processes. Gradually, however, this perspective broadened, positioning cognition within the social context of the classroom (Borg, 2019; Burns et al., 2015; L. Li, 2023; Wang & Zhang, 2024). Burns et al. (2015, p. 588) described further shifts, including a move towards a “social ontology,” influenced by theories of situated cognition and sociocultural perspectives, which then expanded to a “sociohistorical ontology” that considers both the immediate classroom setting and wider social histories. This evolution signifies a shift from viewing cognition as isolated, personal processes to understanding it as complex and interwoven with broader social and historical factors. While Borg (2019, p. 1154) suggests that the term “cognitivist” still holds relevance for examining specific mental constructs abstractly, the field has largely moved away from perceiving cognition as stable across contexts. As L. Li (2023) argues, this earlier perspective of context-independent cognition is now considered overly simplistic in light of more nuanced understandings that have developed in the field, which emphasise the social and situational nature of teacher cognition. Additionally, Wang and Zhang (2024) provide a historical overview of 169 scholarly articles on the topic, which were published in *System* between 2008 and 2023. In summary, this overview suggests that the scope of inquiry has more recently begun to include teachers’ emotions and identities, along with an increased focus on the impact of contextual factors on teacher cognition. They also observe a shift towards viewing teacher cognition as a complex, dynamic

system. Highlighting the development of teacher cognition as a field of inquiry, Borg (2019, p. 1167) proposes an alternative definition of teacher cognition research: “Inquiry which seeks, with reference to their personal, professional, social, cultural, and historical contexts, to understand teachers’ minds and emotions and the role these play in the process of becoming, being, and developing as a teacher.” He further contends that a more appropriate label for the construct is necessary—one that reduces the overemphasis on mental structures and recognises the broader, more complex contexts in which teachers operate.

Recent studies have highlighted the complexity of teacher cognition and the methodological challenges associated with studying it. For instance, in their work examining ESL (English as a Second Language) teachers’ beliefs and practices in teaching literary texts, Cheung and Hennebry-Leung (2023) assert that the influence of emotions on teacher cognition has been insufficiently explored. This gap underscores the necessity of, in addition to the contextual factors, considering teachers’ emotions when investigating the evolving nature of teacher cognition (Cheung & Hennebry-Leung, 2023). Moreover, L. Li (2023) highlights the significance of studying how social interactions and classroom situations affect novice Chinese EFL teachers’ thoughts and decision-making processes. By understanding these complexities through the perspectives of teachers, researchers can gain valuable insights that may improve teacher education and ultimately enhance student learning (L. Li, 2023). Moreover, employing an effective methodology to examine teachers’ minds and emotions can be subjective, as such research may involve various investigatory designs (Chen & Cheng, 2021; Ire et al., 2018; Scott & Sutton, 2009).

Furthermore, it is well documented that examining teacher cognition provides valuable insights into teachers’ beliefs, knowledge, attitudes, and thought processes, as well as how these elements impact on their understanding of effective teaching methods. However, there

is scope for further exploration of how teachers activate their agency to acquire, refine, and internalise these practices. Moreover, greater clarity could be provided on how teachers adapt their instructional methods to different teaching contexts.

In Cambodia's ELT context, where resources and professional learning opportunities may be limited, teacher cognition is crucial for understanding how teachers make instructional decisions and navigate constraints. This construct functions as a theoretical lens in this study, providing insight into how teachers' internal processes shape their professional learning journeys and how these are enacted in everyday practice.

2.3.2 Teacher professional identity

Teacher professional identity is a complex and dynamic construct shaped by personal experiences, contextual factors, and social interactions. It plays a central role in shaping how teachers perceive themselves, engage in professional learning, and exercise agency in their careers. As a theoretical lens, this construct is critical to understanding how teachers make sense of their professional roles and navigate challenges within specific sociocultural contexts.

Beijaard et al. (2004) characterise teacher professional identity as an ongoing process of interpreting and re-interpreting experiences, influenced by both personal and contextual factors. This identity also contains sub-identities, which may be more or less harmonised, and requires teachers to exercise active agency in their professional growth. Similarly, Flores and Day (2006, p. 220) define teacher professional identity "as an ongoing and dynamic process which entails the making sense and (re)interpretation of one's own values and experiences." While Beijaard et al. (2004) observe that the notion lacks a consistent and widely accepted definition in the literature, they suggest that teacher professional identity can be understood as the way in which teachers perceive themselves and their roles within the profession. This

construct encompasses the values, beliefs, and commitments teachers hold regarding their roles and responsibilities (Beijaard et al., 2004). Furthermore, teacher professional identity is shaped by discourse, such as personal biographies and narratives, emotions, social contexts, and relationships with others (Rushton et al., 2023).

In addition, Lave and Wenger's (1991) work on communities of practice provides a foundational understanding of how teacher professional identity forms within social contexts (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998, 2011). According to the authors, each member of a community of practice brings a unique identity (e.g., novice versus experienced teachers) when interacting and collaborating with colleagues. These identities shape teachers' practices, interactions with colleagues and students, and overall professional growth.

In fact, teacher professional identity has become central to teacher education research. A systematic review of 412 articles from 2000 to 2021 by Rushton et al. (2023) indicates that teacher professional identity is widely used as a lens to understand and explore various dimensions of teachers' professional lives. Examples of studies in this broad field include those which examine the way in which teachers conceptualise their roles and responsibilities, and how they collaborate with colleagues to navigate the broader educational context (Herreño-Contreras & González, 2023; Matsagopane & Tang, 2023). Highlighting the essential connection between identity and continuous professional growth, Earl and Ussher (2016) emphasise that an ongoing habit of learning should be a core component of teachers' professional identity. Additionally, understanding professional identity sheds light on classroom instructional practices and the dynamics of teacher-student interactions (Sipuka & Motala, 2022).

Investigating teacher professional identity, however, is challenging due to its complexity, fluidity, and context dependency. The development of professional identity, for example, is

influenced by various factors, making it difficult to define and measure (Buchanan, 2015). Moreover, the context-dependent nature of teacher professional identity makes it hard to generalise findings or develop universal models (Matsagopane & Tang, 2023). To illustrate, Le et al. (2023) identified a continuum of self-perceived professional identities (e.g., flexible teachers, student-centred teachers, reflective teachers, growth-oriented teachers, engaging teachers, supportive teachers, and enthusiastic teachers, to name a few) within the context of teaching English as a foreign language in Vietnam. Similarly, a case study by Herreño-Contreras and González (2023), which examined the professional identity of English teachers in a private university in Colombia, found that teachers view themselves as agents of social change, highlighting how professional identity can be framed differently depending on local educational values and the teacher's personal mission. Additionally, the dynamic and evolving nature of teacher identity is evident when Herreño-Contreras and González (2023) noted that teachers perceived their roles to have changed over time.

Despite its complexities and context dependencies, understanding teacher professional identity, however, is crucial for a comprehensive discussion of research on Teacher Professional Learning. The present study draws on Beijaard et al.'s (2004) conceptualisation of teacher professional identity, highlighting two key features: (1) its dynamic nature and (2) the role of agency within it. Beijaard et al. (2004) view professional identity as an ongoing, evolving process rather than something fixed or rigid. The concept of teacher growth as a continuous, ever-evolving process is effectively understood as the result of sustained professional learning (Beijaard et al., 2004; Day, 2011; Kerby, 1991; Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998, 2011). Sipuka and Motala's (2022) study supports this, by revealing that university teachers' professional identities are primarily shaped through practice. Their findings align with the idea that teacher professional identity evolves through interactions

with various physical, social, and conceptual factors, as well as through accumulated experiences (Matsagopane & Tang, 2023; Sipuka & Motala, 2022; Zembylas, 2003).

Moreover, agency has been shown to play a key role in professional identity, thus suggesting the notion that teachers need to take an active part in their own professional growth (Beijaard et al., 2004; Coldron & Smith, 1999). This dimension of professional identity formation is consistent with a constructivist perspective on learning, which proposes that learning, both individually and collaboratively, happens through the active engagement of the learner (Beijaard et al., 2004). Similarly, Zembylas (2003) argues that teacher identity is closely linked to the effectiveness of teacher agency. Additionally, X. Li (2023) emphasises that teacher agency should be understood as the result of an interaction between various elements, including personal effort, available resources, organisational structure and climate, and contextual factors. This author further argues that the professional identity of EFL teachers is socially constructed, emerging from their interactions both within the classroom and in organisational settings.

In the Cambodian higher education context, where formal pathways for development may be constrained, professional identity becomes an even more salient construct. It helps explain how teachers navigate institutional structures, adapt to evolving expectations, and sustain professional growth through self-directed and collaborative learning. As such, it is central to the conceptual framework used in this study and complements the constructs of teacher cognition and teacher agency.

2.3.3 Teacher agency

While previously introduced in relation to teacher professional identity (Section 2.3.2), teacher agency is discussed here as a distinct and essential construct for understanding Teacher Professional Learning (TPL). As a theoretical lens, teacher agency captures the

intentional and proactive ways in which teachers navigate and shape their professional growth, especially within complex and often under-resourced environments such as those in Cambodian higher education.

The term “agency” has been widely debated over the years because it can be interpreted in many ways, leading to various theories and concepts (Farmasari, 2021). For instance, Emirbayer and Mische (1998) describe agency as a process shaped by time and social interaction. It draws on the past through habits, looks to the future by imagining possibilities, and focuses on the present by adapting past experiences and future goals to current situations (Emirbayer & Mische, 1998). Bandura (2001, p. 6), however, refers to agency as “acts done intentionally.” This definition can be understood as individuals regulating and controlling their cognition, motivation, and behaviour through self-beliefs, particularly self-efficacy.

Teacher agency, on the other hand, is regarded as a distinct form of professional agency. It involves teachers actively engaging in shaping their work and the conditions surrounding it, which is essential for effective and meaningful education (Biesta et al., 2015; Hallinger et al., 2019). In other words, teacher agency refers to the capacity of teachers to act intentionally and constructively to guide their own professional growth. It is also noted that while teacher agency is regarded as an element of teacher professional identity, Wenger (2011) also indicates the important role of agency within communities of practice. He states that: “In pursuing their interest in their domain, members engage in joint activities and discussions, help each other, and share information” (p. 2). Wenger is emphasising that individuals have agency in how they participate in and contribute to communities of practice. Brodie (2021) further explains that members can choose their level of engagement, take on different roles, and shape the community’s practices. Teachers who possess agency understand their role in

their professional growth and actively take charge of it, rather than passively responding to learning opportunities.

Therefore, teacher agency has garnered growing recognition as a key element in enhancing teachers' professional learning, fostering school improvement, and promoting sustainable educational change. For example, in their quest to propose a model for professional growth and school reform, Imants and Van der Wal (2020, p. 7) advocate for the importance of the role of teacher agency in professional innovation by focusing specifically on "the teacher as an actor." Similarly, Nezhad and Stolz (2024) argue that teacher agency is vital for effective professional learning, as it enables teachers to have decision-making power and a sense of ownership over their professional development. Teachers with a strong sense of agency are more likely to innovate and adapt their teaching methods, pursue continuous professional advancement, and create effective and engaging learning environments (Hilal & Akar, 2023; Imants & Van der Wal, 2020; Molla & Nolan, 2020; Nezhad & Stolz, 2024; Polatcan, 2021).

Teacher agency can also be used as a theoretical concept to guide research in the field of education. The notion of teacher agency emphasises the active and purposeful role of teachers in directing their own professional learning and development. This framework can be applied in various research contexts, such as teacher education, professional growth, and inclusive education (X. Li, 2023; Nezhad & Stolz, 2024). For example, Fu and Clarke (2017) establish a clear connection between the preparation of teachers and the conceptualisation of teacher agency, highlighting its practical implications in the Canadian teacher education context.

However, examining teacher agency in relation to their professional progression is challenging due to its dependence on individual and contextual factors. One difficulty in modelling teacher agency, which is essential for their ongoing professional learning, is striking

the right balance between teachers' individual learning preferences and the broader goals of the school (Calvert, 2016). While teachers may have specific areas they want to focus on, these might not always align with systemic priorities or student needs. In addition, a key opportunity for enhancing teacher agency in examining professional learning lies in recognising and addressing the interrelated factors influencing the process, such as motivation and approaches to learning. Nezhad and Stolz (2024), for example, call for future research to focus on the factors influencing teachers' decisions to engage in professional learning.

In the context of this study, teacher agency is central to understanding how Cambodian university English teachers initiate and sustain their learning amidst limited formal support. It supports the overarching argument that effective professional learning is contingent not only on external conditions, but also on teachers' proactive engagement with their growth. As such, agency forms a critical part of the conceptual framework developed in this study.

2.3.4 Community of practice

A Community of Practice (CoP) refers to a group of individuals who share a common interest, set of challenges, or passion for a specific topic, and who enhance their knowledge and expertise in this area through continuous interaction (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998). This theory also emphasises the social nature of learning and knowledge construction among professionals. While a CoP can serve as a platform for teachers to engage in activities that foster their professional growth, it also provides a useful framework for understanding the process of Teacher Professional Learning.

Studies have shown that such CoPs can have significant positive effects on English teachers' professional growth, especially when viewed through the lenses of mutual engagement, joint enterprise, and shared repertoire (Cohen et al., 2015; Irgens et al., 2023; Mehdizadeh et al.,

2023; Tang & Ye, 2023; Wenger, 1998). Mutual engagement describes the interactions and relationships that members of a CoP cultivate as they take part in shared activities and discussions. For English teachers, mutual engagement in a CoP can lead to collaboration, peer support, and diverse perspectives, particularly when teachers from different backgrounds and experiences are involved (James et al., 2007; Kennedy, 2014; Rone, 2009; Vangrieken et al., 2015; Vrikki et al., 2017).

Social interactions such as those which take place in CoPs are essential for teachers' engagement in the professional learning process, providing both the context and means for development. For example, Kvam (2018) describes teachers' conversations as crucial interactions that occur in formal or informal settings, addressing issues directly related to teaching. These interactions, along with informal learning strategies such as teamwork and mentoring, are key to professional growth (Le Clus, 2011). Kennedy (2014, p.692) further suggests that "professional socialisation" through mentoring can be a powerful way to promote behaviours, attitudes, and practices that align with the accepted standards and norms of a particular group or organisation. Teachers prefer real-world, informal exchanges with colleagues to share knowledge and solve problems, reinforcing the value of a positive, collaborative ethos for learning (Hermansen, 2016; Vrikki et al., 2017).

In addition, CoPs facilitate the sharing of good practices, collective problem-solving, and professional growth, thus fostering a culture of continuous learning and innovation. They particularly encourage teacher reflection, innovative practices, and the implementation of research (Tang & Ye, 2023). Instructors collaboratively exchange their experience and expertise concerning teaching content and matters in their workplace to assist their co-workers to solve similar teaching-related issues (Lantz-Andersson et al., 2018; Vrikki et al., 2017). These collaborations can take the form of either virtual or face-to-face social

exchanges (Ab Rashid et al., 2016; Lantz-Andersson et al., 2018; Patahuddin & Logan, 2019; Prestridge, 2019). For instance, Floris et al. (2024) noted that, in online settings, joint enterprise within virtual CoPs supports collaborative navigation of AI (artificial intelligence) integration in ELT, balancing technological advancements with pedagogical soundness. Furthermore, CoPs can bridge the gap between research and practice through co-design partnerships, enabling knowledge co-construction between teachers and researchers (Irgens et al., 2023). As evidenced in these studies, CoPs serve as dynamic platforms for educators to collaboratively navigate the complexities of teaching, continuously evolve their professional identities, and bridge the gap between research and practice, ensuring that both pedagogical innovation and educational excellence are sustained.

While the notion of Community of Practice offers valuable insights into social learning, there are a number of reasons why I have chosen not to use it to frame my study. First, it does not account for the principles of adult learning theory. For example, in their professional practice, English language teachers often engage in learning communities not out of an intrinsic desire to learn, but to address specific professional challenges or requirements (Appova & Arbaugh, 2018). The importance of understanding of how and why adults engage in community-based learning highlights the need for a more comprehensive framework. This framework should combine the strengths of CoP's social learning perspective with the insights of adult learning theory, particularly in order to highlight the motivations and behaviours of adult learners in professional contexts.

Second, CoP emphasises the natural occurrence of learning within communities, but it tends to overlook the motivations and behaviours specific to adult learners such as teachers. As Caffarella (1993) noted, adult learners prioritise their learning based on immediate professional needs, which contrasts with Wenger's (1998) assumption that learning primarily

occurs within an established community. In other words, this group of adult learners predominantly identify a need for learning before seeking out relevant communities or resources, although learning may also occasionally arise as an additional consequence of community membership (Caffarella, 1993, 2000; Cho & Kwon, 2005; Garrison 1997; Hiemstra, 2000; Merriam & Caffarella, 1999).

Additionally, recent research challenges the traditional CoP framework, by emphasising its limitations in addressing environmental factors. Abedini et al. (2024) underline the importance of environmental factors in shaping adult learning in online CoPs, by presenting a framework that considers environmental, personal, and behavioural factors. Similarly, Vangrieken et al. (2015) point out that key factors influencing teacher collaboration include staff continuity, the physical layout or proximity of facilities, the regulatory capabilities of the team, and formalised opportunities for frequent professional interaction. These insights suggest that to fully understand and enhance teacher collaboration, it is fundamental to move beyond traditional frameworks like CoP and consider the broader environmental factors that significantly influence learning dynamics.

2.3.5 Reflective practice

Key theorists such as John Dewey, Donald Schön, and Jack Mezirow have significantly shaped the understanding of reflective practice in education and professional settings (Dewey, 1933; Farrell, 2018; Mezirow, 1998; Schön, 1983). Reflective practice is generally understood as an active, problem-centred process that involves critically examining one's actions and experiences to improve future practice (Machost & Stains, 2023; Mohamed et al., 2022). In the context of teaching, this concept serves to emphasise the importance of teachers critically assessing their own practices, beliefs, and assumptions (Farrell, 2013, 2024). Through

thoughtful consideration of their experiences and outcomes, teachers can enhance their effectiveness.

Since John Dewey introduced the concept of reflective practice in 1933, it has been extensively examined, leading to various interpretations. Schön (1983), for example, identifies two types of reflection that teachers can adopt: reflection-in-action, which involves making immediate adjustments during teaching, and reflection-on-action, which involves analysing actions after the fact. Kolb (1984, p. 21) further elaborates on reflective practice by visualising it as a four-step cycle: 1) concrete experience, 2) reflective observation, 3) abstract conceptualisation, and 4) active experimentation. Similar to the work done by Schön (1983), Mezirow (1998) introduces the idea of “critical reflection,” a process that entails examining underlying assumptions, values, and beliefs.

In the teaching profession, particularly in English language teaching, reflective practice can involve a more complex process that extends beyond mere contemplation. Systematic reflection, for example, refers to a practice in which teachers document and systematically review purposefully collected information, including teaching materials such as textbooks, lesson plans, and educational resources (Farrell, 2013; 2024; Mulu et al., 2022; Pokhrel, 2022; Pollard & Collins, 2005; Richards & Farrell, 2005). Such reflection is more deliberate and allows for deeper analysis of strengths and weaknesses in the teaching approach (Pokhrel, 2022).

There is evidence that reflective practice is crucial for professional learning, fostering self-awareness, professional growth, and improved teaching practices. For instance, systematic reflection has been shown to result in instructional modifications and the enhancement of teachers’ ability to evaluate their impact (Farrell, 2013; 2024; Hayden et al., 2013; Mulu et al., 2022; Pokhrel, 2022; Pollard & Collins, 2005; Richards & Farrell, 2005). It also assists in developing teacher efficacy by encouraging reflection on various pedagogical skills such as

instructional accommodation, scaffolding students to comprehend the English language, and focusing on their needs (Cirocki & Widodo, 2019; Hassner et al., 2023; Pokhrel, 2022).

Although reflective practice offers significant benefits for teachers, its full potential can only be realised when certain conditions are met. With the right support, training, and time, teachers can engage in deeper reflection and develop effective reflective practices (Chan & Lee, 2021; Guo, 2022; Lim et al., 2022; Marshall, 2019). Teachers can thrive in reflective practices when provided with adequate opportunities to reflect meaningfully, supported by timely guidance (Lim et al., 2022). As Godínez Martínez (2018) suggests, when teachers have the right conditions—such as time, opportunities, and collaborative support—they are empowered to critically reflect on their teaching, thus enhancing their professional growth.

Moreover, Marshall (2019) highlights that different interpretations of what constitutes reflective practice can complicate the process of its adoption. For example, the ambiguity related to the role of “critical friends,” the term referred to by researchers such as Farrell (2018, p. 3) and Lamont (2011), can pose challenges for teachers seeking to adopt this framework. According to Farrell (2018), being surrounded by “critical friends”—colleagues who possess reflective abilities and can provide constructive feedback—is a way for teachers to engage in meaningful reflective practice. However, identifying “critical friends” can be subjective and challenging. For example, teachers may find it difficult to determine whether a colleague who is willing to offer feedback actually possesses the reflective skills necessary to be considered a “critical friend,” as this judgement often depends on individual interpretation and the nature of their personal relationship. Additionally, the time required for a “critical friend” to fully understand the practice and context, and to be able to offer meaningful help, can vary greatly (Farrell, 2018).

For this study, reflective practice functions as a learning process construct. It offers a lens for analysing how teachers in Cambodia engage with their own teaching experiences and transform those insights into professional growth. The construct also complements other components of the conceptual framework—such as agency and teacher identity—by focusing on self-regulated learning and critical inquiry, which are essential to sustaining professional learning in informal, resource-constrained environments.

2.3.6 Teaching as inquiry

A review of the literature indicates regional preferences in the usage of two closely related terms—teaching as inquiry and teacher inquiry. The term “Teaching as Inquiry” frequently appears in academic and research papers by scholars from the southern hemisphere, primarily Australia and New Zealand (Benade, 2015; Earl & Ussher, 2016; Education Gazette editors, 2016; Sinnema & Aitken, 2011; 2019). The trend could be seen as a direct result of this notion being incorporated into the New Zealand Curriculum as a model of effective pedagogy in late 2007 (Education Review Office, 2011). Meanwhile, the term “Teacher Inquiry,” which also refers to the process of teachers investigating their own practice, is more widely used elsewhere in the world (Dunn, 2023; Ermeling, 2010; Poekert, 2011). Despite subtle differences in definition, this thesis considers both terms to be synonymous. However, to align with the geographical context of this thesis, “Teaching as Inquiry” is employed throughout.

Teaching as inquiry is a framework that empowers teachers to examine how their teaching practices impact on student learning. It involves a systematic and reflective approach, focusing on identifying and addressing specific areas of need in the classroom (Dyson, 2020; Dunn, 2023; Ermeling, 2010; Poekert, 2011). In other words, engaging in teaching as inquiry often leads to instances of professional learning being experienced by teachers as they follow

this process (Earl & Ussher, 2016; Timperley et al., 2014). This activity can be conducted individually or collaboratively with colleagues (Dunn, 2023; Ermeling, 2010; Poekert, 2011).

While being recognised as fundamental for teacher professional growth, teaching as inquiry may be interpreted or approached differently by various groups of educators and scholars, leading to debates about its exact meaning and purpose (Dyson, 2020). Poekert (2011), for instance, considers the notion to be a method for teachers to direct their own learning and focus on the particular needs of their own classrooms. Other researchers, however, insist that teachers follow a structured cycle of steps, with the specific goal of demonstrating improvement in students' learning outcomes (Earl & Ussher, 2016; Timperley et al., 2014).

Arguing for a structured approach to teaching as inquiry, Timperley et al. (2014) introduce the "Spiral of Inquiry" Model, which begins with a teacher's genuine curiosity to identify a focus area, after which they formulate necessary learning based on collected data, implement changes, and reflect on the outcomes. According to the authors, this spiral of inquiry consists of six steps. The first stage, scanning, involves teachers in gathering information about learners by reviewing a wide range of data and perspectives in order to understand the current situation. Next, the practitioner narrows down the focus based on what was learned during the scanning stage to establish a specific area for improvement. In the "developing a hunch" step, the practitioner articulates current theories and ideas about what might be causing the situation while examining existing practices and assumptions (Timperley et al., 2014, p. 12). Step Four often involves professional learning, where the individual seeks out new knowledge and ideas that could apply the focus area. Following this, they implement the newly learned approaches before assessing their impact. The final step involves gathering evidence to determine whether the changes have been effective.

Consequently, Timperley et al.'s (2014) Spiral of Inquiry Model has been cited and implemented in various research studies, including those conducted in Australia and New Zealand (Brown et al., 2017; Brown & Zhang, 2017; Education Gazette editors, 2016; Ell et al., 2019; McChesney & Cross, 2023; Rincón-Gallardo & Fullan, 2016; Schnellert & Butler, 2021). It appears that the spiral of inquiry model provides a robust structure for conducting inquiry and guides educators through each stage of the process. However, it could be further enhanced by incorporating elements that spark initial curiosity and motivation. The framework tends to focus on the process of inquiry itself and seems to assume that both teachers and educational institutions are already committed to the inquiry process. As Charteris and Thomas (2017) contend, true and sincere curiosity cannot be forced; instead, it arises from these meaningful interactions and experiences. In professional practice, teachers' authentic curiosity about their learners may be sparked by various sources and circumstances, such as peer observations, student feedback, or challenging situations. Incorporating sources of inspiration into the framework could therefore enhance a more comprehensive examination of inquiry practice.

Another area of concern is the level of readiness of teachers in specific contexts, such as Cambodia, to adopt this kind of framework for their professional growth. The concept of teaching as inquiry assumes that teachers are capable of conducting research and analysing data to gain insights and direction for further learning. However, it may be overly optimistic to assume that all teachers possess these skills, particularly in the Cambodian teaching context (Heng et al., 2022). For instance, Sovachana and Serey (2016) identify limited English proficiency and research skills as personal barriers for Cambodian English language teachers engaging in research activities. They suggest that Cambodian EFL teachers may need training in research methods before they can effectively follow the steps of teaching as inquiry.

Moving beyond Timperley et al.'s (2014) spiral of inquiry model, scholars have highlighted other challenges in implementing the teaching as inquiry framework. For instance, Dyson (2020) raises concerns about the practicality of the framework within New Zealand school settings, noting challenges that secondary school teachers face in maintaining inquiry as a tool for self-directed professional learning amidst external pressures. The author asserts that not only is the notion of inquiry contentious, but also teachers often feel pressured when trying to engage in it. Meanwhile, Benade (2015) critiques the model for not requiring teachers to critically examine their foundational beliefs and assumptions, for lacking a broader socio-political contextual analysis, and for omitting important underpinning attitudes. He argues for a more expansive concept of collaborative, critical teacher reflective practice as an alternative. This critique has been countered by other researchers, who argue that teaching as inquiry can be seen as a form of reflective practice that promotes critical and collaborative practitioner research (Charteris & Smith, 2017; Charteris & Thomas, 2017).

For teachers in resource-constrained contexts like Cambodia, challenges such as limited training in research methods, heavy teaching loads, or lack of institutional support may hinder their ability to fully engage in inquiry-based professional learning. Moreover, sociocultural norms around authority and hierarchy may affect how freely teachers question prevailing practices (Benade, 2015; Dyson, 2020). Nonetheless, when adapted to context and adequately supported, teaching as inquiry can foster critical reflection, collaborative problem-solving, and sustained professional growth.

In this study, teaching as inquiry is categorised as a learning process construct. It provides a lens for analysing how Cambodian university teachers investigate their own teaching, experiment with new approaches, and reflect on outcomes—particularly in the absence of formal PD structures. The construct also supports inquiry into how teachers make decisions

about their own professional learning priorities and how they navigate barriers to improvement.

2.3.7 Self-directed learning

The evolution of “Self-Directed Learning” (SDL) can be traced back to Allen Tough’s groundbreaking empirical research on adult learning projects, published as *The Adult’s Learning Projects* in 1971. This research laid the groundwork for understanding how adults engage in self-directed learning in their everyday lives. Through the contributions of other prominent figures in the field, this foundational knowledge led to the development of adult education theories, including SDL. Notably, building on Tough’s work and other research, Malcolm S. Knowles further developed the theoretical framework of SDL, particularly with his seminal work *Self-Directed Learning: A Guide for Learners and Teachers*, which integrated SDL into his broader theory of andragogy (Knowles, 1975). Two decades later, Caffarella (1993) expanded on these foundations by referring to SDL as a process by which individuals take the initiative and responsibility for their own learning. Garrison (1997) further contributes to Caffarella’s (1993) definition by proposing a comprehensive model of SDL that integrates three key dimensions: (1) self-management (contextual control, i.e., task control issues and the social setting in which learning takes place); (2) self-monitoring (cognitive responsibility - the learner's ability to monitor their cognitive and metacognitive processes); and (3) motivation (entering and task - the learner's effort to initiate and maintain commitment to learning).

Regardless of the varying perspectives, SDL can be universally understood as an approach to learning in which learners take the lead and primary responsibility in identifying their learning needs and the required resources, carrying out the process, and assessing their own learning outcomes (Caffarella, 1993, 2000; Garrison 1997; Hiemstra, 2000; Merriam & Caffarella, 1999; Cho & Kwon, 2005). Garrison (1997), however, argues that true self-directed adult learners

must also engage in critical thinking and meaning making throughout their learning journey. For English language teachers, who are adult learners in their professional field, taking the initiative to identify necessary resources and actively participating in purposeful learning enables them to fulfil their professional requirements and advance in their teaching practice (Garrison, 1997).

Garrison's comprehensive theoretical model

Garrison (1997) defines self-directed learning as “an approach where learners are motivated to assume personal responsibility and collaborative control of the cognitive (self-monitoring) and contextual (self-management) processes in constructing and confirming meaningful and worthwhile learning outcomes” (p. 18). He emphasises the importance of motivation in this process, alongside external control and management of learning tasks. In the context of teachers’ professional growth, merely participating in a structured learning environment is insufficient to ensure success; motivation to engage with and persist in tasks is what makes the experience valuable. Additionally, Garrison (1997) argues that fully self-directed learners move beyond basic task control, developing critical thinking and constructing meaning in complex areas. His theoretical model integrates self-management, self-monitoring, and motivational aspects, highlighting how these elements interact to shape meaningful learning outcomes.

Self-management involves implementing learning plans by utilising learning resources and necessary support, such as consultations on learning approaches, flexibility in work schedules, and feedback (Garrison, 1997). It is a process in which learners continuously reflect on managing their learning goals, assessing learning outcomes, adopting suitable learning methods, and acquiring necessary support. In this context, the enactment of learning goals

for teachers refers to the continuing process of learning in order to fulfil their professional needs and interests (Jacobs & Park, 2009; Prestridge, 2019).

According to this view of SDL, teachers are responsible for leveraging contextual situations to meet their learning requirements. Garrison (1997) suggests that learning resources and necessary support should be made available to accommodate different learning preferences and needs, allowing learners to proactively engage in their learning process. Since teachers mostly acquire their professional knowledge and skills within the institutions where they work, facilitating the process of teacher learning is a vital role for the organisations concerned (Kwakman, 2003).

Furthermore, the impact of teachers' collaboration on their professional learning has been acknowledged in various studies. According to Gergen (1995), learning occurs by actively engaging with, integrating, and critically examining others' perspectives, and interaction leads to new possibilities for interpretation. Similarly, Garrison (1997) notes that individual learners collaboratively construct meaning in a shared context in which they lead interactions forward to achieve their intended goals. In the context of TPL, Vrikki et al. (2017) maintain that creating a supportive atmosphere for collaborative group interactions is essential for successful learning processes. Moreover, Chea's (2022) study shows that Cambodian teachers highly value learning from others *in* interaction as a preferred method in the TPL process, highlighting the cultural significance of a supportive atmosphere for collaboration in their professional learning.

Another characteristic of SDL is that learners are capable of locating necessary resources to meet their learning needs. According to Garrison (1997, p. 24), self-monitoring involves the "monitoring [of] the repertoire of learning strategies as well as an awareness of and an ability to think about our thinking (plan and modify thinking according to the learning task/goal)." It

refers to the capability for self-evaluation and reflection on the knowledge needed, determining appropriate learning methods, and producing meaningful learning outcomes by incorporating new information into existing knowledge. Ultimately, self-monitoring focuses on establishing learning goals, ensuring they are achieved, and potentially resulting in planning for more meaningful future learning.

In the TPL context, to construct personal meaning in their professional growth, teachers need to be aware of a large inventory of learning activities and select suitable tasks and resources that will help them learn. Existing research on TPL has identified various types of activities (Bakkenes et al., 2010; Kyndt et al., 2016; Meirink et al., 2007; Meirink et al., 2009). In a recent study on Cambodian EFL teachers' informal professional learning, Chea (2022) reported instances of teachers evaluating and engaging with learning approaches that enhanced their classroom practice. Learning methods reported in the study include interactions with peers to exchange strategies for classroom management and share teaching materials (Chea, 2022).

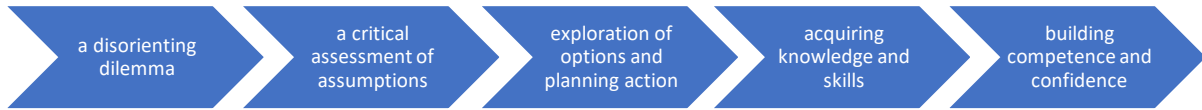
In Garrison's comprehensive model, motivation shapes the learner's values and predicts the learning goals they aim to achieve (Garrison, 1997). In the TPL context, motivation is fundamental for teachers as learners to initiate and sustain their engagement in the professional learning process in order to achieve their intended outcomes. Garrison (1997, pp. 26-27) categorises motivation as having different stages. Initially, he describes "entering motivation" as the process of deciding to participate in learning. Subsequently, learners are said to experience a "higher entering motivational state" when they perceive that achieving these learning goals and outcomes will meet their needs. Finally, Garrison refers to "task motivation" to denote the effort learners expend to remain focused and persistent. Moreover, Garrison underscores the fact that motivation significantly influences the other two elements—self-management and self-monitoring—within the comprehensive model of

SDL. While Garrison's (1997) theoretical model for self-directed learning could be used as a framework for studying TPL, Section 2.3.10 provides a justification for why it is not fully suitable for the Cambodian ELT context.

2.3.8 Transformative learning

Transformative learning theory, introduced by scholars such as Paulo Freire in 1970 and Jack Mezirow in 1978, is considered one of the key frameworks for understanding how adults learn and change their perspectives. Mezirow (1997, p. 5) defines transformative learning theory as “the process of effecting change in a frame of reference.” This theory refers to a method by which individuals alter their existing mindsets, assumptions, and perspectives—making them broader, more discerning, receptive, introspective, and emotionally adaptable to change (Mezirow, 1991, 2018). It involves a deep and significant change in how an individual understands and interprets the world around them, as well as their place in it (Cranton & King, 2003). A central aspect of transformative learning theory is the emphasis on critical reflection, questioning assumptions, and changing frames of reference (Cranton & King, 2003; Mezirow, 1991, 2018; E. Taylor, 2017).

According to Mezirow (1978, 2009, p. 19, 2018), the progressive steps in transformative learning begin with “a disorienting dilemma” that challenges existing perspectives. This is followed by critical reflection to examine and question beliefs and assumptions, rational discourse to explore and validate new perspectives, and ultimately, perspective transformation resulting in a fundamental shift in worldview and understanding (Green, 2023; Mezirow, 2009, 2018; E. Taylor, 2017). Figure 2 illustrates the key phases in transformative learning, adapted from Mezirow's work (1978, 2009, 2018). These phases are particularly relevant to TPL.

Figure 2*Phases in Transformative Learning*

(Mezirow, 1978, 2009, p. 19)

Transformative learning promotes personal growth by encouraging teachers to question and revise their beliefs and practices. In the context of professional practice among educators, workplace learning encompasses more than the mere acquisition of information. It involves the interpretation and integration of experiences, which can lead to transformative changes in beliefs, attitudes, or perspectives. As Cranton and King (2003) argue, the goal of professional learning should go beyond merely acquiring new skills, tools, or techniques; meaningful professional learning should fundamentally aim at changing how teachers think about and approach their practice. Transformative learning is often a lifelong process, with individuals continually revisiting and revising their beliefs as they encounter new experiences and information, resulting in fundamental changes in the way they think, feel, and act. This process is crucial for professional learning as it fosters critical reflection, leading to personal growth, increased empathy, and understanding (King, 2002).

As for research into Teacher Professional Learning, transformative learning theory holds significant potential for guiding such studies by providing a framework to understand and enhance the process. For instance, through the lens of transformative learning theory, Servage (2008) maintains that transformative learning for teachers is an active, reflective, and dynamic process involving continuous self-examination and adaptation. In this regard, teachers are encouraged to critically assess their beliefs and assumptions, articulate and

communicate their perspectives, engage in discussions to reconcile differing viewpoints, and be open to modifying their beliefs based on new insights and understandings. This approach fosters a deeper level of professional growth by promoting an environment where ongoing reflection and dialogue are central to development (Servage, 2008).

As an illustration of this, Nolan and Molla (2021) investigated how transformative learning could potentially build teacher professional capabilities within an Australian teaching context. Their study explored the ways in which transformative learning could contribute to the growth of teachers' professional skills and competencies, and they suggested that transformative learning offers valuable insights into how educators can achieve substantial growth and advancement in their practice.

Further expanding on the application of transformative learning theory, Cole and Duffy (2024) adapted Mezirow's (2009) conceptions to explore models which support the development of professional capital in trainee teachers. Their research highlighted the positive impact of "transformative pedagogy," which can empower learners to critically examine their contexts, beliefs, values, and knowledge (Cole & Duffy, 2024, p. 115). Participants in their study appreciated how this approach enhanced their professional knowledge and capabilities, thus demonstrating the practical benefits of transformative learning principles in educational settings.

Although transformative learning theory has made a significant contribution to understanding adult learning processes, while building upon Mezirow's foundational work, Taylor and Cranton (2013, p. 34) highlighted areas where further exploration could enhance the theory, particularly regarding "the role of experience" and "the desire to change." Their insights pointed to opportunities for continued development, while ensuring that the theory remained relevant and comprehensive as it evolved to address key emerging issues.

Similarly, a critical review of the literature from 2001 to 2016, focusing on Mezirow's conception of critical reflection in transformative learning, revealed several significant issues (E. Taylor, 2017). These included the necessity for a standardised approach to critical reflection, effective methods of assessment, the impact of emotions on the reflective process, and the role of journaling within the field (E. Taylor, 2017). While E. Taylor's review brought attention to the inherent challenges and gaps in past research, it also suggested that existing frameworks, though evolving, might still require further refinement to fully capture the complexities of critical reflection in transformative learning.

In addition, Boylan et al. (2023) recently examined transformative professional learning in relation to critical forms of teacher professionalism. Their analysis indicated that current approaches to transformative professional learning for teachers are too narrow. They advocate for a more comprehensive and well-rounded approach that incorporates elements such as clear purposes, solid knowledge foundations, and a deep understanding of the relationship between learners and knowledge. According to the authors, integrating these components would be more effective in fostering critical teacher agency and facilitating meaningful professional growth.

In this study, transformative learning is conceptualised as a learning process construct that enables deeper, reflective changes teachers may experience through the process. It enables analysis of whether Cambodian teachers' engagement in TPL leads to shifts in their professional identity, instructional beliefs, or understanding of their role. The theory also informs exploration into how teachers experience and respond to disorienting challenges—be they institutional, linguistic, or pedagogical—within their unique professional and cultural contexts.

2.3.9 Teacher efficacy

This section examines “Teacher Efficacy” as another key theoretical construct in understanding teachers’ perceptions of their professional growth and how this connects with Teacher Professional Learning. To begin, grounding in Social Learning Theory, Bandura (1997, p. 3) defined self-efficacy as “beliefs in one’s capabilities to [organise] and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments.” Building upon Bandura’s (1997) work, Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2001, p. 784) regarded a teacher’s efficacy belief as “a judgment of his or her capabilities to bring about desired outcomes of student engagement and learning, even among those students who may be difficult or unmotivated.” This refers to a teacher’s belief in their ability to effectively teach, motivate students, and positively impact their learning outcomes (Barni et al., 2019). However, as a self-reported construct, teacher efficacy appears to be directly unobservable, even though its effects on a teacher’s willingness to try new strategies or persevere through challenges can be evidenced.

In this regard, after noting persistent measurement problems in studying teacher efficacy, Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2001, p. 796) proposed a new measure of teacher efficacy called the Ohio State Teacher Efficacy Scale (OSTES), which was later renamed the Teachers’ Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES) (Duffin et al., 2012; Fives & Buehl, 2009). This scale has been used by a number of studies to measure teacher self-efficacy in educational research (Ayar, 2023; Gao et al., 2021; Wang et al., 2024). Audrin and Hascoët (2024), for example, adopted TSES to investigate how teachers’ self-perceived competence affects their persistence in the profession. The scale was also used to examine English as a foreign language teachers’ informal workplace learning profiles, as well as native and non-native teachers’ perceptions of self-efficacy in teaching EFL in China (Gao et al., 2021; Wang et al., 2024). Moreover, using the same tools, Heikonen et al. (2024) explored perceived preparedness for future school

closures and work-related stress in the teacher community during the COVID-19 pandemic in Finland.

In addition, teacher efficacy, or teachers' perceived confidence in their teaching abilities, has been linked to several significant educational outcomes. For teachers, several studies have suggested that such efficacy can support continuous improvement and professional growth. High level of efficacy can lead to greater persistence, enthusiasm, commitment, and effective instructional behaviours. Teachers are empowered to take ownership of their professional growth and embrace challenges (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). The studies conducted by Lazarides and Warner (2020) and Lap et al. (2022) also affirmed that teachers with this attribute were more willing to try new teaching methods, set higher goals for themselves, plan and organise more effectively, focus on problem-solving, seek help when needed, and adapt their teaching strategies in response to challenges. Higher teacher efficacy also positively impacted students' learning experience, resulting in improved achievement, higher motivation, and stronger self-belief in their learning capabilities (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001, 2007).

Despite being a powerful indicator of teachers' confidence, teacher efficacy studies are not likely to provide details of the specific experiences and strategies that shape their growth. Teacher efficacy provides insights into teachers' self-assessments of their capabilities, indicates where they believe they are in their professional journey, and can serve as a starting point for further growth (Bandura, 1997; Lap et al., 2022; Lazarides & Warner, 2020; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001, 2007; Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998). However, it offers limited information on the specific experiences, strategies, or approaches that contribute to their current level of efficacy. Consequently, it can be challenging for researchers to identify

the precise pathways or facilitations needed to advance their professional growth based solely on this construct of teacher efficacy.

In this study, teacher efficacy is understood as a learning outcome construct. It helps explore how Cambodian teachers perceive their own professional capabilities, and how these beliefs may relate to their willingness to engage in, sustain, or lead TPL activities. In contexts with limited formal development opportunities, teacher efficacy can signal internalised growth and readiness for further learning, even if the learning process itself is informal or self-directed.

2.3.10 Existing theories used in TPL research

In addition to the key theoretical constructs already reviewed in Teacher Professional Learning (TPL), my further review of existing studies indicates that such projects can be grounded in various theoretical foundations. As part of my review in this section I will discuss and critique a number of theoretical approaches.

For instance, Jacobs and Park's (2009) framework provides a comprehensive approach to workplace learning by incorporating essential variables such as location, planning, and facilitator roles. This holistic perspective recognises that workplace learning is shaped by multiple interconnected factors, offering a nuanced understanding of diverse learning contexts. A key strength of the framework is its integration of both formal and informal learning, acknowledging that learning occurs not only through structured training but also through every day, informal interactions. Its flexibility in accommodating both structured and self-directed learning experiences also makes it highly adaptable to various organisational needs.

On one hand, Jacobs and Park's (2009, p. 133) framework recognises the importance of "location of learning" as a key variable to address aspects of the complexity of workplace learning, such as organisational culture and social interactions. On the other hand, to further enrich its insights, the framework could more explicitly highlight the role of cultural, social, and individual factors within the context of location, as well as their interactions with the other variables. Moreover, while the framework's focus on "extent of planning" and "facilitator roles" offers valuable insights into structured learning environments, it could be further enriched by considering more decentralised or self-directed approaches, which would broaden its applicability in autonomous learning contexts. By slightly adjusting the balance between facilitator roles and learner autonomy, the framework could offer an even more comprehensive model that values both structured guidance and learner-driven growth.

In a similar way, so that they might capture the complex professional environments in which TPL occurs, Cameron et al. (2013) proposed a framework that offered a holistic view of how and why individual teachers engage with professional learning throughout their careers. According to the authors, by focusing on isolation, costs (educational and emotional), and the professional and personal stages of teachers' lives, the framework highlights key external influences shaping teachers' professional growth. However, in my view, this framework could be strengthened by incorporating internal factors such as teacher cognition, identity, and agency in learning, which play essential roles in how teachers internalise new knowledge. Additionally, expanding the framework to consider the impact of professional learning on classroom practice, as well as the importance of collaborative learning and professional communities, would enhance its applicability.

Attard Tonna and Shanks' (2017) work provides another example of a theoretical framework to guide research on TPL. Their study, which examined the role of the environment in Teacher

Professional Learning in Malta and Scotland, employed a situative and sociocultural perspective on learning. This theoretical approach highlighted the influence of contextual and cultural factors, as well as collaboration, in understanding how teachers learned within specific social and cultural settings. Similarly, Goodnough (2018) utilised the Cultural-Historical Activity Theory (CHAT) framework, recognising learning as a complex and social process, to explore and address contradictions in teachers' practice through professional learning in Canada. However, such frameworks could usefully be expanded to include a focus on the importance of teachers' awareness of their own repertoire of learning activities, which they rely on to develop particular teaching techniques.

In a different geographical context, Kvam (2018) used reflection theory to investigate how teachers' conversations with colleagues could potentially improve teacher learning in primary schools in Norway. Reflection theory views teachers' learning as a process which is initiated by perceived discomfort to search for a solution to a problem. It may also involve the practice of organising or re-organising existing knowledge in an attempt to solve an issue (Kvam, 2018). However, as Attard Tonna and Shanks (2017) argue, TPL is essentially shaped by both social and cultural contexts and professional identity. From this perspective, viewing Teacher Professional Learning through reflection theory can only give a partial picture of the practice.

Likewise, Garrison's (1997) comprehensive model for self-directed learning (as discussed above in Section 2.3.7) could be used as a theoretical framework to guide a study such as this one. This theoretical model can enable the investigator to understand teachers' perceptions of learning activities, how teachers acquire the resources and necessary support needed for their professional learning and their cognitive and metacognitive (decision-making) processes used for evaluating the learning outcomes. This framework may also help the researcher to recognise observable components aligned with those identified in the model in order to

explain the events of professional learning and the associated variables to answer the research questions.

Garrison's (1997) SDL model has been adopted in several recent research projects across various educational contexts and levels. For example, Palaniappan and Noor (2022) reported a significant improvement in self-management, self-monitoring, and motivation—the three interactive dimensions identified in Garrison's (1997) SDL model—when learners from a Southeast Asian country engaged in specific learning activities in an online environment. Similarly, Sun et al. (2022) applied this framework to investigate learner engagement in online learning environments in China, while Kemp et al. (2022) examined self-directed learning as a collaborative model in a medical school in the United States of America. Moreover, Wittmann and Olivier (2021) highlighted the importance of self-directed learning in teacher professional development programmes by applying this SDL model to their recent study within a language teaching context in South Africa.

In the Cambodian English language teaching context, where the current study took place, Garrison's (1997) comprehensive theoretical model could potentially provide a practical starting point for guiding the project. However, it must be acknowledged that the theoretical foundation is primarily Western-oriented (Abd-El-Fattah, 2010; Garrison, 1997). It is essential to investigate the practical applications of Garrison's SDL model in non-Western contexts in order to assess the generalisability of findings based on Western samples (Abd-El-Fattah, 2010; Ahmad & Majid, 2010). Additionally, my project highlighted the aspects of TPL which were noteworthy in my geographical context, by placing particular emphasis on the learning activities involved and their direct impact on teaching practice.

While Garrison's (1997) model provides valuable insights into this process, it could be enhanced by a more detailed exploration of the teachers' learning approaches and their

specific effects on teaching practice. Moreover, although Garrison (1997) acknowledges collaboration to some degree, the model could benefit from further attention to the highly collaborative nature of effective TPL, which often involves collective enquiry, shared reflection, and community-based learning experiences. In light of these considerations, a more suitable framework might explicitly address the specific learning methods, collaborative nature, contextual factors, and observable impacts that are characteristic of robust TPL.

Moreover, while all the key theoretical constructs in TPL reviewed earlier hold significant potential to guide a study of this nature, none of these constructs, when considered individually, is sufficient to serve as a comprehensive framework for the current research. This limitation arises from their unsuitability due to the scope of the current study and the specific cultural context in which this project is situated. However, these constructs collectively provide a comprehensive lens for understanding TPL. The subsequent section introduces a proposed conceptual framework that maps the interconnections among the reviewed constructs and outlines how they collectively contribute to understanding the process of TPL.

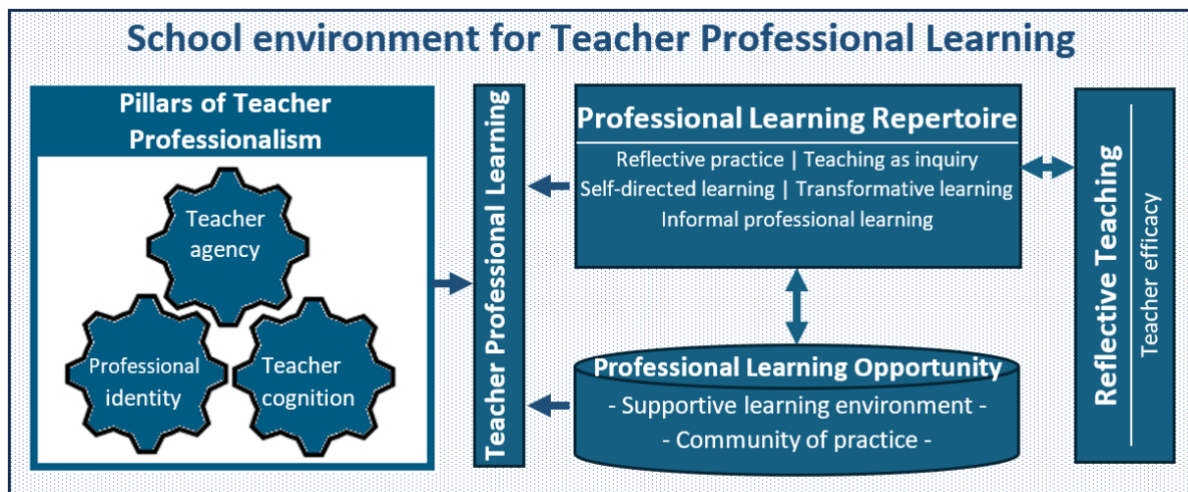
2.3.11 Conceptual framework

My proposed conceptual framework for this study depicts the process of Teacher Professional Learning. It is grounded in the interrelationships among the key constructs reviewed in Sections 2.3.1 to 2.3.9, which together provide a foundational understanding of TPL. The framework illustrates how the interconnectedness of teacher cognition, teacher agency and professional identity underpins teacher professionalism. It also acknowledges the importance of reflective practice, self-directed learning, and transformative learning among other professional learning strategies. These elements are further facilitated by a Community of Practice and other professional learning opportunities. Ultimately, this process may lead to increased teacher efficacy. Central to the framework is the influence of the school

environment, which shapes and supports the entire process of professional learning—from its inception through to its outcomes. Figure 3 offers a visual representation of the proposed conceptual framework.

Figure 3

Conceptual Framework of Teacher Professional Learning



Explanation of the Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework integrates the key constructs reviewed in this section, offering insights into how the interconnectedness of these theories influences the process of TPL. It displays the dynamic and evolving nature of professional growth within a specific school context, which significantly shapes all elements of the proposed model.

The first part of the proposed conceptual framework – the *Pillars of Teacher Professionalism* – recognises the interconnected elements of teacher cognition, teacher professional identity, and teacher agency as foundational components of teacher professionalism (Bandura, 2001, 2006; Beijaard et al., 2004; Biesta et al., 2015; Borg, 2003; Emirbayer & Mische, 1998; Flores & Day, 2006; Hallinger et al., 2019). This triad, when working in harmony, ignites and fuels their professional learning process. Teachers’ beliefs, knowledge, and attitudes (cognition),

coupled with their deeply held values and commitments to their teaching roles (identity), empower them to exercise ownership and make informed decisions (agency). This dynamic interplay fundamentally shapes the conceptual framework's notion of a *Proactive Teacher*, influences teachers' approaches to their profession and serves as a catalyst for meaningful professional growth.

The second component, *Professional Learning Repertoire*, refers to the collection of teaching strategies, activities, and practices that educators use to facilitate their professional learning (See Section 1.4). It includes both formal and informal methods aimed at enhancing professional growth. Informed by the key constructs reviewed above (Sections 2.3.1 – 2.3.9) and existing literature, a teacher's *Professional Learning Repertoire* may incorporate adult learning theories, such as self-directed and transformative learning, alongside approaches like reflective practice and teaching as inquiry, and other methods of TPL (Caffarella, 1993; Ermeling, 2010; Farrell, 2011; Freire, 1970; Garrison, 1997; Meirink et al., 2007; Meirink et al., 2009; Schön, 1983; Timperley et al., 2014).

The third component is the *Professional Learning Opportunities* available within the work context. This element highlights the importance of meaningful collegial interaction, collaborative learning, and support networks in fostering teacher professional growth. It may also involve unstructured professional learning, with engagement further enhanced through participation in a Community of Practice, providing a collaborative space for teachers to share concerns, solve problems, and collectively improve their practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1999).

This type of professional learning journey ultimately leads to an outcome of *Reflective Teaching*. At this stage, teachers develop a stronger belief in their ability to positively impact student learning, that is, teacher efficacy (Bandura, 1991, 1997; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy,

2001). The conceptual framework highlights the importance of sustainability in TPL by emphasising a feedback loop from *Reflective Teaching* back to the foundational stages, where teachers revisit their core principles to reinforce the cycle of professional growth. However, it is crucial to recognise that engagement in this loop is neither uniform nor mandatory. Teachers, depending on their individual stage of professional growth, learning preferences, contextual factors, and personal goals, may engage with the feedback loop to varying degrees and at different frequencies. This framework acknowledges teachers' agency in navigating their professional growth journey and encourages a flexible approach to utilising the feedback loop as a tool for continuous improvement.

As demonstrated in the visual representation of the conceptual framework (Figure 3 above), the *Pillars of Teacher Professionalism* serve as the foundation for ongoing professional learning, which ultimately results in *Reflective Teaching* within a specific school context. This conceptual framework also recognises that it is primarily the contextual environment, which encompasses factors such as the school's culture, norms within the community, and available resources, which collectively shapes teachers' professional learning experiences. Furthermore, the framework highlights the role of both *Professional Learning Repertoire* and *Learning Opportunities* in this process. While the *Professional Learning Opportunities* can intertwine with the *Professional Learning Repertoire* to support teachers' professional growth, the framework also acknowledges that progress can continue even in the absence of abundant *Learning Opportunities*. In such cases, the *Pillars* alone can propel teachers to draw on their *Professional Learning Repertoire* for sustained growth.

The conceptual framework presented in this study is consistent with the key tenets of Ecological Systems Theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1977), in that it accounts for how teacher learning is influenced by nested systems of interaction. While not explicitly framed through

this theory, the framework acknowledges the meso- and macro-level factors—such as collegial dynamics, institutional support, and cultural expectations—that shape professional learning in the Cambodian HE context. This ecological awareness highlights the importance of understanding TPL as a context-sensitive and systemically influenced process.

2.4 A Review of Teacher Professional Learning Research

Teacher Professional Learning is a complex process influenced by both internal and external factors (Asterhan & Lefstein, 2024; Cirkony et al., 2024; Kennedy, 2014; Opfer & Pedder, 2011a, 2011b; Timperley, 2008). Numerous studies have examined the conditions that affect teachers' professional growth (Bellibaş & Gümüş, 2023; Coffie et al., 2019; Furner & McCulla, 2019; Hayes et al., 2024; Koffeman & Snoek, 2019; Malone, 2024; Pinar et al., 2021). For instance, Bellibaş and Gümüş (2023) found that the overall school context in Turkey significantly predicts teachers' engagement in professional learning. Research into teachers' perceptions of their professional growth further reveals the interconnected factors that co-shape this process. These include motivational factors (Geijsel et al., 2009; Pokhrel, 2022; Thoonen et al., 2011; Zhang et al., 2021), the types of professional learning activities they engage in (Geletu & Mihiretie, 2023; Hallinger et al., 2023; Topkaya & Celik, 2016; Saud, 2023), and the perceived impact of this learning on their teaching practice (Al Asmari, 2016; Alruqi & Alharbi, 2022; Er, 2024; Geletu & Mihiretie, 2023; Wichadee, 2011; Zeichner & Liston, 2014). These findings not only deepen the understanding of the TPL process but also provide a foundation for further exploration.

To provide a solid foundation for current knowledge on Teacher Professional Learning, this section reviews the key studies that have explored various aspects of the process. It begins by examining the factors that motivate teachers to engage in professional learning. Following this, the types of learning activities teachers participate in offer insights into how they pursue

continuous professional development. Additionally, the environment that enables professional learning is critical to understanding how this process unfolds. Ultimately, a comprehensive understanding of these factors is expected to lead to a clearer understanding of the role institutions play in offering support for TPL.

2.4.1 Teachers' motivation for professional learning

Motivation plays a key role in influencing teachers' participation in professional learning activities (Bolhuis & Voeten, 2004; Durksen et al., 2017; Heystek & Terhoven, 2015; Proudfoot & Boyd, 2022; Ryan & Deci, 2000, 2020). Recognising this importance, researchers have sought to identify the conditions that drive teachers' engagement in professional learning (Abakah, 2023a, 2023b; Appova & Arbaugh, 2018; Dixit, 2022; Geijsel et al., 2009; Harper-Hill et al., 2022; Louws et al., 2017; McMillan et al., 2016; Truong & Murray, 2019). As a further example, Kwakman (2003, p. 158) categorises those motivational elements as "personal, task-related, and work environment factors." The author discusses these three elements in greater detail:

(1) Personal factors encompass elements such as professional attitudes, perceptions of feasibility and meaningfulness, and a feeling of personal achievement; (2) Task factors are associated with factors such as work pressure, job diversity, and the extent of involvement in decision-making processes; and (3) the work environment (discussed later in in Section 2.4.2) also plays a critical role, with management support, collegial support, and intentional learning support (p. 158).

This section reviews some key motivational conditions that are likely to influence Cambodian English language teachers to engage in professional learning. To begin with, there is evidence that one of the motivational factors for TPL identified in the literature is a fundamental personal interest. For instance, a study by Heystek and Terhoven (2015) highlights the crucial role of motivation in teachers' professional growth, particularly in underperforming schools facing contextual challenges in South Africa. In alignment with this finding, Louws et al. (2017) identify an interest in learning (i.e., something is fun to learn) as intrinsic motivation for

engaging in professional learning activities. Similarly, McMillan et al. (2016) report that a personal commitment to improving one's teaching is a significant factor which drives teachers in Ireland to pursue ongoing professional development.

Studies also indicate that self-esteem can play a significant role in propelling teachers' engagement in their professional learning (Appova & Arbaugh, 2018; Heystek & Terhoven, 2015; Motallebzadeh & Kazemi, 2018; Proudfoot & Boyd, 2022; Tabassum et al., 2011; Yağan et al., 2022). For example, in addition to identifying passion for teaching as a key motivator for South African teachers, Heystek and Terhoven (2015) also highlight self-esteem as another motivational factor for TPL. Likewise, a study by Appova and Arbaugh (2018) shows that teachers' dissatisfaction with their teaching and students' learning drive them to engage in professional improvement. Specifically, the teachers internalise images of "perfect" teaching and teachers, constantly comparing themselves to these ideals – their perceived shortcomings motivating them to pursue professional development to become "better" teachers (Appova & Arbaugh, 2018, p. 5). Similarly, Motallebzadeh and Kazemi (2018) maintain that self-esteem plays a key role in motivating teachers' professional practice and continuous learning, as it influences the teachers' willingness to communicate and share knowledge. Moreover, as Yağan et al. (2022) assert, teachers with high self-esteem tend to be genuinely motivated to adopt changes and innovations, are open to implementing new learning, and actively support students by giving them more responsibility in their learning process.

Another key factor influencing teachers' professional growth is their belief in their own abilities, known as self-efficacy. Self-efficacy refers to teachers' confidence in their capacity to teach successfully (Barni et al., 2019). As discussed earlier in Section 2.3.9, it plays a crucial role in shaping their attitudes towards personal development and their willingness to engage

in learning opportunities. Furthermore, this construct empowers teachers by fostering confidence in their capabilities, motivating them to take ownership of their growth, and actively seek improvement (Barni et al., 2019; Geijsel et al., 2009; Lazarides & Warner, 2020; Lap et al., 2022; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). Additionally, previous studies, including those by Geijsel et al. (2009), Thoonen et al. (2011), and Zhang et al. (2021), provide strong evidence that teachers' sense of self-efficacy is one of the most significant motivational factors driving their engagement in professional learning.

In addition, a teacher's conception about acquiring knowledge refers to the beliefs and perspectives that teachers hold about the process of learning and teaching (Barni et al., 2019; Bolhuis & Voeten, 2004). This construct significantly influences teachers' engagement in their professional growth (Bolhuis & Voeten, 2004; Dejene, 2020; Rojas et al., 2023). For example, Zhang et al. (2021) found that teachers' views on their own learning ability propel their engagement in professional learning. This was later confirmed by Rojas et al. (2023), who highlighted a direct link between these conceptions and teachers' motivations to improve their practice and stay up to date in their field.

Additional factors such as teachers' sense of accountability and responsibility is considered a crucial driving force behind their engagement in professional learning. Researchers such as Louws et al. (2017) and McMillan et al. (2016) emphasise that teachers often participate in professional learning due to a strong sense of duty towards their students and the teaching profession. Similarly, Proudfoot and Boyd (2022) argue that teachers driven by a strong sense of duty towards their students and the profession are motivated to engage in professional learning due to their commitment to both.

However, teachers' engagement with professional learning can often be driven by external pressures. In particular, previous research studies highlight that compliance with

requirements is a key external factor influencing teachers' participation in such activities (McMillan et al., 2016; Njenga, 2023; Truong & Murray, 2019). In addition, Louws et al. (2017) suggest that teachers may only engage in professional learning due to expectations from management and colleagues. In a similar vein, Truong and Murray (2019) observed that compliance with requirements is also a significant factor for Vietnamese EFL teachers participating in an online professional development programme. Furthermore, Amponsah et al. (2023), who examined the motivational factors of 352 in-service teachers in Ghana, found that the intention to meet job requirements—such as staying current with subject matter, curriculum knowledge, and assessment practices—were the top motivators for continuous professional learning. Similarly, Njenga (2023) found that compliance with requirements is one of four primary motives driving Kenyan teachers to engage in professional learning activities.

2.4.2 Teacher Professional Learning environment

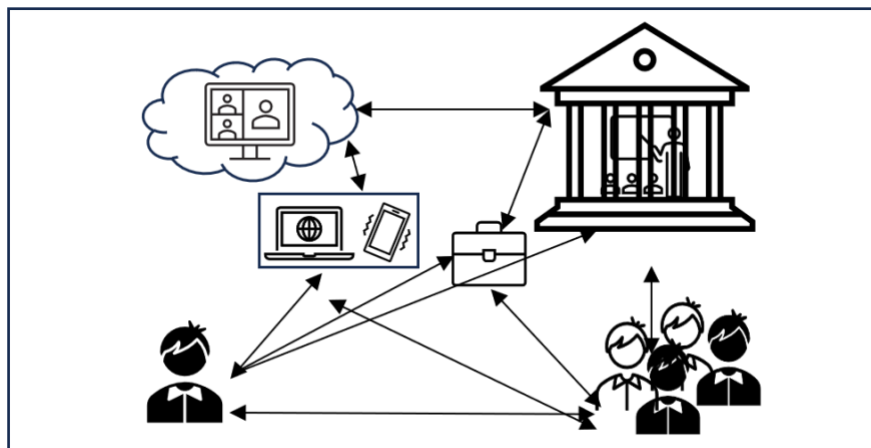
A comprehensive understanding of workplace learning requires consideration of various environmental factors. According to Fuller et al. (2007), a 'learning environment' in the workplace encompasses not only the physical and virtual spaces but also the organisation of work and the social and technical relations within it. The authors highlight the significance of understanding the dynamic context in which workplace learning takes place, noting how regulatory, sectoral, and organisational characteristics impact the types of learning and knowledge accessible to employees. This perspective is further supported by Rusticus et al. (2020), who assert that a learning environment, defined as comprising the psychological, social, cultural, and physical settings, plays a crucial role in influencing learners' motivation and success. Figure 4 provides a visual representation of the interaction between various

factors—such as physical settings, virtual space, and social dynamics—that collectively shape a comprehensive learning environment in the workplace.

The environment in which teachers work plays a key role in shaping their learning opportunities; more importantly understanding this dynamic context is crucial for fully appreciating how teacher learning happens in practice (Fuller et al., 2007; Timperley et al., 2019). In line with this, Opfer and Pedder (2011a) suggest that Teacher Professional Learning is conceptualised as a complex system comprising three subsystems: the teacher, the school, and the learning activity. These subsystems interact in dynamic ways, suggesting that

Figure 4

Interaction of Physical, Virtual, and Social Factors in Shaping Workplace Learning Environments



(Adapted from Fuller et al., 2007; Rusticus et al., 2020)

understanding teacher learning requires a holistic consideration of how these elements influence one another (Opfer & Pedder, 2011a, 2011b). Additionally, the environment is considered to have such importance due to the situated nature of professional learning within the specific social environment of the teacher's workplace (Attard Tonna & Shanks, 2017).

In fact, different learning environments significantly influence the opportunities for participation and the pedagogical approaches employed (Fuller et al., 2007). In the context of TPL, variations in these environments also shape the modalities for learning. According to the literature, such modalities can encompass synchronous or asynchronous formats, delivered through face-to-face, online, or blended modes. Face-to-face and synchronous learning are traditionally paired and considered to foster direct interaction and immediate feedback (Grosemans et al., 2015; Meirink et al., 2007; Meirink et al., 2009). However, synchronous learning can also be conducted online, replicating such immediacy through virtual tools and bridging the gap between distance and real-time engagement (Lantz-Andersson et al., 2018; Prestridge, 2019; Trust et al., 2018). Vanoostveen et al. (2019), for instance, explore how collaborative online learning environments affect teachers' knowledge. Additionally, a study by Wang and Zhang (2023) exemplifies this process and highlights a relationship between the quality of teachers' online learning and their self-efficacy and learning achievement.

Similarly, asynchronous learning was traditionally associated with activities such as reading articles, watching recorded videos, or attending lectures—forms of learning from others without interaction (Bakkenes et al., 2010; Enthoven et al., 2023; Grosemans et al., 2015; Meirink et al., 2007). However, these processes have increasingly transitioned to online or blended formats, allowing participants to engage with content at their own pace. This shift enables personalised learning paths and offers the convenience of remote access (Ahmad et al., 2023; Singh et al., 2022). It is also noted that blended learning integrates both synchronous and asynchronous modes, combining the benefits of real-time interaction (whether face-to-face or online) with the flexibility of asynchronous activities (Cowan & Farrell, 2023; Mohammadi, 2023; Richards, 2017a).

The evolution of learning technologies has not only transformed traditional asynchronous learning methods but has also sparked a growing interest in the impact of virtual learning environments on teacher professional development. Lantz-Andersson et al. (2018) conducted a review of 52 studies and found that online teacher communities are particularly valuable. These communities not only provide information and updates on good practices but also support informal learning (Ab Rashid et al., 2016; Trust et al., 2018). Moreover, with the rise of smartphones, tablets, and high-speed internet, researchers are particularly keen to examine the benefits of social media for Teacher Professional Learning (Ab Rashid et al., 2016; Collins et al., 2016; Jones & Dexter, 2014; Kamalodeen & Jameson-Charles, 2016; Kind & Evans, 2015; McGowan et al., 2012; Prestridge, 2019; Puijenbroek et al., 2014). For instance, early career teachers have been found to enhance their professional learning networks through social media to address challenges, obtain instructional support, and engage socially with colleagues (Staudt Willet, 2024).

2.4.3 Support for Teacher Professional Learning

Maintaining the momentum of Teacher Professional Learning heavily depends on an organisational infrastructure that supports the process (Eraut, 2000, 2004; Timperley, 2008). To fully grasp how work contexts influence the TPL process, this section explores types and levels of support workplace environments offer for TPL. As a survey, Enthoven et al.'s (2023) meta-ethnographic study provides valuable insights into TPL within the workplace. The researchers analysed 51 articles published between 2000 and 2020, indicating that teachers' workplaces offer diverse learning opportunities and should be viewed as multifaceted environments encompassing school, personal, and virtual spaces. Emphasising the workplace's intrinsic relationship with learning, rather than viewing it as a passive set of conditions, the authors propose a more context-sensitive understanding of TPL. This

perspective aligns with Joo et al.'s (2011) argument that a positive organisational atmosphere is characterised by supportive work structures and shared beliefs and values.

In an earlier study, Kwakman (2003, pp. 157 – 158) had identified three key factors within the work environment that can positively influence the TPL process: *management support*, *collegial support* and *intentional learning support* (emphasis in original). First, collegial support is referred to as the helpful social interaction among colleagues within the work context (Kwakman, 2003). This kind of support includes both instrumental and social-emotional aspects of assistance provided by fellow teachers. Joo et al. (2011) characterise this notion as a dynamic process that not only involves the provision of assistance to colleagues in their learning endeavours but also actively supports the integration of acquired knowledge into professional tasks.

Numerous other studies have emphasised the critical role that social interaction, particularly collegial support, plays in fostering TPL (Abakah, 2023b; Dooner et al., 2008; Owen, 2014; Sinnayah et al., 2023; Thomas et al., 2019; Zhang et al., 2021). They suggest that it is essential for teachers working in similar contexts to participate in professional learning activities together, fostering an interactive learning community where more experienced members can support less experienced colleagues (Desimone, 2011; Driver et al., 1994; Kennedy, 2014; Steyn, 2017).

Within this process of workplace learning, teachers can support each other through various forms of interaction. Charner-Laird et al. (2016, pp. 2-3) identify three types of collegial interactions that serve as key sources of support for teachers' informal professional learning: (1) *aid and assistance*; (2) *sharing*; and (3) *critical dialogue* (emphasis in original). *Aid and assistance* refer to collegial interactions in which teachers individually seek advice from their peers. According to the authors, these types of interactions may generate teaching ideas but

do not provide the opportunity for further discussion and collaboration on those ideas. *Critical dialogue*, on the other hand, involves teachers actively participating in in-depth discussions about their teaching practice, going beyond the mere sharing of materials or ideas (Charner-Laird et al., 2016).

Meaningful collegial interactions are essential for fostering collaborative learning and professional growth among teachers. Key elements that drive these interactions include mutual trust, frequent communication, and physical proximity, all of which are particularly important when aiming for effective collaboration (Desimone, 2011; Liu et al., 2016; Ninković et al., 2022; Sinnayah et al., 2023; Thoonen et al., 2011; Vangrieken et al., 2015). Trust allows teachers to feel comfortable sharing their challenges, while frequent interaction ensures consistent support, and proximity facilitates spontaneous and informal exchanges that strengthen these relationships.

To promote or facilitate such interactions, a Community of Practice (see Section 2.3.4) offers a valuable platform for teachers to engage in collaborative learning (Cohen et al., 2015; Irgens et al., 2023; Mehdizadeh et al., 2023; Tang & Ye, 2023; Wenger, 1998). As Long (2004) also observes, educators who seek professional growth tend to seek out colleagues who share their commitment to learning and openness to change, making CoP a natural environment for fostering these connections. However, it is important to acknowledge factors beyond individual control that can influence collegial support. Building trust and fostering open communication, for example, can only thrive in a safe working environment, which relies on management and institutional leadership (Sinnayah et al., 2023).

Therefore, another key factor within the work environment that can positively influence the TPL process is support from management (Kwakman, 2003). This concept involves school leaders actively recognising the importance of TPL and facilitating the application of that

knowledge within their teaching contexts. Kwakman (2003, p. 157) refers to “management support” as the extent of helpful social interactions available from managers in the work context, which includes both instrumental and social-emotional aspects. Supporting this idea, researchers consistently assert the fundamental responsibility of school leaders in creating conditions that motivate, engage, and sustain teachers’ ongoing learning (Grosemans et al., 2015; Hallinger et al., 2019; Kang & Cheng, 2014; Lockwood, 2018; McMillan et al., 2016; Tran et al., 2018; Zhang et al., 2021).

To enhance their teachers’ engagement in the professional learning process, school leaders can provide management support in various capacities. For example, Grosemans et al. (2015) conducted a study in Belgium on the relationship between Teacher Professional Learning and school culture, highlighting two key strategies for school leaders: “Give teachers the time to try out a new method and ask them afterwards what their impressions were” or “stimulating teachers to reflect on their own teaching” (p. 158). Additionally, Tran et al. (2018) emphasise that practices related to observation and feedback among principals and teachers, as well as peer interactions, serve as vital forms of learning support, underscoring the value of collaborative learning environments.

The third factor for enhancing Teacher Professional Learning is intentional learning support within the work environment. Kwakman (2003, p. 158) emphasises the necessity for “intentional learning support” to create opportunities for meaningful professional learning. This support involves institutions explicitly encouraging teachers to engage in professional learning activities, thereby fostering a more conducive environment for growth. In line with this recommendation, Attard Tonna and Shanks (2017) argue that teacher communities, for example, require deliberate initiation and facilitation by their institutions to ensure they are valued.

Intentional learning support can be conceptualised at three levels: basic, technical, and strategic. First, the basic level involves foundational support, such as access to resources and time for professional learning. For example, Penuel et al. (2007) highlight the importance of allowing teachers time to plan for implementing the content of professional development workshops, along with providing necessary technical support throughout the process. Similarly, Attard Tonna and Shanks (2017) observe that only when school schedules allocate sufficient time can teachers meet to engage in collective reflection and collegial sharing of practices, as individual teachers often have limited control over their time in order to overcome these constraints.

Second, the technical level encompasses management-led structured programmes and training designed to enhance specific skills and knowledge among educators. To support this, Kwakman (2003) recommends providing resources and assistance for activities such as experimenting, reflecting, and collaborating, tailored to teachers' needs. These activities not only build teachers' capacities but also foster a culture of continuous improvement.

Finally, the strategic level focuses on aligning professional learning with school goals. Studies emphasise that institutional support—including school infrastructure, culture, and work arrangements—strategically impact teachers' engagement in TPL (Belay et al., 2021; Grosemans et al., 2015; Kwakman, 2003; Shirrell et al., 2019). In addition, Hallinger et al. (2019, p. 353) illustrate how to cultivate a learning-supportive school culture by emphasising the need to “activate” teachers' sense of agency. This activation is believed to influence their motivation to engage in professional learning and, ultimately, to make the role of trust more evident in enhancing the TPL process.

It is also important to consider the variety of TPL activities as discussed in Section 2.4.4, and how these differences influence the support teachers might adopt. Hoekstra et al. (2009)

recommend that institutions tailor support to meet the specific requirements that enhance TPL. The authors exemplify this by describing how teachers engaged in ongoing experimentation and collaboration benefit from being supported in their efforts. They argue that providing opportunities for peer interaction, sharing learning experiences, and accessing learning resources can enhance these teachers' professional growth. Hoekstra et al. (2009) further illustrate how support can be differentiated by addressing the needs of teachers who work in relative isolation and face unexpected challenges. They advocate for creating a safe learning environment where these teachers can experiment with new practices, receive guidance in interpreting classroom situations, and have their immediate concerns addressed.

2.4.4 Teacher Professional Learning approaches

A review of the literature suggests that educators develop their professional knowledge through both formal and informal learning approaches (Ab Rashid et al., 2016; Hermansen, 2016; Kvam, 2018). In examining these approaches, researchers have classified various types of professional learning activities adopted by teachers (Bakkenes et al., 2010; Kyndt et al., 2016; Meirink et al., 2009). For example, Richards and Farrell (2005) describe teacher learning activities such as attending workshops, self-monitoring, teacher support groups, keeping a teaching journal, peer observation, and action research. Expanding on these categorisations, Kyndt et al. (2016, p. 1122) identify 129 distinct professional learning activities from a range of different studies, listing the most common as reading professional literature, observation, collaboration with colleagues, reflection, learning by doing/through experience, and experimenting, among others. In contrast, Hallinger et al. (2023) present nine specific Teacher Professional Learning activities within the Vietnamese social, political, and cultural context, including degree-upgrading courses, weekly professional meetings, seminars, and mentoring.

Similar to the complexity of conceptualising Teacher Professional Learning itself, the terminology used to describe and label professional learning activities poses another challenge. The variation in terminologies and inconsistencies in definitions across the literature underscore the difficulties in standardising key professional learning approaches. In the remaining part of this section, I will review key TPL activities and synthesise any diverse perspectives to establish a consistent approach for coding, interpreting, and discussing the data throughout this thesis.

Doing

This type of activity refers to teachers' daily practice, where they rely on teaching methods that they find effective and appropriate for their classroom context, often without the explicit intention to learn (Meirink et al., 2007). Similarly, Bakkenes et al. (2010) describe this approach as "avoiding learning," highlighting the fact that some teachers believe learning new concepts is unnecessary for their teaching. These observations align with a previous study by Van Eekelen et al. (2006, p. 408), which classifies a specific group of teachers as those who do "not see the need to learn," because these educators seldom question their existing knowledge and beliefs. Furthermore, in a subsequent study, Meirink et al. (2009, p. 213) reframe the activity of 'doing' as "trusting one's own intuitions and feelings," indicating that teachers persist in their established methods because they perceive no need for change.

Experimentation

Experimentation involves teachers deliberately implementing new teaching methods in their classrooms whilst engaging in reflective practice (Bakkenes et al., 2010). Meirink et al. (2009, p.213) suggest it is essentially about "trying different things and seeing where they go." By engaging in this process, teachers can assess whether various activities, methods, or materials are suitable for their specific teaching context. This approach is often driven by factors such

as feedback—both positive and negative—as well as spontaneous decisions to explore new teaching techniques (Bakkenes et al., 2010).

Moreover, experimentation as an activity of Teacher Professional Learning is frequently emphasised in educational research (Grosemans et al., 2015; Kwakman, 2003; Louws et al., 2017). For instance, in a study that examined key factors for successful school environments, Little (1982) reported that the teachers appreciated and engaged in experimentation as a way to try out new strategies or ideas for teaching. Echoing this result, a study by Thoonen et al. (2011) suggested that teachers' engagement in professional learning activities, one of which involved experimenting, was a powerful predictor of teaching practices.

Reflection

It is important to distinguish between 'reflection' as a professional learning approach and 'reflective practice,' which was discussed in Section 2.3.5, as one of the nine key theoretical constructs. In this context, reflection involves teachers consciously and actively examining their own teaching practices, whether in a structured or informal manner (Bakkenes et al., 2010; Farrell, 2013). Meirink et al. (2009, p. 213) describe it as "critical individual reflection to develop an appropriate approach," while Bakkenes et al. (2010, p. 539) refer to it as "considering one's own practice." Although various researchers have labelled this process differently, the underlying concept remains consistent, and this study refers to and describe the process as 'reflection on experiences.'

In fact, reflection has been proven to be a crucial professional learning activity that significantly enhances teacher professional growth. Thoonen et al. (2011), for instance, assert that when teachers engage in reflective practices, it positively impacts their teaching methods, leading to improved outcomes in the classroom. Furthermore, Enthoven et al. (2023) highlight that reflecting on daily actions during classroom activities offers teachers

valuable opportunities to learn from their experiences, enabling them to adapt and refine their practices effectively. Nonetheless, MacPhail et al. (2024, p. 597) additionally emphasise the importance of having a “critical friend”—a colleague or mentor who provides constructive feedback. Such support not only stimulates deeper reflection but also encourages educators to critically assess their practices and seek continuous improvement.

Learning from others in interaction

As previously discussed in Section 1.4, the use of the preposition ‘in’ within the phrase ‘learning from others in interaction’ is intentionally employed to emphasise that learning occurs during the process of exchange or reciprocal communication with others (Grosemans et al., 2015; Meirink et al., 2007; Meirink et al., 2009). As a result, Meirink et al. (2007, p. 155) refer to “learning from others in interaction” as encompassing activities such as “brainstorming, discussing, exchanging (experiences with) teaching methods, asking questions about colleagues’ experiences or experiments, and receiving feedback from colleagues on their own experiences or experiments.” Likewise, Richards (2017a) further emphasises that teachers can enhance their learning by engaging with experts in semi-structured interviews, which involve not just questioning but also reflective dialogue throughout the interaction. This process closely resembles what Meirink et al. (2009, p. 213) refer to as “asking colleagues for advice.” In addition to informal exchanges, “learning from others in interaction” can be more formally structured through a Community of Practice (see Section 2.3.4), in which the members of the community interact to exchange knowledge or collaboratively address professional challenges (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998; Wenger et al., 2002).

The role of interaction in promoting teachers’ professional growth has been examined in various research studies, particularly within the notion of a CoP as a platform for fostering

teacher learning (De Jong et al., 2022; Fonseca-Chacana, 2019; Kohnke, 2021; Johnston, 2016; Little, 1982; Nguyen, 2017; Premier & Parr, 2019; Yim & Ahn, 2018). In addition, Kyndt et al. (2016) and Grosemans et al. (2015) highlight the value of sharing teaching materials and resources as a key part of these exchanges. It has also been suggested that there is a link between meaningful dialogue, teacher collaboration, and professional learning (Iraola et al., 2024; Khong et al., 2023). In workplaces where teachers are given opportunities to share experiences, observe each other's practices, and engage in joint problem-solving, they are more likely to foster deeper learning and knowledge exchange (De Jong et al., 2022; Khasawneh et al., 2023; Pischetola et al., 2023; Sinnayah et al., 2023).

Learning from others without interaction

'Learning from others without interaction' refers to a method in which teachers acquire knowledge and skills indirectly from other educators or professionals without direct communication or collaboration. This process involves activities such as observation, listening to presentations, and reading (Enthoven et al., 2023; Grosemans et al., 2015; Meirink et al., 2007). Later, Meirink et al. (2009, p. 213) expanded this category to include "gathering information from the Internet." Richards (2017a) further suggests that this type of professional learning includes watching teaching videos available on platforms like YouTube, as well as attending conferences. Similarly, Bakkenes et al. (2010, p. 540) identify examples such as reading a book, attending a lecture, and observing a colleague in action as instances of "getting ideas from others" performed individually.

2.4.5 Critiques of Teacher Professional Learning

A number of potential challenges associated with encouraging teacher-initiated professional learning to enhance their professional growth have been highlighted in previous studies. First, researchers are concerned that schools, especially those that are under-resourced, may

struggle to dedicate the necessary time and resources to maintain this continuous process over time (Azaza et al., 2023; Drago-Severson & Pinto, 2009; Opfer & Pedder, 2011b; Ventista & Brown, 2023). These concerns are based on the observation that the sustainable facilitation of continuous professional learning is a collective effort grounded in practice and aligned with the vision of the work context (Bendtsen et al., 2022). More importantly, effective TPL often relies on access to resources such as facilitators, coaches, or technology. In other words, the success of TPL hinges on strong leadership that fosters a collaborative environment and empowers teachers. Schools with inadequate leadership or limited resources might struggle to allow teachers to implement TPL effectively (Pedder & Opfer, 2011).

Additionally, isolation, along with time and workload constraints, are potential obstacles for teachers engaging in professional learning. Cameron et al. (2013, p. 377) observe that “isolation,” whether geographic or professional, is one of the key factors influencing teachers’ engagement in their professional learning. While TPL may encourage teacher autonomy, it can inevitably lead to professional isolation if not balanced with collaborative opportunities. These challenges can occur in any work environment, regardless of economic conditions. For example, Jensen et al. (2016) identified time constraints as a hindrance to teachers’ participation in professional learning in their study which compared four high-performing educational systems: British Columbia, Hong Kong, Shanghai, and Singapore.

Another critique of TPL is the potential lack of structure and consistency. Unlike traditional top-down professional development programmes that follow a standardised curriculum and schedule, TPL relies on individual teachers to identify their learning needs and seek out appropriate resources. This can result in a fragmented approach, with significant variations in the quality and depth of learning experiences (Hill, 2009; Jensen et al., 2016; Pedder & Opfer, 2013; Sugrue, 2002). Some educators may also struggle to identify their needs or find suitable

resources, leading to gaps in their professional growth. However, Simmie (2023) counters this argument by stating that the lack of standardisation does not necessarily lead to inconsistencies in teacher growth. The author argues that while standardisation might ensure consistency, it could overlook the unique contexts and needs of teachers and students, potentially hindering the development of a more nuanced and adaptable teaching practice championed by critical perspectives.

Despite those criticisms, research findings have shown that teachers perceive professional learning as essential for both their professional practice and the improvement of student learning (Al Asmari, 2016; Saud, 2023; Topkaya & Celik, 2016; Wichadee, 2011). In particular, the impact of TPL on positive instructional changes has also been examined in various studies (Belay et al., 2021; Nguyen & Newton, 2021; Shirrell et al., 2019). For instance, Shirrell et al. (2019, p. 599) observe that TPL has the potential to “predict changes in [...] instructional practices and beliefs related to [the teaching content].” In the same way, according to Akiba and Liang (2016), TPL positively impacts classroom practice and, in turn, has a positive effect on student achievement.

Furthermore, in the context of this current research project, it is acknowledged that teachers in well-resourced universities may have greater access to professional learning opportunities compared to those in under-resourced institutions. Similarly, geographic or professional isolation, along with time and workload constraints, are the undeniable concerns that impact equity in TPL. However, these criticisms provide a strong justification for research in TPL, such as this study, particularly in contexts marked by disparities in resources and support. This project aims to investigate the processes of TPL among English language educators in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in Cambodia (see Section 1.2.2), where teachers often have to manage varying levels of resources and support.

2.5 Gaps in TPL Research

The review of the literature illuminates several gaps in the research on Teacher Professional Learning. While extensive studies have previously been carried out, they offer only a partial understanding of the TPL process. To develop a more comprehensive view, it is crucial to systematically examine teachers' awareness of their professional needs, the resources required, the motivational factors driving TPL, and the institutional support available for this practice.

One significant gap in the research concerns how teachers learn and how professional learning translates into classroom practice. Although there is a growing body of literature on the various methods and approaches that can enhance teacher learning, understanding how these approaches lead to practical changes in teaching remains under-explored (Asterhan & Lefstein, 2024; Cirkony et al., 2024; Kennedy, 2014; Timperley et al., 2008). It is vital to further investigate how teachers internalise new knowledge and pedagogical practices, as well as the factors that influence the successful transfer of learning into effective teaching.

Another area where research has not yet yielded conclusive answers is a context-appropriate approach for facilitating effective TPL. While multiple models and strategies have been proposed, there is no consensus on which approach, or combination of approaches, is the most effective in promoting meaningful professional growth for teachers (Koffeman & Snoek, 2019; Pedder & Opfer, 2019; Vermunt et al., 2019). This ambiguity highlights the need for further research into what conditions and practices effectively support sustained professional learning and development in diverse educational contexts.

Moreover, there is a clear geographical imbalance in the focus of TPL research. Much of the existing literature is concentrated in Western contexts, leaving significant gaps in

understanding how TPL occurs in under-researched regions, particularly in developing countries (Hallinger & Kulophas, 2019; Kyndt et al., 2016; Kwakman, 2003; Margalef & Roblin, 2018; Postholm, 2012; Opfer et al., 2011a, 2011b). Additionally, while research on TPL has been undertaken in neighbouring countries such as Vietnam and Thailand (Hallinger et al., 2019; Hallinger et al., 2023; Nguyen & Newton, 2021; Tran et al., 2018; Truong & Murray, 2019), only a few studies have been conducted in Cambodia (e.g., Chea, 2022). This unbalanced geographical focus restricts the broader application of findings and neglects the distinct challenges and opportunities found in non-Western contexts. In particular, there is an urgent need for studies that address the challenge of how to facilitate effective TPL in contexts such as Cambodia, where research remains sparse. This study should contribute substantively to the existing body of knowledge on TPL, both within Cambodia and in similarly situated countries, helping to bridge this critical research gap.

2.6 Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I have provided a comprehensive review of the literature related to Teacher Professional Learning. I began by offering background on the concept, clarifying how TPL differs from traditional teacher professional development. My explanation highlighted the focus on sustained, teacher-driven growth, as opposed to top-down, one-off training events. In the Section 2.2, 'Conceptualising Teacher Professional Learning,' I introduced a working definition to guide this thesis. This definition captures the multifaceted- and context-dependent nature of TPL.

I also reviewed nine key theoretical constructs that contribute to understanding TPL. These constructs—teacher cognition, teacher professional identity, teacher agency, reflective practice, teaching as inquiry, self-directed learning, Community of Practice, transformative learning, and teacher efficacy—were presented in a deliberate sequence to create a coherent

narrative. However, it is evident that none of these constructs, when considered in isolation, provides a comprehensive framework for researching TPL. Through exploring their interconnections, I have proposed a conceptual framework in Section 2.3.11 that integrates essential elements from these constructs, offering a more robust and holistic approach to understanding teacher professional learning. This integrated framework aims to more fully capture the complexities of TPL and its impact on teachers' growth.

In addition, I reviewed existing studies, identifying key factors that influence the TPL process, including motivation for professional learning, learning approaches, the learning environment, and available support. I also addressed criticisms of the current research landscape, dedicating a section to discussing their limitations and the need for more context-sensitive investigations.

Finally, I identified important gaps in the research, particularly in under-researched contexts such as Cambodia. By addressing these gaps, this study aims to contribute valuable insights to the field. In the next chapter, *Chapter III*, I will lay out the design of my study.

CHAPTER THREE: DESIGN OF THE STUDY

Structured into seven sections, this chapter outlines the study's design. First, it presents the research questions, as well as a description of the research objectives. Section 3.2 describes the research paradigm that guides the framework of investigation. Following this, a justification for the research method is provided in Section 3.3, leading into a description of the study's design in Section 3.4. The three remaining sections cover a positionality statement, ethical considerations, and the chapter summary.

3.1 Research Questions

This project was designed to contribute to the understanding of Teacher Professional Learning (TPL) by exploring the TPL practices of English language teachers within Cambodian Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). Through this investigation, the research aimed to explore the perceptions held by the research participants regarding their professional learning, drawing attention to the spectrum of learning activities they engage in. Moreover, it sought to investigate the motivational and contextual forces that drive their commitment to professional growth. Concurrently, the project probed the participants' insights concerning the impact of professional learning on their instructional methodologies, while also seeking their perceptions on approaches for fostering TPL within the research context. To fulfil the research objectives, this study sought to answer the following questions:

1. What are Cambodian English language teachers' views about "Teacher Professional Learning"?

2. What are the contextual factors that Cambodian English language teachers perceive to influence their professional learning engagement?
3. What are the aspirational and motivational factors that propel the teachers' engagement in professional learning?
4. What are the learning activities the participating teachers adopt for their professional growth?
5. What are the teachers' perceptions of the impact of professional learning activities on their classroom practice?
6. According to Cambodian English language teachers, how can Teacher Professional Learning be fostered in their teaching context?

3.2 Research Paradigm

Following the interpretive paradigm, this research is grounded in the philosophical framework of social constructivism, which theorises that learning is a collaborative endeavour where individuals actively engage in social interactions to construct knowledge and meaningful learning experiences (Amineh & Asl, 2015; Kim, 2001; Palincsar, 1998; Vygotsky & Cole, 1978). The choice of social constructivism as the guiding philosophy stems from the understanding that the TPL process largely occurs within the context of the teachers' workplace, emphasising the social nature of learning processes (Koffeman & Snoek, 2019; Lantz-Andersson et al., 2018; Paul, 2006; Vrikki et al., 2017). Moreover, Merriam and Tisdell (2016) assert that qualitative research is inherently rooted in social constructivist principles. Through qualitative inquiry, which is the adopted framework to guide the data collection process for this project, researchers gain insight into how individuals interpret their experiences and construct their realities, thus aligning with the core views of social constructivism (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

The subsequent sections provide a review of social constructivism as the foundational backbone for examining the TPL process and related factors.

In research projects exploring Teacher Professional Learning, such as this one, the application of social constructivism as a philosophical assumption recognises the significance of social interactions, collaborative learning, contextual factors, and active engagement (Saleem et al., 2021). Firstly, since social constructivism has been adopted as a foundational belief in various recent research works (Nugroho et al., 2024; Pan, 2023; Pennanen, 2023; Saleem et al., 2021; Varma et al., 2023), this suggests that the knowledge construction process is heavily influenced by the cultural and social settings of the research as proposed by Vygotsky and Cole (1978). In this regard, individuals are seen to co-construct their knowledge through interactions between people and their environment. Researchers embracing a social constructivist standpoint acknowledge the significance of examining how individuals derive meaning from their encounters, a process deeply entangled with social, cultural, and historical elements (Ageeva, 2016; Guimaraes, 2021; McWilliams, 2016).

Secondly, employing social constructivism as the foundational philosophical assumption enhances investigators' ability to more deeply understand the role of collaborative learning environments in the TPL process (Dhungana et al., 2021; Goldman, et al., 2022; Krasniqi, 2021). In essence, collaborative learning involves active participation, shared experiences, and collective knowledge construction. Teachers benefit significantly from such activities, which enhance their teaching practices and professional development by fostering critical thinking and mutual learning. Additionally, research has consistently shown that collaborative learning is a powerful tool for knowledge construction (Baanqud et al., 2020; Herrera-Pavo, 2021; Lee & Yang, 2023; Lenkauskaitė et al., 2020). This perspective prompts potential

researchers to consider the importance of teachers actively engaging in group discussions, peer mentoring, and collaborative lesson planning to collectively construct new knowledge (Saleem et al., 2021, Suhendi et al., 2021, Sumarna & Gunawan, 2022).

Thirdly, social constructivism accentuates the significance of contextual factors shaping professional learning experiences (Dhungana et al., 2021). Therefore, it is fundamental for a study that focuses on teacher professional growth to consider teachers' existing beliefs and practices within their educational contexts (Liu et al., 2023; Mulu et al., 2022). By acknowledging the influence of context on knowledge and comprehension, social constructivism can furnish a comprehensive framework for investigating intricate social occurrences and comprehending the diverse outlooks and experiences of both individuals and communities (Berger & Luckmann, 2016; Gergen, 2015).

Furthermore, social constructivism suggests that individuals actively construct their understanding of the world. In this case, teachers, play an active role in constructing their own knowledge and understanding through engaging in meaningful activities, discussions, and reflective practices (Farrell, 2016, 2017, 2018; Farrell & Ives, 2015; Shanmugavelu et al., 2020; Zhang & Zhang, 2020). Active participation is vital in fostering meaningful learning experiences and encouraging teachers to take ownership of their professional growth (Timperley et al., 2007). Moreover, reflection and dialogue serve as important tools for learning and knowledge construction within the social constructivist framework (Saleem et al., 2021; Smith, 2022). These actions promote thoughtful self-assessment, collaborative discussions, and deeper insights into effective teaching strategies. By engaging in reflective practices and meaningful conversations, teachers refine their pedagogical approaches and enhance their professional efficacy.

Social constructivism also aligns with the concept of lifelong learning (Mohammed & Kinyó, 2020). Within this framework, professional learning is viewed as an ongoing, dynamic process that extends throughout a teacher's career (Ivanova, 2021; Garner & Kaplan, 2021; Tarnanen et al., 2021; Torres-Cladera et al., 2021). Consequently, engaging in lifelong learning enables educators to remain responsive to changes in pedagogical practices and educational demands, ensuring their instructional approaches remain effective and relevant.

3.3 Qualitative Case Study Research

Before discussing qualitative case study research, it is essential to review the notion of 'case study.' Yin (2018, p. 15) defines a case study as "an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon (the "case") in depth and within its real-world context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context may not be clearly evident." Therefore, a case study provides investigators with a robust framework to study complex social phenomena in their natural settings.

As noted by Yin (2009), a "case study" is not necessarily a method of data collection but rather a research strategy or design to study a social unit. In case study research, multiple methods of data collection are used, as this type of research involves an in-depth study of a phenomenon (Priya, 2021). Based on this perspective, qualitative case study research, which is categorised as a specific type of case study that utilises qualitative research methods to explore complex phenomena through detailed observations, interviews, and document reviews, was adopted as the data collection framework for this study (Creswell, 2007; Merriam, 1988).

3.3.1 Benefits of qualitative case study research

Qualitative case study research is an investigative approach focused on examining a specific real-world entity, known as a case, within its natural environment. According to Creswell (2007):

Case study research is a qualitative approach in which the investigator explores a bounded system (a case) or multiple bounded systems (cases) over time, through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information (e.g., observations, interviews, audiovisual materials and documents and reports), and reports a case description and case-based themes. (p.73)

Adopting a qualitative case study design benefits investigators because of its attributes of holistic description and explanation, flexibility in design and data collection methods, and contextualisation. First, qualitative case study designs empower researchers to analyse and understand complex phenomena by examining them from multiple angles and considering various factors that contribute to their dynamics (Fearon et al., 2021; Lavarda & Bellucci, 2022). Consequently, such designs produce rich, vivid accounts of the phenomenon under investigation, enabling readers to visualize the research context and better comprehend the findings (Lavarda & Bellucci, 2022; Paparini, et al., 2021; Yazan, 2015).

Secondly, capitalising on the principle that qualitative case studies can utilise a variety of data sources like interviews, observations, and documents, this type of design does not have to adhere strictly to predetermined structures (Creswell, 2007; Hyett et al., 2014). Instead, it can be adapted to the requirements of the case and research questions. Therefore, investigators adopting this design in their study have flexibility in design and data collection methods. In addition, this type of design frequently utilises triangulation—the combination of multiple data sources, theories, or methods—to increase the robustness and validity of findings (Yazan, 2015).

Moreover, qualitative case study research recognises the importance of the situational environment in influencing outcomes and therefore places significant emphasis on understanding the context in which the phenomenon unfolds (Barbara et al., 2021; Kwon et al., 2021). This approach recognises that outcomes are not isolated events but rather are deeply intertwined with the specific environments and circumstances in which they occur. By carefully examining the situational dynamics, researchers are able to gain valuable insights into the complexities and subtleties that influence the phenomena under investigation, thereby enriching their understanding of the underlying mechanisms and implications.

3.3.2 Critics of qualitative case study research

Despite the previously discussed strengths, critics point to perceived weaknesses in qualitative case study research. First, such research is often criticised for its lack of generalisability. Yazan (2015), for example, argues that because the design primarily focuses on a single case or a small number of cases, it is difficult to draw conclusions that can be applied to larger populations.

Secondly, because of its reliance on multiple sources of evidence to support claims and conclusions and to increase the trustworthiness of the findings, qualitative case study research can be time-consuming and resource intensive (Amisi et al., 2021; Blacketer et al., 2021; Yang & Nguyen, 2022). Investigators need to recognise that employing this method of data collection will require a significant investment of time and effort to gather and analyse their data.

Some critics also argue that qualitative case study research can be subjective and prone to researcher bias, as the investigator's interpretation of the data can influence the findings (Hyett et al., 2014; Mwita, 2022). Additionally, social desirability bias, where participants

present reality to align with social norms, can also impact the findings of qualitative case study research (Bergen & Labonté, 2020).

Others argue that the lack of standardised procedures and the flexibility of the approach can lead to haphazard reporting and limit its global application as a valuable, theoretically supported methodology that can be rigorously applied across disciplines and fields (Hyett et al., 2014). In other words, this lack of standardisation can make it challenging to compare findings across different case studies or to establish consistent quality criteria for evaluating such research. Furthermore, while the flexibility of the approach has certain advantages, it can also result in inconsistencies in how researchers design, conduct, and report their studies, potentially undermining the credibility and transferability of the findings (Simons, 2020).

To address these limitations, some researchers propose alternative approaches to enhance the rigour and credibility of qualitative case study research. One such approach is the social constructivist paradigm, proposed by Stake (1995) and Merriam and Tisdell (2016) (discussed in Section 3.2). This paradigm views the case as a socially constructed reality, emphasising the relationships between the researcher, participants, and the case itself (Hyett et al., 2014). By adopting this perspective, researchers may be able to mitigate some of the criticisms mentioned earlier. For instance, the social constructivist approach acknowledges the subjective nature of qualitative research, addressing concerns about researcher bias by explicitly recognising the researcher's role in co-constructing knowledge. Additionally, this paradigm's emphasis on thick description and contextual understanding can help address issues of generalisability by providing rich, detailed accounts that enable readers to assess the transferability of findings to their own contexts.

3.3.3 Qualitative case study in the current research project

Despite the criticisms discussed above, qualitative case study research can remain a valuable method for exploring complex phenomena within their natural contexts, offering rich, detailed descriptions and insights into the studied cases. Therefore, this research project adopted a qualitative case study design as its methodological framework to guide the data collection process.

Firstly, the study acknowledges that the practice of professional learning is significantly influenced by the participants' teaching contexts. Therefore, the project examines Cambodian English language teachers engaging in their professional learning processes within their natural work environments. Data collection occurred during their regular working hours, including classroom observations conducted during their typical teaching sessions.

As detailed later in this chapter (Section 3.4.6), the research design capitalises on the principle that qualitative case study designs utilise a variety of data sources like interviews, observations, and documents. Consequently, the research findings offer comprehensive descriptions and insights into the participating teachers' professional learning endeavours within the research context.

The research acknowledges the criticism often directed at qualitative case study research regarding its limited generalisability, given its focus on a small number of cases, which may hinder drawing conclusions applicable to larger populations. This study involves seven participating teachers serving as cases; Stake (2005, p. 445) refers to this type of study as a "multiple case study or collective case study," which allows for broader generalisation across a population of cases.

Furthermore, the study endeavours to conscientiously address any concerns regarding the subjective interpretation of data and its susceptibility to researcher bias. Given that this is a PhD project, the research process, including data analysis and interpretation, was overseen and checked by experienced senior researchers holding titles as professors within the university. Consequently, the reporting of research findings has undergone thorough scrutiny to ensure fair presentation.

3.4 Research Design of the Current Study

In the first part of this section, I provide the rationale for utilising pseudonyms in my current research, a practice integral to safeguarding the identities and confidentiality of my research participants. I then discuss the research context and explain the reasons behind the selection of my research sites. Additionally, I present a brief overview of each data collection venue and the profiles of the research participants.

Following this, I detail the data collection procedures employed throughout my research endeavours. I outline the instruments employed, which ranged from interviews to observations and document analysis. Subsequently, I elaborate upon the procedure and process of data collection and data analysis, outlining the methodologies applied to derive insights from the collected data.

3.4.1 Use of pseudonyms in current research

The use of pseudonyms (Sections 3.4.3 and 3.4.5) fulfils the core requirement to protect the anonymity and confidentiality of research participants, a fundamental ethical consideration in the current study (see Section 3.6, Ethical Considerations, for more information). In accordance with this principle, this thesis employs pseudonyms derived from the names of Cambodian ancient temples – *Prasat* – as well as the names of deceased Cambodian scholars,

poets, and writers to anonymise both the data collection sites and the research participants. The selection of these pseudonyms serves a dual purpose: to protect the identities of those involved in the study and to pay tribute to the Cambodian ancient temples and luminaries for the cultural and intellectual legacy they represent. Appendix C provides brief descriptions of the history of each temple – *Prasat Angkor Wat*, *Prasat Bayon*, *Prasat Ta Prohm* and *Prasat Banteay Srei*, the names of which are used to anonymise the research venues. Additionally, the brief biographical sketches of deceased Cambodian scholars, poets, and writers – *Kong Bunchhoeun*, *Nou Hach*, *Venerable (Ven.) Som*, *Chuon Nath*, *Keng Vansak*, *Queen Indradevi*, and *Krom Ngoy*, whose names are used as pseudonyms for the research participants – can also be found in Appendix D. In Cambodian culture, the surname or family name is placed before the first name. When the family name is not specified, titles such as Venerable (Ven.), which is a title for a Buddhist monk or Queen are used instead. Table 2 presents the pseudonyms for data collection sites and the research participants in this thesis.

Table 2

Pseudonyms for Data Collection Sites and the Participants Used in this Study

	Inst. 1	Inst. 2	Inst. 3	Inst. 4
Institutions	<i>Prasat Angkor Wat</i>	<i>Prasat Bayon</i>	<i>Prasat Ta Prohm</i>	<i>Prasat Banteay Srei</i>
1st Participant	<i>Krom Ngoy</i>	<i>Ven. Som</i>	<i>Kong Bunchhoeun</i>	<i>Chuon Nath</i>
2nd Participant	(Withdrawn)	<i>Queen Indradevi</i>	<i>Nou Hach</i>	<i>Keng Vansak</i>

3.4.2 Research context

The focus of this study is an examination of the landscape of English language teaching and learning in Cambodia, thus laying the foundation to better understand the context in which the research is situated. In addition to the detailed discussion of the past and current states

of higher education in Cambodia in Section 1.2.2, this section provides a brief overview of the dynamics of learning and teaching English as a language in Cambodia, before exploring its usage, significance, and the various factors influencing its acquisition and teaching.

The significance of English in Cambodia has grown over recent decades, evolving from a scarcely spoken foreign language in the early 1970s to a pivotal medium for business and administrative communication nationwide (S. Clayton, 2008; Neau, 2003). This transformation stemmed from Cambodia's embrace of diplomatic and economic changes in the early 1990s, when the nation opened its doors to regional and global engagement (T. Clayton, 2002, 2006; S. Clayton, 2008). Two pivotal political milestones significantly elevated the status of English in Cambodia: the establishment of the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) in February 1992; and Cambodia's accession to ASEAN in April 1999 (S. Clayton, 2008; ASEAN Secretariat, 2020; Kirkpatrick, 2010; UN, 2022). The latter event prompted the Cambodian government to adopt English as the official international language for communication, aligning with ASEAN's commitment to its use as the main working language for the community (Kirkpatrick, 2008; Low & Ao, 2018).

Consequently, English language teaching and learning have garnered more attention from diverse stakeholders, including educational authorities, corporate entities, government officials, and the general populace. Recognising English's pivotal role in economic development, Cambodia's Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sports (MoEYS) formally integrated English into the national curriculum for Grades 7 to 12 in 1993 (S. Clayton, 2008; Dara, 2019; MoEYS, 2004; Neau, 2003). Beyond the MoEYS's requirements, the general public has also acknowledged the advantages of mastering English for enhanced job prospects, international education, and business interactions (Hashim et al., 2014). As a result, many

students seek additional English language classes outside regular school times, and numerous international schools, particularly in urban centres, adopt Western curricula with English as the primary medium of instruction.

The imperative for English language teaching and learning to foster economic growth has spurred educators and institutions toward continuous improvement. Notably, there has been a transition from English classes predominantly taught by foreign nationals to their being led by local ELT professionals. Initially, in the early 1990s, English classes were largely conducted by international ELT expatriates or native speakers (Moore & Bounchan, 2010). However, today, the majority of English classes are facilitated by Cambodian ELT instructors, including locally trained graduates and those with international teaching qualifications.

Methodologies and materials for English language teaching have also undergone substantial evolution. Reflecting on my personal experience, I can attest that English classes in 1999 often employed traditional methods like the grammar-translation approach, primarily conducted in the Khmer language. In contrast, contemporary English language teaching in Cambodia emphasises communicative competency, with instructors encouraged to adopt research-based methodologies like communicative language teaching (CLT). Additionally, classroom materials now align with internationally recognised frameworks such as the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), exemplified by publications like Richards' (2017) *Interchange* series by Cambridge University Press (see for example, Richards, 2017b). Notably, CLT activities such as group discussions and oral presentations are increasingly prevalent in Cambodian ELT classrooms.

Although English is not mandatory after high school, many Cambodian universities, particularly private institutions, offer courses in English for both degree and non-degree

programmes (Lim, 2016). However, the absence of a clear language policy for content instruction remains a significant issue. While *Khmer* (the official language of Cambodia) and French are predominantly used in some public institutions, private HEIs often utilise English or a mix of *Khmer* and English, depending on the lecturers and courses. Additionally, some private universities conduct classes entirely in English, highlighting the diversity and complexity of language preferences (Nhem, 2022; Un & Sok, 2018).

In addition to the complexity of language choices for the medium of instruction, there are also differences between public and private HEIs in terms of programme quality and management. For example, Williams et al. (2016) found that public and private universities contend with varying challenges, including access to funding and research partnerships, educational quality, and administration. Regarding international research collaborations, Cambodian researchers have noted that international collaborations are more common within public HEIs, particularly in the capital city, than in private institutions (Sok & Bunry, 2021). The authors attribute this discrepancy to the established reputation, robust research foundations, and more proficient faculty members in public HEIs. These disparities in funding accessibility and international collaborations inevitably affect the resources allocated to support the TPL process.

3.4.3 Research sites

The data collection for this project was carried out at four higher education institutions (HEIs) in Cambodia: *Prasat Angkor Wat*, *Prasat Bayon*, *Prasat Ta Prohm*, and *Prasat Banteay Srei*. A brief description of each institution's profile is provided later in this section. First, I will explain the rationale behind selecting these four research venues.

Two primary considerations guided the selection of these research venues. The first consideration arises from a notable gap in the investigation of Teacher Professional Learning within Cambodia's higher education landscape. Over the past decade, at least five doctoral studies have focused on university lecturers within the capital city (Boun, 2014; Chan, 2016; Keuk, 2015; Khan, 2017; Lim, 2016). Notably, four out of these five researchers justified their choice of research sites based on the historical prominence and reputation of these institutions in English Language Teaching (ELT) education and teacher training (i.e., Boun, 2014; Chan, 2016; Khan, 2017; and Lim, 2016). The repeated selection of these research sites has led to the assumption that these doctoral theses and dissertations were conducted within the same locale in the capital city of Phnom Penh. Although Keuk's (2015) study spanned multiple venues, he described his research locations as being six prominent tertiary ELT education institutions in Phnom Penh. However, since the understanding of what, how, and why teachers learn is so important, the necessity to encompass a broader spectrum of social and economic contexts was a clear requirement for this study (Kyndt et al., 2016; Kwakman, 2003; Margalef & Roblin, 2018; Opfer et al., 2011a, 2011b; Postholm, 2012).

Motivated by the imperative to address geographical disparities underscored by Hallinger and Kulophas (2019) in TPL research, this project investigated Teacher Professional Learning practices at two public universities: Institution 2 - *Prasat Bayon* and Institution 4 - *Banteay Srei*. Located in the northwestern provinces of Cambodia, both institutions are approximately 300 and 400 kilometres from the capital city, respectively. More importantly, these institutions are situated in a remote Cambodian locale where TPL research is scarce, if not absent.

The study also involved two additional HEIs: a public university (Institution 3 - *Ta Prohm*) and a private university (Institution 1 - *Prasat Angkor Wat*), both located in Phnom Penh, the setting for the five doctoral studies discussed above (Boun, 2014; Chan, 2016; Keuk, 2015; Khan, 2017; Lim, 2016). It is important to note that the research project aimed to recruit participants in equal measure from two private and two public universities. However, participation was voluntary, and as a result, participants from these four universities were only those who stepped forward and expressed interest in the research project.

The second consideration driving the selection of these two categories of HEIs (public or private) hinged on the public's general perceptions of their respective prestige and status within Cambodia. A clear distinction between public and private universities is evident in the demographics of their student bodies. Public universities, particularly those in provincial areas, tend to attract students from lower economic and social backgrounds, whereas wealthier families often enrol their children in private universities or highly regarded public HEIs located in the capital city (Un & Sok, 2022; Williams et al., 2016). Moreover, differences extend to other aspects of public and private HEIs, including programme quality and management. For instance, as highlighted by Williams et al. (2016), public and private universities face distinct challenges related to access, quality, funding, and administration. Sok and Bunry (2021) further emphasise that extensive international research collaboration is more common within public HEIs, particularly in the capital city, compared to private institutions. They attribute this trend to the longstanding reputation, robust research foundations, and more proficient faculty members, which are common characteristics of public HEIs.

The subsequent parts offer a brief description of each research venue. However, in line with the aim of safeguarding the anonymity and confidentiality of research participants, only limited details about each site are disclosed.

Prasat Angkor Wat (Institution 1)

The data collection for this research project was conducted at the Department of English at *Prasat Angkor Wat*. Established in the early 2000s, *Prasat Angkor Wat* is recognised as one of the well-established private universities situated in the capital city of Phnom Penh. According to information available on its website, the institution features a diverse faculty comprising of both national and international academics holding bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees. The university consists of various colleges and schools, including the research site, and provides a wide array of study programmes primarily catering to Cambodian students, who form the majority of its student body.

Prasat Bayon (Institution 2)

The second research site was the Department of English at *Prasat Bayon*. Initially founded in the late 1960s, the University was forced to close less than a decade after its opening and remained so until the early 2000s. During the closure, the university buildings were repurposed by various organisations. Since its reopening about a decade and a half ago, *Prasat Bayon* has been steadily gaining a reputation among Cambodian students, especially those residing within or nearby the provincial areas of the institution. Home to eight graduate schools, faculties, and institutes, *Prasat Bayon* is now considered a prominent state university in the northwest region of the country.

Prasat Ta Prohm (Institution 3)

The primary data for this research was also gathered from participants associated with the Department of English at *Prasat Ta Prohm*, situated in the capital city of Phnom Penh. Established in the early 1960s, the University, just as *Prasat Bayon*, endured a five-year closure during the Khmer Rouge regime. However, it regained its stature as a respected public higher education institution upon its reopening in the early 1980s. *Prasat Ta Prohm* now offers bachelor's, master's, and doctoral programmes across various fields of study. The research site, situated within *Prasat Ta Prohm*, employs academics with a blend of local and international teaching qualifications, and with teaching experience ranging from 2 to 30 years.

Prasat Banteay Srei (Institution 4)

The research project also involved the Department of English at *Prasat Banteay Srei* as its fourth data collection site. Inaugurated in early 2000s, the University is located in a small provincial town approximately 60 kilometres northwest of Institution 2 - *Prasat Bayon*. According to its website, the university was founded with the aim of transforming a former battlefield into a quality human resource training centre. Since its establishment, *Prasat Bayon's* mission has been to provide higher education opportunities for Cambodian students in the northwest part of the country without requiring them to leave their villages and incur significant expenses. It offers courses and programmes leading to officially recognised higher education degrees in several areas of study, including Arts, Humanities, and Languages; Science and Technology; Sociology and Community Development; Management and Tourism.

3.4.4 Research participant recruitment process

The researcher initially aimed to engage two English language teachers from each of the four Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in Cambodia. The recruitment process was limited to

those with Cambodian nationality and their interest and availability for the project. The participants' genders, qualification levels, and the origin of their teaching degrees were not considered when selecting participants for the study.

Upon receiving ethics approval from Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee (AUTEC) in early March 2023 (see Appendix A), I dedicated the subsequent three weeks to translating various English documents into *Khmer* – the Cambodian official language – including the request letters and information sheets, all of which received additional approval from AUTEC. I also composed the required administrative letters in *Khmer* which were addressed to specific universities in order to seek permission for data collection.

In early April 2024, I initiated the data collection process by sending the Request for Access and Circulation of Invitation Letters to the heads of departments/faculties of the four universities (*Prasat Angkor Wat*, *Prasat Bayon*, *Prasat Ta Prohm*, and *Prasat Banteay Srei*) to request permission to conduct the research within their institutions (see Appendix E for the Request for Access and Circulation of Invitation Letter).

In mid-April 2023, I received confirmation for access to *Prasat Angkor Wat* and *Prasat Ta Prohm*; and in late April, I obtained permission to access *Prasat Bayon* and *Prasat Banteay Srei*. After receiving permission for the study, I requested the respective heads of departments at each research venue to disseminate the Participant Information Sheet for Teachers (Appendix F), along with an online notice to potential teacher participants. The Participant Information Sheet and online notice, available in both *Khmer* and English, were designed to communicate essential information about the aim of the research. They also included my Cambodian mobile number and email address, allowing teachers to contact me if they were interested in the research or wished to inquire further about the project.

Consequently, the potential participants were the ones who initiated contact with me, as the researcher.

Despite this effort, the initial response rate was notably low. After three weeks, only a limited number of teachers had reached out, prompting me to request a second circulation of the research announcement. This additional dissemination aimed to increase awareness of the study and encourage more teachers to consider participation. By late May 2023, eight participants, two from each institution, contacted me through emails and Telegram Messenger to express their interest in my research project. I provided each participant with a consent form, available in both *Khmer* and English, to sign as evidence of their consent to participate in the research (Appendix G). The number of teachers who contacted me matched the intended number of research participants, so I accepted all of them and decided to conclude the recruitment process in late May 2023. Unfortunately, one participant became unavailable after signing the consent form, leaving only seven participants for data collection. Table 3 provides a summary of the participant demographic information. The profiles of the teachers who participated in the entire data collection process are provided in the subsequent section.

It is also noted that although the recruitment process successfully reached the target number of participants, gender representation was significantly imbalanced. Of the teachers who volunteered, only one was female, while the remaining were male. The gender imbalance in participant recruitment, marked by a significant underrepresentation of female teachers, may be attributed to several interrelated cultural and structural factors in Cambodian society.

Despite progress in gender equity, disparities persist in higher education, resulting in a smaller proportion of female faculty members, which naturally limits the potential participant pool.

Traditional gender dynamics may also shape communication patterns, making female teachers less inclined to initiate contact with a male researcher. Moreover, perceptions of research relevance and time constraints, particularly those arising from work-family responsibilities, may disproportionately affect female teachers' participation. While these are broad generalisations, they provide culturally and contextually grounded explanations for the observed gender disparity in the study's participant pool.

Table 3

Summary of Participant Demographic Information

Participants	Gender	Age Range	Highest teaching qualifications	Years of teaching experience	Affiliation
<i>Kong Bunchhoeun</i>	Male	40—44	MA TESOL, international.	Approximately two decades	<i>Prasat Ta Prohm</i>
<i>Nou Hach</i>	Male	25—30	BA TEFL, local.	Approximately two years	<i>Prasat Ta Prohm</i>
<i>Venerable Som</i>	Male	30—34	MA TESOL, local.	Approximately a decade	<i>Prasat Bayon</i>
<i>Chuon Nath</i>	Male	40—44	MA TESOL, international.	Approximately two decades	<i>Prasat Banteay Srei</i>
<i>Keng Vansak</i>	Male	40—44	BA TEFL, Local.	Over sixteen years	<i>Prasat Banteay Srei</i>
<i>Queen Indradevi</i>	Female	30—34	MA TESOL, international.	Over seven years	<i>Prasat Bayon</i>
<i>Krom Ngoy</i>	Male	50—54	MA TESOL, local.	Approximately two decades	<i>Prasat Angkor Wat</i>

3.4.5 Research participants' profiles

This section presents the profiles of research participants, which are based on the information they provided after signing consent forms to participate in my research. It is worth noting that the ordinal numbers preceding or following the names of research participants serve solely to facilitate easier reading and listing of the individuals involved, without any additional intended purpose.

The first participant for this research is *Kong Bunchhoeun*, a male lecturer currently employed at Institution 3 – *Prasat Ta Prohm*. Holding a Master of Education Studies from a university in Australia, he has served as a lecturer at this institution since 2004. *Kong Bunchhoeun's* areas of teaching include Introduction to Globalisation, Intercultural Business Communication, Critical Thinking, Literature Studies, Vocabulary, Writing Skills, and Core English. Beyond the classroom teaching, *Kong Bunchhoeun* identifies himself as a dedicated scholar with a strong belief in continuous professional growth. He demonstrates his commitment through active participation in conferences and workshops, contributing to discussions and presentations on a variety of topics including student engagement activities, bilingual education models, blended learning, and research capacity development in social sciences and humanities.

The second research subject is *Nou Hach*, a male lecturer employed at Institution 3 – *Prasat Ta Prohm*. He graduated with a bachelor's degree in education, majoring in teaching English as a foreign language, from a local university in Cambodia in 2020. With less than two years of his tenure in the current position, he is responsible for developing classroom materials and teaching various subjects to first- and second-year students, including Core English and Academic Writing courses. *Nou Hach* also had some teaching experience as an English instructor at two other language centres in the capital city, prior to joining *Prasat Ta Prohm*.

The third participating teacher is *Venerable Som*, a male lecturer currently employed at Institution 2 – *Prasat Bayon*. He holds a master's degree in TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) from a higher education institution in Cambodia and a postgraduate diploma in Applied Linguistics from an English language teacher training and research institution in a Southeast Asian country. With a decade of experience, *Ven. Som's* teaching areas cover Academic Writing and Literature Studies. Prior to his current role as a

lecturer at the institution where this research was conducted, *Ven. Som* served as an English language teacher at two public high schools in remote districts in northwest Cambodia. At both high schools, he performed the role of an English subject technical leader, in addition to his teaching duties. Moreover, during his tenure as an English subject technical leader and teacher of English Language, *Ven. Som's* responsibilities included crafting lesson plans and curriculum outlines, delivering full-time English instruction, designing monthly and semester examinations, and evaluating students' progress. Beyond his primary English teaching duties and leadership position, *Ven. Som* concurrently performs another role as an English teacher educator at a public provincial teacher training centre in Cambodia. In this capacity, his duties encompass supervising groups of teacher trainees in conducting action research, organising action research workshops for teacher trainees, and overseeing the assessment process for action research report defences.

The fourth participant is *Chuon Nath*, a male lecturer currently working at Institution 4 – *Prasat Banteay Srei*, located approximately one hundred and twenty kilometres west of his residential town. He holds a master's degree in TESOL from a university in Australia and has over two decades of experience in English language teaching, including a role as a university lecturer. His teaching areas cover various subjects, including Academic Writing, Foundation of Education, and Teaching Methodology. Concurrently with his teaching role at *Prasat Banteay Srei*, *Chuon Nath* holds an academic position at another Higher Education Institution, where he instructs students in subjects such as Comparative Literature, Language Testing and Assessment, and English Phonetics and Pronunciation. *Chuon Nath* also fulfils roles as an English language teacher trainer and serves as the head of the teacher training department at a non-governmental organisation dedicated to providing support and training to public school English teachers in Cambodia. In this capacity, he is responsible for delivering a range

of courses covering topics such as language testing and assessment, education and character building, and the foundations of education and teaching methodology. Moreover, he oversees and guides teacher trainees during their practicum projects, providing mentorship and support.

The fifth participant is *Keng Vansak*, a male lecturer currently employed at Institution 4 – *Prasat Banteay Srei*. He holds a Bachelor of Education acquired in the early 2000s from a higher education institution in the capital city of Cambodia. With over sixteen years of experience as a university lecturer, he has taught a wide range of subjects, including English for Academic Purposes, Literature, Global Studies, Core English, Academic Writing, and Business English. In addition to his role as an academic staff member at *Banteay Srei*, *Keng Vansak* holds positions at three other educational institutions in his hometown. Beyond his responsibilities as a classroom educator, he serves as a teacher trainer at a university, specialising in Teaching Methodology, Applied Linguistics, and Foundations of Education. Furthermore, *Keng Vansak* had undertaken leadership roles such as Head of the Management Department and Deputy Head of the Foundation Year Department at another university. In these capacities, he conducts evaluations of faculty performance in teaching, research, and service. Furthermore, he ensures the quality of foundation year students and compiles essential documents for the Accreditation Committee of Cambodia.

The sixth research participant is *Queen Indradevi*, the only female (see Section 3.4.4 for a justification), who currently serves as an educator at Institution 2 – *Prasat Bayon*. *Queen Indradevi* earned a master's degree in English Education from a university in a Southeast Asian country, and another in TESOL from a local higher education institution in Cambodia. With more than seven years of teaching experience, *Queen Indradevi's* primary role has been as a

lecturer within the English Department at the institution where this research took place. In this capacity, she has shouldered a diverse array of teaching responsibilities, covering a wide spectrum of subjects. Her areas of expertise include Academic Writing, Teaching Methodologies, and Communication Skills.

Krom Ngoy, the seventh participant in this research, is a male lecturer currently employed at Institution 1 – *Prasat Angkor Wat*. With his highest academic qualification being a master's degree in TESOL, *Krom Ngoy* possesses approximately two decades of teaching experience. In his role as an EFL teacher, *Krom Ngoy* holds the position of lecturer at two different higher education institutions, one of which is *Angkor Wat*, the research venue. In those tertiary establishments, he teaches various subjects, including Academic Writing, Core English and English Grammar to Cambodian students with diverse backgrounds in English language proficiency. Beyond his role as an English teacher, *Krom Ngoy* also identifies himself as having been an English language teacher educator in a teacher training centre in the capital of Cambodia since 2002. In this capacity, *Krom Ngoy* serves as a source of expertise in Teaching Methodology. His additional responsibilities include equipping future instructors with adept teaching methodologies, instructional strategies, and effective classroom management skills.

3.4.6 Data collection instruments and process

In qualitative case study research, according to writers such as Creswell (2007) and Merriam and Tisdell (2016), data collection involves the use of a diverse range of sources, including interviews, observations, audio-visual material, and documents. These data collection methods are necessary to provide a comprehensive understanding of the case, allowing for the collection of rich, detailed, and context-specific data (Buriro et al., 2017; Fransella & Farr, 1982; Talmy, 2010). The primary data for this research project were gathered from various

sources, namely: (1) first-round, semi-structured interviews with the participating teachers; (2) classroom observations, followed by recall interviews, conducted by the researcher; (3) weekly voice memos recorded by the participants; and (4) documentation, such as lesson plans, worksheets, textbooks, course outlines, and official policy documents related to teachers' professional development from the universities. Table 4 provides the planned timeline of the data collection process, and Table 5 provides the actual timeline of the data collection process. In the sections below I discuss the advantages and disadvantages of various methods of data collection and explain why I chose the methods I used. I also included the descriptions of the actual data collection process under each method.

Interviews

An interview constitutes a dialogue between a researcher and a participant, with the intention of eliciting information regarding the participant's experiences, perspectives, and opinions on a specific topic (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; DeMarrais, 2004; Jamshed, 2014; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Interviews may assume structured or unstructured formats and can occur in person, via telephone, or online (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). However, because structured interviews rely on a predetermined set of questions, they leave little room for flexibility or the exploration of emerging themes. This rigidity restricts the discovery of unexpected insights and fails to reflect the complex, context-specific dimensions of professional learning in a particular geographical area such as Cambodia. Unstructured interviews, on the other hand, while highly flexible, lack the focus necessary to address specific research objectives systematically. Their open-ended format allows participants to guide the conversation entirely, which can lead to data that are broad but less relevant to the core aims of the study.

Table 4*Planned Data Collection Timeline*

	W1	W2	W3	W4	W5	W6	W7	W8	W9	W10	W11
Inst. 1 (PP)*	one semi-structured interview (x 4 teachers)	1st thirty-minute observation per class per teacher (x 4 teachers), followed by recall interviews		Each participating teacher is requested to record one voice memo per week.			2nd thirty-minute observation per class per teacher (x 4 teachers), followed by recall interviews		semi-structured interviews with a member of management team (x 4)	x	x
Inst. 2 (PP)										x	x
Inst. 3 (BB)**	x	x	x	one semi-structured interview (x 4 teachers)	1st thirty-minute observation per class per teacher (x 4 teachers), followed by recall interviews		Each participating teacher is requested to record one voice memo per week.			2nd thirty-minute observation per class per teacher (x 4 teachers), followed by recall interviews	
Inst. 4 (BB)	x	x	x								

* PP: Phnom Penh - the capital city of Cambodia.

** BB: Battambang - the name of a Cambodian province and its town.

Table 5*Actual Data Collection Timeline*

	June 2023					July 2023		
	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6	Week 7	Weeks 8 - 10
Prasat Angkor Wat (Inst. 1)	1st semi-structured interviews with <i>Krom Ngoy, Kong Bunchhoeun and Nou Hach</i>	1st thirty-minute observation per class per teacher (<i>Krom Ngoy, Kong Bunchhoeun and Nou Hach</i>), followed by recall interviews		Each participating (<i>Krom Ngoy, Kong Bunchhoeun and Nou Hach</i>) teacher is requested to record one voice memo per week.			2nd thirty-minute observation per class with <i>Nou Hach</i> , followed by a recall interview.*	X
Prasat Ta Prohm (Inst. 3)								x
Prasat Bayon (Inst. 2)	x	x	x	1st semi-structured interviews: (with <i>Venerable Som</i> and <i>Queen Indradevi</i> in Week 4, and with <i>Chuon Nath</i> and <i>Keng Vansak</i> in Week 5)		1st thirty-minute observation per class per teacher (x 4 teachers), followed by recall interviews. (with <i>Venerable Som</i> and <i>Queen Indradevi</i> in Week 6, and with <i>Chuon Nath</i> and <i>Keng Vansak</i> in Week 7)		Each participating teacher is requested to record one voice memo per week for the next three weeks.
Banteay Srei (Inst. 4)	x	x	x					

* Only one participating teacher – *Nou Hach* from *Prasat Ta Prohm* (Inst. 3) - was willing to have a second observation.

On the other hand, semi-structured interviews are a flexible method that combines structured questions with unstructured exploration (Wilson, 2014). They can be valuable tools in qualitative research, particularly for exploring hidden aspects of social life and the discovery of new issues (Belina, 2022; Wilson, 2014). Semi-structured interviews were deemed to be the most appropriate for this type of project as they empower me as the researcher to use a list of guiding questions with flexibility (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). In a semi-structured interview environment, the participants were able to share their perspectives and experiences freely, which fostered open and honest dialogue (Ferguson et al., 2011). Additionally, this type of interview enhanced my deeper understanding of the challenges and successes teachers face in their classrooms and allowed me to gain a comprehensive understanding of the professional learning landscape as the teachers could discuss a variety of teaching methods and strategies (Chaudhry & Sivakamasundari, 2004; Winstone et al., 2014). All of these factors contributed to my research objectives of establishing how Cambodian English language teachers perceive professional learning in their context.

Likewise, the recall interviews after observations were crucial for the research as they prompted participants to reflect on the relationships between their professional learning and day-to-day classroom practice (Farrell, 2011; Geiger et al., 2016; Hoban, 2000). This method encouraged participating teachers to reflect on their own practices and identify areas for improvement (Ab Rashid, 2018).

In the process of gathering primary data for my project, I conducted both types of interviews: (1) the initial, semi-structured interviews with participating teachers, and (2) the recall interviews based on the notes I took during the observations. Both sets of interviews followed a face-to-face, one-on-one format, lasting approximately 30 to 45 minutes per participant. All

interviews were conducted at locations convenient for the participants within the designated research venues. Furthermore, to facilitate unrestricted expression of their views, participants were encouraged to utilise the language they felt most comfortable with, whether *Khmer*, English, or a combination of both (*Khmer* and/or English). The interviews were audio-recorded to ensure secure retention and protection of the data for subsequent analysis (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

The initial semi-structured interviews were conducted using pre-determined questions designed to serve as guides for gathering data relevant to the study (refer to Appendix H). These questions encompassed four overarching themes. The first and second themes aimed to explore the participating teachers' perceptions of interconnected factors influencing their professional growth, including the motivational drivers behind their learning practices. In addition, the third theme prompted them to identify the learning strategies and activities they have employed. Moreover, supplementary guiding questions were utilised to investigate the teachers' views on effective methods for facilitating professional development within their workplace. These interviews were conducted with all seven research participants over the initial five weeks of data collection (Table 3), totalling approximately two hundred and fifty minutes in duration.

After completing the classroom observations, I conducted recall interviews with participating teachers. These interviews were primarily guided by the field notes taken during the observations. The main objective of the post-classroom observation interviews was to gain insights from research participants into the ways their pedagogical methodologies and professional development are influenced by their engagement in professional learning

activities within their respective contexts. As was the case with the initial semi-structured interviews, I gathered approximately 250 minutes of interview data from the participants.

Classroom observations

In order to gain insight into teachers' classroom practices within a natural setting, I had initially proposed two rounds of classroom observations for each participating teacher. Merriam and Tisdell (2016, p. 144) describe four distinct positions a researcher may assume during observations, that of a complete participant, a participant as observer, an observer as participant, and as a complete observer. A "complete participant" actively engages in the group under scrutiny while concealing their researcher identity. Conversely, a "participant as observer" immerses themselves in the group transparently acknowledging their role as a researcher. An "observer as participant" primarily observes but also engages in group activities. Lastly, Merriam and Tisdell define a "complete observer" as someone who solely observes without actively participating.

During the classroom observations, I assumed the role of a "complete observer," which enabled me to maintain my primary role as a data gatherer (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). During the observations, I strategically positioned myself in the back row to ensure an unobstructed view of the classroom proceedings. A classroom observation protocol containing field note (Appendix I) was used to aid this data collection process.

As outlined by Merriam and Tisdell (2016), these observations provided me, as a researcher, with opportunities to witness participants' practices, contributing to a deeper understanding of the context. The insights gained from classroom observations were utilised to enhance the level of data triangulation in my study (Carter et al., 2014; Leech & Onwuegbuzie, 2007; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Furthermore, information gathered from the observations served

as prompts in subsequent recall interviews (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). To capitalise on this advantage, I used field notes to document classroom activities, offering points of reference for discussion during the recall interviews conducted as promptly as possible after each observation session.

Before and after the observations, the participating teachers were informed that the purpose was not to evaluate their teaching. Instead, the primary aim of conducting classroom observations was as prompts for the recall interviews, which would provide further insights for me into how professional learning influences the practices participants implement in their classrooms.

As planned, the classroom observations occurred approximately one to two weeks after each initial semi-structured interview session, and the notes taken during the observations were utilised for the recall interviews conducted within the same week. Each observation lasted approximately an hour. However, despite having proposed two observations for each teacher participant, only one participant - *Nou Hach* - allowed me to observe his teaching twice. The remaining six participants (*Kong Bunchhoeun*, *Ven. Som*, *Chuon Nath*, *Krom Ngoy*, *Keng Vansak*, and *Queen Indradevi*) cited time constraints near the end of the semester as reasons for not permitting additional observations. Nonetheless, single observations with the majority of the research participants provided data of suitable quality for my research.

Weekly voice memos

Another method utilised for data collection involved weekly voice memos recorded by the research participants and transmitted to the researcher via Telegram Messenger. Telegram Messenger was chosen due to its user-friendly interface, reliability, and adaptability (Sutikno et al., 2016). Being free of charge and accessible as a web-based, desktop, and mobile

application, Telegram Messenger is widely used among smartphone users in Cambodia. It facilitates asynchronous communication between participants and the researcher. Voice memos received through Telegram Messenger were exported as audio files and securely stored in a password-protected cloud storage, affording me as the researcher flexibility in data management and security.

Each participant teacher was requested to record a weekly voice memo between the initial and subsequent classroom observations for the research project. While a suggested duration of approximately three minutes was provided, participants were encouraged to determine the length and number of memos according to their preferences and needs. Memos could be recorded in *Khmer*, English, or both languages.

In the weekly voice memos, participants were prompted to describe activities undertaken during the week that they believed would enhance their professional practice (Appendix J: Voice Memo Protocol). These memos were intended to yield insights into the professional learning endeavours of participating teachers, including their perceptions about the effectiveness of their learning activities, motivational factors, contextual influences, and classroom practices.

However, despite the participation of all the participants in this phase of data collection, only a limited number of voice memos were collected. Due to the low response rates and the amount of data already gathered, the decision was made just to use the voice memos which had been collected and conclude the process without any further follow-up with participants.

Documentation

As a further source of data, I sought access from the universities where my research was being conducted to the participating teachers' lesson plans, worksheets, handouts, textbooks,

course outlines, and official policy documents related to teachers' professional development. This type of data collected facilitated further exploration of the interrelationships among the various factors influencing TPL. Furthermore, these data were expected to shed light on any potential variations in TPL practices among English language teachers across both public and private educational institutions, as well as between urban and provincial Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in Cambodia.

3.4.7 Data analysis

The analysis of qualitative data involves the employment of either deductive or inductive coding processes, each with its own merits and limitations (Elliott, 2018; Elo & Kyngäs, 2008; Thomas, 2006). While deductive coding provides a structured and efficient method for qualitative data analysis within the framework of existing theories or concepts, researchers have identified several drawbacks associated with this approach, including limited exploration, biased interpretation, and contextual ignorance. Firstly, relying solely on deductive coding may constrain researchers from exploring new or unexpected themes that do not align with predefined categories, thus restricting the potential for discovering novel insights. Secondly, there is a risk of bias if researchers attempt to force data into predetermined categories, potentially skewing the interpretation of findings. Moreover, deductive coding may fail to fully capture the unique context, or cultural factors present in the data, as it primarily focuses on predefined concepts (Crabtree & Miller, 1992, 1999; Hsieh & Shannon, 2005).

Conversely, inductive coding serves as a valuable approach for exploring new and diverse perspectives within qualitative data, as it offers benefits such as the discovery of new insights, flexibility, openness, and rich descriptions. Firstly, inductive coding enables researchers to

gain unexpected and novel insights that may not be captured using pre-existing concepts or theories. Secondly, this approach provides the flexibility to explore data without being constrained by predefined categories, making it suitable for investigating a wide range of topics. Additionally, since codes and categories emerge directly from the data, the resulting descriptions can be rich, detailed, and grounded in participants' language (Azungah, 2018; Hsieh & Shannon, 2005; O'Kane et al., 2021; Patton, 2014).

However, the drawbacks of inductive coding include its time-consuming nature, lack of focus, and the potential overlooking of relevant information. Inductive coding can be time-consuming due to the extensive reading and analysis required to generate categories and themes. Without predefined categories, the analysis may lack a clear focus, resulting in potentially broad or fragmented findings. There is also a risk of overlooking important aspects of the data if the researcher lacks a prior framework to guide their analysis (Bazeley, 2009; Elo & Kyngäs, 2008; Paraskevopoulou et al., 2022).

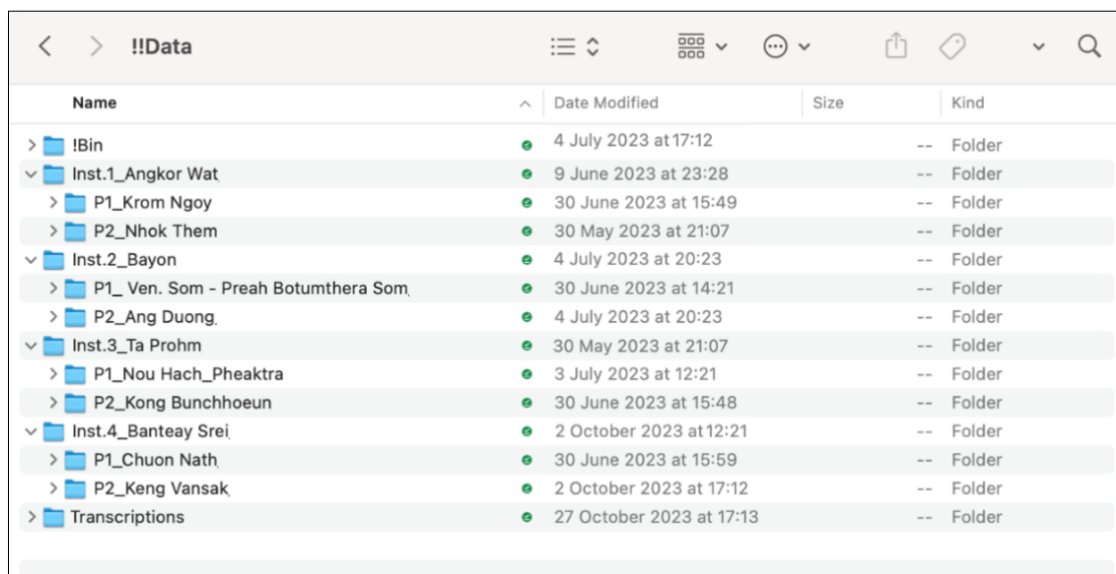
To maximise qualitative data analysis, a hybrid approach that combines elements of both inductive and deductive coding can be beneficial. The hybrid approach to qualitative data analysis seeks to harness the strengths of both approaches to provide a comprehensive and well-rounded analysis of the data. Moreover, employing the hybrid approach allows the researchers to achieve a deeper understanding of research data (Bazeley, 2009; Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006; Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2010). As the hybrid coding method seemed most appropriate for my study, the data analysis procedure was divided into two stages: preparation and trial, and the actual data analysis process for the study.

Data preparation stage for this project

The data preparation stage for this project began immediately following the completion of the data collection process. Initially, I ensured that all collected data, including the audio files of interviews, scanned notes that I took during the classroom observations, and voice memo sent by the research participants, were securely stored on a password-protected cloud drive, organised by folders based on the pseudonyms of the participating teachers. Simultaneously, all audio files were uploaded to NVivo for transcription and analysis. Figure 5 illustrates the way the collected data were stored and organised.

Figure 5

Digital Organisation of Collected Data



Name	Date Modified	Size	Kind
> !Bin	4 July 2023 at 17:12	--	Folder
▼ Inst.1_Angkor Wat	9 June 2023 at 23:28	--	Folder
> P1_Krom Ngoy	30 June 2023 at 15:49	--	Folder
> P2_Nhok Them	30 May 2023 at 21:07	--	Folder
▼ Inst.2_Bayon	4 July 2023 at 20:23	--	Folder
> P1_Ven. Som - Preah Botumthera Som	30 June 2023 at 14:21	--	Folder
> P2_Ang Duong	4 July 2023 at 20:23	--	Folder
▼ Inst.3-Ta Prohm	30 May 2023 at 21:07	--	Folder
> P1_Nou Hach_Pheaktra	3 July 2023 at 12:21	--	Folder
> P2_Kong Bunchhoeun	30 June 2023 at 15:48	--	Folder
▼ Inst.4_Banteay Srei	2 October 2023 at 12:21	--	Folder
> P1_Chuan Nath	30 June 2023 at 15:59	--	Folder
> P2_Keng Vansak	2 October 2023 at 17:12	--	Folder
> Transcriptions	27 October 2023 at 17:13	--	Folder

Given that the interview data were primarily in the *Khmer* language, the initial step also involved interpreting the data into English. This entailed listening to the interviews and voice memos to familiarise myself with the content. During this process, I made notes of significant sections and identified key interviews and quotes requiring translation into English. The translation and transcription of the interview data occurred concurrently with transcriptions

being typed directly into English on the NVivo Qualitative Data Analysis Software, Version 14 (NVivo, 2020). Rather than transcribing word for word from *Khmer* to English, I interpreted the participants' thoughts and ideas directly into English. Therefore, where the grammatical mistakes did not interfere with the intended meaning, I tended to keep the language as close as possible to the original text.

Following the interpretation phase, I sent all interview transcripts to the respective participants, requesting verification and confirmation of the accuracy of the English version in reflecting their intended responses (Appendix K). In the meantime, I also continued to organise other qualitative data which I had collected, including the field notes taken during classroom observations and the policy documents obtained from respective HEIs. After receiving verification from the participants, I revisited the interview data and transcripts to establish general themes which had occurred throughout the interviews.

Coding process for this project

Under the guidance of my supervisors, I piloted my coding and theme-creating process, utilising the hybrid coding method. The next step involved my supervisors and I independently coding a selection of translated interviews and voice memos. We then engaged in rigorous discussions to reach a consensus on key themes and a standardised coding process, thus enhancing the validity of the coding and the reliability of the data analysis (Merriam & Tisdell, 2009). In this regard, Brinkmann and Kvale (2015) differentiate between “arithmetic intersubjectivity” and “dialogical intersubjectivity” (p. 279). The former denotes reliability measured statistically, while the latter denotes agreement attained through rational discourse and reciprocal criticism among those interpreting a phenomenon. The framework

of dialogical intersubjectivity was adopted as the approach to validate the coding and ensure the reliability of the data analysis in this project.

After establishing the coding and theme-creation process which had been agreed upon during the meeting with my supervisors, I conducted another round of close reading of the data. This phase resulted in the identification of five broad themes: (1) perceptions of professional growth, (2) opportunities and challenges, (3) strategies and activities in TPL, (4) professional learning and classroom practice, and (5) perspectives on TPL facilitation. These five data categories were fundamental to the completion of the study objectives and to the answering of the research questions. However, to confirm the five broad themes and sub-themes, another round of theme validation with my supervisors was undertaken in one of our regular meetings.

Thematic categorisation for this project

Guided by these five broad themes, the analysis of each participant's dataset involved closely examining the interview transcripts and noting the emergence of sub-themes during the reading process. This entailed the scrutinising of each line in all the raw data to identify and assign descriptive codes to the themes related to the project's objectives. Consequently, after multiple rounds of close reading and coding, separate codebooks were developed for each participant to accommodate the variations in sub-themes, and to reflect the unique insights gained from their respective interviews under each overarching theme. Figure 6 illustrates an example of the process of creating themes and sub-themes.

Figure 6*Screenshot of NVivo Displaying Themes and Sub-Themes*

Name	Files	Referen	Created on	Created	Modified on	Modified b
Contextual factors for TPL	0	0	10/08/2023 2:41	TRC	10/08/2023 2:45 pm	TRC
Circumstances	0	0	10/08/2023 3:28	TRC	11/08/2023 11:45 am	TRC
Institutional context	0	0	10/08/2023 3:01	TRC	11/08/2023 11:46 am	TRC
TPL approaches	0	0	10/08/2023 2:41	TRC	10/08/2023 4:10 pm	TRC
TPL Strategies	0	0	10/08/2023 2:45	TRC	10/08/2023 2:45 pm	TRC
Collaborative learning	0	0	10/08/2023 4:10	TRC	10/08/2023 4:17 pm	TRC
Engaging with research	0	0	10/08/2023 4:13	TRC	10/08/2023 4:13 pm	TRC
Experimentation	0	0	10/08/2023 4:18	TRC	10/08/2023 4:18 pm	TRC
Feedback seeking	0	0	10/08/2023 4:15	TRC	10/08/2023 4:15 pm	TRC
Goal settings or action planning	0	0	10/08/2023 4:13	TRC	15/09/2023 4:23 pm	TRC
Inquiry-based learning	0	0	10/08/2023 4:18	TRC	10/08/2023 4:18 pm	TRC
Mentorship	0	0	10/08/2023 4:17	TRC	10/08/2023 4:17 pm	TRC
Self-assessment	0	0	10/08/2023 4:16	TRC	10/08/2023 4:16 pm	TRC
Student feedback	0	0	10/08/2023 4:12	TRC	10/08/2023 4:12 pm	TRC
Motivational factors	0	0	10/08/2023 2:47	TRC	10/08/2023 3:13 pm	TRC
Extrinsic motivation	0	0	10/08/2023 3:06	TRC	10/08/2023 3:06 pm	TRC
Intrinsic motivation	0	0	10/08/2023 3:05	TRC	10/08/2023 3:05 pm	TRC
Perceptions of professional growth	1	1	10/08/2023 2:43	TRC	12/09/2023 4:56 pm	TRC
Continuous Improvement	1	1	2/10/2023 9:39 a	TRC	2/10/2023 9:39 am	TRC

3.5 Positionality Statement

The qualitative nature of this research inherently reflects the influence of my positionality (Hampton et al., 2021; Henry & MacIntyre, 2023; Holmes, 2020). In this part, I describe my identity and role as a researcher for this project. First, I have a personal and professional history deeply intertwined with the context of my study. Growing up in a remote area of Cambodia, I initially had limited access to English language education, a factor that shaped my subsequent educational journey. I completed my undergraduate studies in English language teaching at Cambodia's flagship public university, an experience that opened my eyes to the educational inequalities between rural and urban areas. This personal history provides me with a foundational understanding of the challenges faced by English language teachers in Cambodia, which is central to my research.

My background as an English language teacher and teacher educator in Cambodia has equipped me with an insider's perspective of the educational system and the realities of professional learning. Over the years, I have engaged directly with many teachers in the field, which has allowed me to observe the discrepancies between formal, mandated professional development programmes and the informal, organic professional learning that takes place within peer networks. These interactions have deepened my understanding of the professional needs and challenges faced by teachers in my research context.

However, my position as a researcher also carries elements of both insider and outsider status, and these dynamics shaped my interactions with participants (Yip, 2024). While I share a common professional background with the teachers in my study, my transition from Cambodia to Australia and later teaching in New Zealand introduced a sense of difference. In Cambodia, I was often seen as an insider, someone who understood the local educational context and the struggles of teachers. However, my position as a researcher from an international background, particularly after transitioning abroad, may have also marked me as an outsider to some participants. Some may have perceived me as a benevolent advisor with authority, while others might have viewed my foreign experiences with a sense of scepticism or distance.

When recruiting participants, my dual identity as an insider and outsider was both advantageous and challenging. On one hand, my professional history in Cambodia helped me gain initial access to participants, as they recognised me as someone who understood their teaching challenges. On the other hand, my foreign background may have caused some teachers to question my understanding of their specific context or to regard me as detached from the daily realities of Cambodian classrooms. These dynamics influenced the level of trust

and openness in interviews and observations. Some participants may have felt comfortable confiding in me due to our shared professional experiences, while others may have been more guarded, possibly perceiving me as an outsider who might not fully grasp the nuances of their local educational environment.

Ultimately, my positionality as both an insider and outsider has shaped how I conducted my research, including the way I approached recruitment, how participants interacted with me, and how I interpreted their perspectives. I am aware of these dynamics and how they may have influenced the data I gathered, and I have reflected on this throughout the analysis process to ensure that my interpretation is as nuanced and grounded in the participants' voices as possible.

3.6 Ethical Considerations

Ethical approval for my research project was granted by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee (AUTEC) on 10 March 2023, under reference number 23/8 (see APPENDIX A). The ethical dimensions of the study were given thorough consideration, and my conduct of the project closely followed AUTEC's guidelines to ensure a participant selection process devoid of coercion and voluntary participation in the study.

Upon receiving ethics approval from AUTEC, I initiated the process of the project by sending formal letters requesting permission to conduct my study at the designated universities before my travel to Cambodia (Appendix E). Subsequently, I personally approached the heads of departments/faculties at each university, requesting them to disseminate the Participant Information Sheet for Teachers (Appendix F), along with an online notice, to reach all potential participants. All of the documents related to my research project were provided in both *Khmer* and English.

The Participant Information Sheet, which was available in both *Khmer* and English, served to convey crucial details about the research's objectives. It also provided my Cambodian mobile number and email address, through which interested teachers could contact me for further information or express their interest in participating. Note that the initial contact was established by potential participants reaching out to me, as the researcher.

Importantly, both the potential participants and I share teaching positions at a similar level of status, which should have eliminated any power differentials between us. Throughout the data collection process, I assured the teacher participants that their insights and teaching practices would remain confidential, and their involvement in the study would not adversely affect their careers. To ensure their privacy, participants were assured that their identities were unlikely to be identifiable by the general public. In the research report, pseudonyms like "*Krom Ngoy*" and "*Prasat Angkor Wat*" are used to reference participants and institutions (see Section 3.4.1 for these detailed descriptions). While acknowledging limited confidentiality within their own institutions, it is understood that participating teachers might be recognised by colleagues or supervisors. However, the design of this project which involved two teacher participants from each university was intended to prevent colleagues or supervisors from identifying the source of specific data or quotes.

The process of actual data collection began once informed written consent was obtained from all research participants. The confidentiality of participant details and the security of acquired research data were and continue to be fully safeguarded. Participant email addresses and mobile numbers were exclusively used for communication during the data collection period, and the research report employed pseudonyms instead of actual names. Furthermore, all research data, encompassing audio files, transcripts, and related documents stored in digital

format, were securely stored in a password-protected cloud storage. Printed documents were stored in a securely locked locker at Auckland University of Technology's City Campus.

3.7 Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I have explained and justified the reasons for the particular research design chosen for the present study. Beginning with an overview of the research paradigm, I discussed the rationale behind adopting a qualitative case study research design as the methodological framework for data collection. In the section on research design for the current study, I have also provided a comprehensive overview of the research context, data collection venues, and data collection procedures before outlining the process of data analysis. I have also included a positionality statement, necessary for establishing my position in this research, and a section on ethical considerations. Overall, these measures have been combined to ensure the integrity, credibility, and trustworthiness of the research. The next chapter presents a report on the findings of the research.

CHAPTER FOUR:

COMMITMENT AND GROWTH

Narratives of Engaged Practitioners

This research involved seven participants, from whom the primary data for the project were collected through four key methods: (1) semi-structured interviews with teachers, (2) classroom observations followed by recall interviews, (3) weekly voice memos from participants, and (4) relevant documentation. The initial semi-structured interviews contributed to the formation of themes regarding participants' perspectives on professional growth, opportunities and challenges in Teacher Professional Learning (TPL), as well as strategies and activities used in TPL. The subsequent classroom observations and recall interviews primarily provided insights into the impact of professional learning on classroom practice, along with participants' views on fostering enhanced TPL. Observing teachers in action helped me better understand what they were referring to when discussing their classroom behaviour and guided my questions during the recall interviews. The results of these observations and discussion are presented in the section on professional learning and classroom practice for each participant. Additionally, the weekly voice memos and analysis of relevant documentation offered further insights into each theme.

Findings from this research are presented in two chapters: *Chapter IV* and *Chapter V*. There are two fundamental reasons for this arrangement. Firstly, dividing the findings into two chapters enhances readability. Secondly, participants are grouped in each chapter based on their observable commitment to professional growth and shared sub-themes.

In this chapter, *Kong Bunchhoeun* (4.1), *Nou Hach* (4.2) and *Ven. Som* (4.3) share similar perspectives under the main theme of their perceptions of professional growth, and their

citing a sense of achievement, personal satisfaction, values, and responsibility as driving forces for their engagement in professional learning. Table 6 provides a summary of the participants' profiles.

Table 6

Summary of Participant Profiles Contributing to Findings Presented in Chapter IV

Participants	Highest teaching qualifications	Years of teaching experience	Affiliation
<i>Kong Bunchhoeun</i>	MA TESOL, international.	Approximately two decades	<i>Prasat Ta Prohm</i>
<i>Nou Hach</i>	BA TEFL, local.	Approximately two years	<i>Prasat Ta Prohm</i>
<i>Venerable Som</i>	MA TESOL, local.	Approximately a decade	<i>Prasat Bayon</i>

All three participants presented in this chapter demonstrate a strong commitment to TPL, sharing the belief that deliberate and continuous learning is essential for fostering professional growth. *Kong Bunchhoeun* and *Nou Hach*, both employed at Institution 3 – *Prasat Ta Prohm*, have benefitted from the institution's strong support for TPL and are solely affiliated with this workplace. *Ven. Som*, despite working across multiple institutions, upholds the values of sustained professional growth. Rather than emphasising a lack of professional learning opportunities at *Prasat Bayon*—where the data collection took place—he takes advantages of the diverse environments of his various workplaces to actively engage in professional learning. This chapter provides an account of each participant's views and experiences related to TPL (Sections 4.1 – 4.3). Key points and insights from these cases are summarised at the end of each participant's section. Table 7 presents the sub-themes that emerged from discussions and classroom observations.

Table 7

Sub-Themes Emerging from each Participant Whose Insights Are Presented in Chapter IV

	Perspectives on professional growth	Opportunities and challenges	Strategies and activities in TPL	Professional learning and classroom practice	Views about fostering enhanced TPL
Kong Bunchhoeun	- Sense of achievement - Internal drive and the importance of continuous learning - Unpleasant experiences as the personal driver for change	- Workplace support for TPL - Encouragement and sponsorship - Community of Practice (CoP) established and sponsored by the institution - Supportive colleagues and collaboration - Other opportunities for TPL	- Advice and feedback - Feedback and reflection - Importance of trust and selectivity when approaching colleagues - Informal conversations - Professional development workshops	- Implementation of techniques and ideas gained from workshops - Innovation and creativity in teaching methods - Incorporation of technology into teaching practice	- Importance of systematic support and professional growth opportunities - Recognition and reward systems - Consideration of timing to ensure broader teacher participation
Nou Hach	- Acknowledgment of growth - Curiosity and personal satisfaction - Identified gaps in teaching practice - Extrinsic motivation - Management expectations	- Workplace support: Availability of teacher professional development workshops - Workplace support: Research grants - Workload and time constraints - Limited confidence	- Research project - Interaction with colleagues - Use of technology for professional learning	- Implementing CLT in his teaching practice	- Desire to experiment in teaching practice - Desire for lighter workload
Venerable Som	- Personal values - Sense of responsibility - Continuous improvement as a guiding principle	- Interactions with peers - Availability of resources - Time constraints and workload - Loneliness - The perceived impact of policies on motivation for professional growth	- Self-reflection: A catalyst for improvement - Experimentation in teaching - Peer interaction and collaboration - Informal conversations - Meaningful peer feedback - Importance of trust - Use of Internet technologies	- Innovative teaching methods - Adaptation to students' needs	- Stable incomes - Achievable workload - Clear policy and guidelines

4.1 Kong Bunchhoeun

Don't pretend to be a "know-all person," open your mind and always keep learning new things!

~ Kong Bunchhoeun, the research participant.

Kong Bunchhoeun, employed at Institution 3 – *Prasat Ta Prohm*, holds a Master of Education Studies from a university in Australia. He has served as a lecturer at this institution since 2004. Beyond classroom teaching, Kong Bunchhoeun identifies himself as a dedicated scholar with a strong belief in continuous professional growth. He demonstrates this commitment through active participation in conferences and workshops, contributing to discussions and presentations on various topics such as student engagement, bilingual education models, blended learning, and research capacity development in social sciences and humanities.

4.1.1 Perspectives on professional growth

During the interview, Kong Bunchhoeun shared his perspectives, as well as factors and motivations that drive his dedication to professional growth. He perceived professional learning as an ongoing journey fuelled by a commitment to positively influence students, an innate drive for continual learning and growth professionally, but also unpleasant personal experiences during his teaching career.

Firstly, one of the motivators for Kong Bunchhoeun's professional learning was what he called "the profound sense of purpose" that had come from making a difference in students' lives:

I see my job as a teacher as quite impactful. I feel I have helped a lot of students to achieve their goals, they give feedback to me that their achievement partly resulted from my help. It makes me feel more satisfied than receiving financial incentives.

This quote illustrates that the intrinsic reward of witnessing students succeed serves as an encouragement for *Bunchhoeun* to continue forging impactful learning opportunities and inspiring his students.

Kong Bunchhoeun also highlighted the significance of internal motivation and the importance of maintaining a mindset of continuous learning. He believed that staying up to date with the latest pedagogical techniques and educational advancements was essential:

Don't pretend or see yourself as a 'know-all person,' always keep learning new things all the time. You need to understand that there is always something new and you need to create this curiosity to learn new things.

It appears to *Kong Bunchhoeun* that it is fundamental to remain open to new knowledge and grasp learning opportunities when possible, and this internal drive also serves as his personal motivation to engage in professional development activities.

Kong Bunchhoeun further conveyed that his professional learning journey was partly influenced by a painful experience, which saw him receiving fewer positive appraisals from his students, early in his teaching career. Rather than viewing this challenge as an obstacle in his professional pathway, *Bunchhoeun* acknowledged that the experience had become a catalyst for his self-improvement and a driving force that propelled him to become a better teacher:

It was my own bitter experience, the PAIN, when receiving poor evaluations from my students when I first started teaching. It was that painful experience that pushed me to further improve my teaching.

This realisation highlights the impact of his personal drive in motivating him to enhance his teaching skills.

4.1.2 Opportunities and challenges

In the course of analysing the interview data from *Kong Bunchhoeun*, various sub-themes emerged regarding learning opportunities. These included aspects such as workplace support

for TPL, the Community of Practice initiative, and collaborative interactions with supportive colleagues. Concurrently, the conversation also shed light on challenges impeding his involvement in professional learning activities.

To begin with, *Kong Bunchhoeun* believed that his participation in professional learning activities was largely influenced by the support and initiatives within his workplace, which include the availability of professional development (PD) workshops. He explained that a variety of professional gatherings, such as the Community of Practice (CoP) initiated and sponsored by the institution, internal PD workshops, and sponsorship for external events, proved instrumental in fostering his continuous commitment to professional growth. Moreover, *Kong Bunchhoeun* expressed appreciation for his supportive colleagues, acknowledging their significant role in his professional learning. He also underlined his own proactive pursuit of additional opportunities for TPL.

When discussing workplace support for professional learning, *Kong Bunchhoeun* pointed to various initiatives available at his school. He stated that some notable features included weekly workshops for him and his colleagues to attend and share their experiences, as well as annual internal conferences, providing an opportunity for teachers across the field to engage in professional learning activities. He provided an example:

[...] We also have this annual ELT conference on English language teaching and research, in addition to CoP workshops and other ad-hoc workshops by visiting professors or scholars from other local and international institutions. [...] At my workplace, we normally have such workshops available for us - teachers - to attend.

Bunchhoeun acknowledged that these educational events enabled him to stay up-to-date with the latest trends and effective practices in his field and allowed him to continually expand his knowledge base, as well as enhance his teaching practices. From my observation, the availability of these workshops also demonstrated the institution's proactive stance in providing accessible avenues for their teachers to engage in professional learning activities.

As *Kong Bunchhoeun* additionally revealed, *Prasat Ta Prohm* – the Institution where he worked – not only offered internal workshops and conferences but also actively encouraged and sponsored their teachers to attend both local and international professional development events. He stated, “I know that there is an annual budget for us to organise and attend PD workshops,” and gave an example of his being sponsored to participate in the CamTESOL Conferences – the international conference series on English language teaching founded in Cambodia in 2004. *Bunchhoeun* viewed this practice as the Institution’s commitment to ensuring that he and his colleagues have the necessary resources to participate in workshops and conferences, thereby fostering a culture of continuous learning.

Furthermore, *Kong Bunchhoeun* expressed his gratitude to his workplace and external stakeholders who organised and offered free workshops, “I genuinely appreciate [the] effort of the visiting professor from [a university from the US] and other people who offer the workshops.” Additionally, he pointed out that he voluntarily attended workshops without receiving payment, stating: “Even though I am not paid to attend the workshop, and I attend them on my own time, the workshop admission is free.” This highlights the significance of accessible, cost-free PD sessions in supporting his professional growth.

Perceiving it as an opportunity to engage in professional learning activities, *Kong Bunchhoeun* applauded the Community of Practice (CoP) initiative that had been developed and sponsored by his workplace. In the context of English language teaching, a CoP refers to a group formed by English language educators so that they can share a common interest, or concerns related to classroom practice as well as research in language teaching (Wenger et al., 2002; see Section 2.3.4). This platform enables social interactions, experience sharing, and collaborative learning among the group members. According to *Bunchhoeun*, the sponsored CoP created an invaluable space for teachers to convene and exchange insights, experiences, and good

practices of teaching. Additionally, he considered CoP not only as a stage for discussing the highs and lows of his own classroom journey but also a collaborative opportunity to enhance the collective knowledge and skills of his colleagues in language teaching.

Declaring himself as a committed member of the CoP at his institution, *Kong Bunchhoeun* stated that he actively engaged in various roles, contributing proactively and eagerly seizing opportunities to present when they arose:

I almost always attend those workshops. I sometimes offer a presentation or workshop in CoP as well. [...] I find offering workshops is not only about sharing what I know about teaching but also an opportunity to improve myself along the way, specifically, improve my public speaking and presentation skills.

This statement indicates that *Bunchhoeun* saw his consistent attendance, and occasionally taking on an active role by offering presentations or workshops, not only as a chance to share his knowledge about teaching but also a valuable moment for his own personal growth. In particular, he regarded these occasions as opportunities to refine his understanding of English language teaching and to enhance his skills in presenting to his peers.

As well as recounting his own positive encounters with the benefits of the CoP, *Kong Bunchhoeun* also described his observations of a colleague who similarly derived advantages from participating in the Community of Practice:

I also witnessed how a teacher benefited from attending CoP workshops. That particular teacher struggled a lot in his teaching; he was not very happy. However, after he kept attending the CoP workshops, sharing issues with colleagues and receiving feedback from fellow teachers, he has improved [his teaching performance] tremendously.

This serves as a testimonial to the opportunities available for his colleagues to engage in and derive benefits from attending the workshops of the CoP initiative.

Another integral element to the process of professional growth that *Kong Bunchhoeun* identified is his supportive colleagues and collaboration. He noted that seeking advice and

feedback, building trust with selected colleagues, and engaging in informal conversations all contribute to a dynamic and enriched learning environment for educators:

[...] I then started talking to my colleagues for their advice. It is fortunate that I have helpful colleagues who are always ready to share their thoughts and suggestions. They are willing to help; you just need to take courage and approach them. So, supportive colleagues are one of the factors that push TPL [...]

The insights shared by *Kong Bunchhoeun* underscore the significance of peer support in refining teaching practices and fostering a culture of continuous improvement. In this regard, he expressed his opinion that when educators come together to exchange ideas and experiences, they collectively contribute to the betterment of their profession, ultimately benefiting both themselves and their students.

Beyond being merely passive recipients of professional learning opportunities, *Kong Bunchhoeun* further stated that he and his colleagues also actively assume the role of knowledge providers. They took advantage of the chance to conduct workshops for fellow teachers in various locations, extending their expertise beyond their immediate surroundings: “We also deliver workshops to other teachers in the provinces.” He considered the occasion as an opportunity to share his expertise and foster the professional development of teachers in diverse locations, while simultaneously enhancing his own growth. Additionally, when disseminating knowledge to peers in other regions, *Kong Bunchhoeun* felt that he was promoting a culture of collaborative learning and support within the teaching profession.

Kong Bunchhoeun perceived teaching as a vocation that demanded dedication, passion, and a continual commitment to improvement. While establishing his devotion to his ongoing professional growth, *Bunchhoeun* also acknowledged that there were factors that presented themselves as challenges to this process. “Sometimes, I feel I am about to be burned out. Too much teaching - tired - no time to prepare.” This frank acknowledgment shed light on the

rigorous challenges he faced with demanding teaching schedules that resulted in fatigue and limited time for crucial preparatory tasks.

While mostly blaming workload, which can be the result of institutional assignment, *Kong Bunchhoeun* also indirectly alluded to the interplay between his teaching commitments and his personal desire to generate adequate income to support his family. He acknowledged that, being an hourly-paid teacher – like most of the other educators at his workplace – he had succumbed to the temptation to undertake multiple teaching assignments to ensure financial stability, which inevitably could result in a substantial workload and, as indicated, a potential risk of burnout.

4.1.3 Strategies and activities in TPL

In discussing his commitment to continuous professional growth, *Kong Bunchhoeun* described his intuitive strategies and activities for effectively engaging in his professional learning. He emphasised the practice of seeking guidance and constructive feedback not just from peers but also from students, thereby facilitating a comprehensive evaluation of his learning requirements. He also placed importance on the crucial element of trust in the individuals he had turned to for advice and feedback, recognising that a foundation of trust is integral to the efficacy of the learning process. Furthermore, *Bunchhoeun* valued informal dialogue as a method to exchange ideas among colleagues; he expressed his view that these organic interactions yield enriching outcomes that benefit his professional growth. He also praised the benefits which are derived from active participation in professional development workshops, recognising them as valuable arenas for honing skills and staying abreast of industry advancements.

Kong Bunchhoeun adopted a strategy of seeking advice and feedback as a fundamental aspect of his professional development. He believed that this approach allowed him to cultivate a wealth of collective knowledge and experience from his supportive colleagues. Such collaboration in his workplace enhanced his professional growth. “It is fortunate that I have helpful colleagues who are always ready to share their thoughts and suggestions.” This statement exemplifies what *Bunchhoeun* perceived as the value of peer input in refining teaching methods and pedagogical approaches.

Since he considered himself to be an academic who highly valued an open mindset, *Kong Bunchhoeun* stated that he looked beyond his colleagues for advice and feedback by also deliberately soliciting feedback from students. To facilitate this process, *Kong Bunchhoeun* gathered insights into his teaching effectiveness by using “exit tickets.” His statement “I sometimes seek feedback from my students on my teaching [exit ticket - e.g., what can I do more to improve my teaching]. [...] I often do this type of feedback seeking,” appears to show his genuine interest in understanding how students perceive his instruction. He believed that by actively seeking advice and feedback from various stakeholders, he not only demonstrated his dedication to enhancing the learning experience for his students, who are the primary beneficiaries of his professional development, but also established the groundwork for his own constructive self-improvement.

Kong Bunchhoeun described another strategy that he adopted to engage with his professional learning; he called it “feedback and reflection.” This typically went beyond merely seeking feedback by taking the additional step of reflecting on his teaching methods in light of the feedback he received:

Once I receive those “exit ticket” slips from my students, I will read them attentively and reflect on my teaching practice. One example of what I found from that activity

is my fast-speaking speed; I even recorded my own speaking and listened to the audio, and I agreed that the students were right about me speaking fast.

This shows that he actively engages in a process of reflection, carefully analysing the feedback received from students and highlights his conscientious approach to leveraging student feedback for professional growth.

Kong Bunchhoeun consciously made necessary adjustments to his teaching methods through the process of “feedback and reflection.” He described his response to students’ feedback, “I then consciously adjust my speaking speed - as well as my voice projection.” This attests to his commitment to meeting the diverse learning needs of his students.

Additionally, *Kong Bunchhoeun* indicated that self-reflection often resulted in an alteration of his teaching methods and his expectations of students’ engagement. He observed variations in student engagement between morning and evening classes:

I also notice that not all activities invite the same degree of participation from my students, the morning ones tend to be more active and participate more than those students who take the evening class - they are very tired after a long day at work.

Kong Bunchhoeun explained that this insightful observation guided his approach to designing lessons that cater to the specific needs and energy levels of his students. Through this process, he concluded that effective teaching requires a deep understanding of student learning styles and preferences, and that he valued the importance of observing the way students learn and adapting teaching methods accordingly.

While maintaining that seeking advice from colleagues and other stakeholders was valuable, *Kong Bunchhoeun* also highlighted the importance of trust and selectivity in these interactions. He explained that placing his faith in his colleagues was paramount, as it created a safe space for open discussions. Additionally, he believed that educators need to be careful in choosing which colleagues to approach for guidance:

I guess it is important to be selective about who you want to talk to. Make sure that the colleagues you approach are the ones who are genuinely supportive, and willing to help. You need to trust them.

This insight illustrates the delicate balance between seeking guidance and maintaining a professional relationship built on confidence and reciprocity.

On the topic of seeking advice and feedback from colleagues, *Kong Bunchhoeun* also advocated teachers' engagement in informal conversations as a way to enrich this experience. During the interview, he expanded upon his observations to explain how informal conversations with colleagues further highlight the collaborative nature of professional development. His statement, "The conversation normally takes place informally, e.g., at a cafe, the canteen, or the staffroom," highlights the organic and spontaneous nature of these interactions. According to *Kong Bunchhoeun*, these discussions served as platforms for the sharing of ideas and experiences, and such casual exchanges fostered a sense of camaraderie among educators and provided opportunities to explore innovative teaching methods and pedagogical strategies.

Kong Bunchhoeun also considered attending PD workshops as an additional approach to fostering his professional growth:

Another approach to TPL is that I always attend PD workshops whenever possible. For example, in CoP initiated in our English Department, every Saturday, there will be PD workshops and I almost always attend those workshops. [...] I really think PD workshops are a good platform for teachers to seek solutions to his challenges.

Through his statement, *Bunchhoeun* demonstrated that a collaborative environment, in which educators come together to share experiences and receive feedback, can foster an atmosphere of problem-solving and growth.

In addition, while discussing the workshop series as a component of the CoP initiative at his institution, *Kong Bunchhoeun* also mentioned that he actively engaged in PD workshops, not merely as a learner, but also as a contributor to the professional growth of his peers:

[...] I sometimes offer a presentation or workshop in CoP as well. I can be a role model for other teachers. I can tell them proudly that I was nervous when I first started to give workshops, but now I feel more confident and comfortable in doing so. I can inspire them to do the same - sharing through workshops.

This dual role reflects his strong dedication to knowledge-sharing and demonstrates a commitment to fostering a culture of collaborative learning. *Kong Bunchhoeun* felt that, through his consistent attendance and his role as a workshop provider, he embodied a commitment to excellence in teaching and a dedication to the betterment of his professional community.

4.1.4 Professional learning and classroom practice

This section presents *Kong Bunchhoeun's* perspectives on how engaging in professional learning has beneficially impacted his classroom practice. To begin with, he expressed his view that his engagement with TPL led to a direct application of the knowledge acquired during the workshop in his own classroom. Secondly, he observed that the professional knowledge gained from attending workshops enhanced his teaching techniques, so they became more dynamic and innovative. He also appreciated that TPL equipped him with greater creativity, adaptability, and the ability to integrate technology, thus elevating the learning experience for his students while continuously improving his teaching methods. *Bunchhoeun's* descriptions of the impact of his professional learning on his classroom practice were confirmed by me, the researcher, during the classroom observation that took place during the data collection process.

In his pursuit of professional growth, *Kong Bunchhoeun* stated that, whenever feasible, he actively applied the techniques and ideas acquired from professional development workshops in his teaching. *Bunchhoeun's* stance towards implementing innovative strategies was evident in his statement: "After I got to know this technique, I immediately applied it in my teaching." This immediate application underscores his proactive approach to incorporating innovative teaching methods into his classroom, ultimately benefiting his students.

To showcase his enthusiasm for applying what he had learned from the workshop into his own teaching context, *Kong Bunchhoeun* shared a real-world example of how PD workshops had shaped his teaching practice. During the classroom observation, task instructions were observed to incorporate action verbs corresponding to various levels in Bloom's Taxonomy (e.g., compare, contrast, argue, etc.). In the post-observation interview, he explained the reasons he had integrated Bloom's Taxonomy, which he had recently learned in a workshop, into his teaching. He observed that applying the framework allowed him to elicit answers from students and invite their thinking and ideas about a particular topic, as well as to foster critical thinking and creativity among the students. Additionally, *Bunchhoeun* believed that promoting these higher-order skills enhanced the depth of their learning and encouraged students to think critically and creatively.

Kong Bunchhoeun felt that his participation in various workshops significantly enriched his knowledge and skills. He further explained that the practice also led to innovation, creativity, and flexibility in his teaching methods. He stated that he usually liked to take a step further than just merely applying what he had learned during the workshop, as he believed that innovation and creativity were at the heart of effective teaching. "I sometimes add my own ideas/creativity into the technique to make it more fun or suitable for my class." To illustrate

how he incorporated and adapted engaging activities into his teaching, *Kong Bunchhoeun* described a classroom activity that he introduced during the observation:

Another possible technique I can use is to get the students to play Rock Paper Scissors, but I alter the rules quite a bit to match with my lesson. [...] I got to know this activity through a workshop. This is just an example of how I got ideas/teaching techniques from PD workshops. The workshops can be a starting point for me to get to know an activity. If I get curious about a certain activity in the workshop, I tend to either read more or apply it in my class.

During the classroom observation, this adaptive approach appeared to not only attract students' responses to the fun activities but also to create a positive and motivating learning environment.

Another observable impact that *Kong Bunchhoeun* perceived as being the result of his ongoing professional learning was his developing skills in integrating technology across various aspects of his teaching. "Other examples of what I have gained from the workshops include how to incorporate Google Classroom in my teaching, online voting, and online exit tickets." According to *Bunchhoeun*, this integration went beyond mere adoption—it substantially stimulated the students' participation, facilitated seamless communication, and streamlined assessment processes, ensuring the continued relevance and engagement of his teaching in today's digital age.

Kong Bunchhoeun also believed that his embrace of technology directly informed and shaped his instructional methods. During the classroom observation, he was seen utilising a microphone and speaker system within the instructional environment. When asked about the rationale behind incorporating these audio-enhancing technologies into his pedagogical strategy, *Bunchhoeun* explained that their use was instrumental in optimising instructional delivery and fostering effective communication with students:

Now when we are teaching face-to-face, I need to use a microphone and a speaker to make sure my voice is loud enough. This is a result of the students' feedback, and I took action to adjust my teaching style in response to their feedback.

Kong Bunchhoeun further explained that the adaptation and refinement of his teaching methods were based on the insights from the analysis of audio recordings captured during his online instructional sessions and the students' feedback. He believed that this integration not only enhanced his teaching effectiveness but also demonstrated his solid dedication to leveraging technology for an enhanced learning experience.

Beyond the classroom, *Bunchhoeun* admitted that he extended his utilisation of technology for self-assessment and professional development. He described how he conscientiously recorded and reviewed his teaching sessions, incorporating student feedback to make informed adjustments to his teaching style. "I even recorded my own speaking and listened to the audio, and I agreed that the students were right about me speaking fast." Additionally, reflecting on his experience, *Bunchhoeun* expressed a realisation that technology has become an invaluable asset in modern education. This idea appears to demonstrate his commitment to utilising technology as a tool for continuous refinement of his teaching skills.

4.1.5 Views about fostering enhanced TPL

Kong Bunchhoeun shared his insights into a potential approach for enhancing Teacher Professional Learning facilitation. He put forward what he considered to be a suitable framework for TPL facilitation which encompassed: (1) systematic support and professional advancement opportunities, (2) recognition and reward systems, and (3) strategic timing when facilitating professional learning for teachers. According to *Bunchhoeun*, this holistic approach would nurture a culture of lifelong learning among staff members, motivating educators to consistently engage in learning initiatives and empowering them to enhance their skills. He also believed that the implementation of these strategies ultimately would contribute to an elevated quality of education for students.

Kong Bunchhoeun identified “systematic support and professional advancement opportunities” as the first element of his proposed framework for TPL facilitation. He explained how the educational institution could be the bedrock of Teacher Professional Learning. “There should be systematic support for teachers’ growth, and there should be a record and reward system for the teachers who attend workshops.” His perspective suggests that in the Institution he works for there should be a profound recognition of the interconnected nature of continuous learning and professional progression.

In addition to appealing for systematic support, *Kong Bunchhoeun* also emphasised the necessity for the implementation of a “record/reward system” as a way to acknowledge and appreciate the efforts of educators who actively engaged in their own professional learning activities. While advocating for this system as the second element of his proposed framework for TPL facilitation, *Bunchhoeun* commented that this form of recognition not only validated teachers’ commitment to growth but also served as a motivating factor for them to sustain their professional learning journey. Additionally, he hypothesised that it could potentially boost morale and enthusiasm for TPL.

Elaborating on the third component of his proposed framework for TPL facilitation, *Kong Bunchhoeun* highlighted the importance of careful consideration of the timing of professional development workshops, as well as other forms of support, to ensure broader teacher participation. Acknowledging the practical constraints that teachers often face, such as busy schedules and responsibilities, *Bunchhoeun* demonstrated an awareness of the need to make professional growth opportunities accessible and accommodating. His statement, “The timing of the workshop is also important to make sure that more teachers can attend,” reflects his commitment to inclusivity and making TPL accessible to all educators.

4.1.6 Summary of *Kong Bunchhoeun's* responses

The dataset indicated that *Kong Bunchhoeun's* commitment to professional growth was driven by his personal experiences in teaching, a dedication to positively impact students, and an innate drive for continuous learning. Generally, rather than viewing challenges as obstacles, *Bunchhoeun* regarded them as motivation for professional development. The analysis of his interview also highlighted themes such as workplace support, community initiatives, and collaborative interactions as being opportunities for his professional learning.

In regard to strategies for undertaking professional learning, *Bunchhoeun* emphasised seeking guidance, constructive feedback, and building trust for effective TPL engagement. He valued informal dialogues, exchange of ideas, and participation in workshops as essential for skill development and staying updated.

The findings also pointed to *Bunchhoeun's* perceptions of the way TPL positively impacted his classroom practices, enhancing his teaching techniques, creativity, adaptability, and integration of technology. Toward the end of the conversation, *Bunchhoeun* put forward a framework for effective TPL facilitation, focusing on systematic support, professional growth initiatives, recognition, and strategic timing to foster a culture of lifelong learning among educators. He recommended that educational institutions prioritise these elements to inspire continuous learning and elevate the quality of instruction.

4.2 Nou Hach

I sometimes like to try out my own ideas, my own creativity, for teaching.

~ *Nou Hach*, the research participant.

Currently working at Institution 3 – *Prasat Ta Prohm*, *Nou Hach* graduated with a bachelor's degree in education, majoring in teaching English as a foreign language, from a local university in Cambodia in 2020. Over the course of the interview, *Nou Hach* appears to be highly committed to professional growth and keen to innovate his teaching practices, despite having less than two years of tenure in his current position.

4.2.1 Perspectives on professional growth

My examination of *Nou Hach's* interview provided insights into his views on his professional growth, detailing several themes related to his perspectives, as well as the motivational factors shaping his dedication to continuous learning. Beginning with his recognition of its potential impact on his career advancement, *Nou Hach* stated that his commitment to professional learning was driven by personal curiosity, a sense of personal satisfaction, and the identification of areas for improvement in teaching during interactions with colleagues. Furthermore, he explained that external factors, such as his aspiration for hierarchical progress in his career in educational leadership and alignment with the institution's policies, also contributed significantly to fuelling his commitment to ongoing professional growth.

Nou Hach acknowledged progress in his teaching performance:

I could see some changes in my teaching - even though it is not always a good one, but I still like what I am doing, and I feel that I have improved a lot.

Nou Hach recognised that the pursuit of quality in teaching required his dedication to ongoing professional learning and self-improvement. "Once I started working here, I started to realise

the importance of teaching approaches.” He believed that his self-evaluation and perspectives on his own teaching career served as a basis for his commitment to professional growth.

Throughout the data collection process, *Nou Hach* was observed to consistently display a curiosity about means to his professional advancement:

I am always curious to learn new teaching approaches and apply them in my teaching. [...] This aligns with my intentions to do better in my job. I am always curious to learn new teaching approaches and apply them in my teaching to see how it goes.

Nou Hach went on to explain that “It is also part of my own satisfaction. I believe I should be knowledgeable in my profession as a teacher.” He considered being knowledgeable in his profession as a teacher not only as a responsibility or duty, but also as a source of personal fulfilment.

According to *Nou Hach*, curiosity and personal satisfaction were the intrinsic motivations that drove his commitment to continually seek new knowledge and adapt to emerging educational methodologies. His insights also demonstrated his values regarding continuous professional learning and his belief that it contributed to his overall sense of accomplishment in his role as a teacher.

Another motivational factor that *Nou Hach* believed propelled his professional learning were the gaps in his teaching practice that he identified as a result of his informal interactions with his colleagues. “It also partly results from my personal observation of my peers’ teaching practice and my conversations with them regarding their teaching practice, and I feel the need to keep up with them.” Additionally, he explained that his reliance on conversations with his colleagues issued from his belief in the importance of engaging in informal learning for professional improvement. His demonstrated desire to “keep up with them” suggests a

motivation to stay abreast of current teaching practices, implying a sense of competition or comparison with his co-workers, which in turn results in his professional learning engagement.

In addition to showing his curiosity and personal satisfaction as his intrinsic motivations, *Nou Hach* also expressed a desire to progress in his career:

In the future, I hope to also progress in my career ladder to become a part of the management team, for example, to become a head teacher. That's part of the need to become a better teacher. I hope it will push me to the next level of my employment.

Nou Hach believed that there was a direct connection between continuous professional development and his success in achieving a leadership role in his field. According to *Nou Hach*, that aspiration served as a strong source of motivation, driving him to advance his professional knowledge with the belief that it elevated his accomplishments to the next level.

Nou Hach also expressed his view that management expectations and the educational institution's policies served as guiding frameworks that dictated his engagement in professional learning. "It is the policy and guidance from the management team. In essence, teachers here are expected to keep learning and developing their professional knowledge." It could be the case that his appreciation for this guidance and his accountability when complying with institutional policy formed the basis for his determination to stay abreast of current teaching practices and continually enhanced his professional knowledge. From my knowledge of this Institution, which was also confirmed by *Nou Hach*, his workplace demonstrates a commitment to fostering a culture of continuous learning and professional development among teachers working in this institution.

4.2.2 Opportunities and challenges

A review of the interview data with *Nou Hach* provided insights into his perceptions of opportunities and challenges that directly influenced his engagement in professional learning activities. He regarded the availability of teacher professional development workshops and research grant schemes provided by his workplace as opportunities for him to engage in professional growth. Concurrently, while acknowledging external factors such as workload and time constraints as challenges, *Nou Hach* believed that a perceived lack of confidence hindered his access to certain professional learning opportunities.

Nou Hach outlined two types of workplace support that he believed enabled him to undertake this process. The first type of support was the frequent number of workshops and training sessions available for him and his colleagues to attend:

Even though we are not paid to attend the workshop/training, my current workplace does a very good job in offering a series of workshops. [...] For example, I got to know this CLT [Communicative Language Teaching approach], alongside other teaching approaches, through a workshop.

Through his statement, *Nou Hach* recognised the initiative as a platform to enhance his professional growth, rather than a part of formal job requirements.

Nou Hach went on to provide another specific example of this type of support by stating: “They also have this CoP in which they offer a series of PD sessions.” A Community of Practice serves as a platform for members to share and learn good practices, as well as to create new knowledge through joint activities, discussions, and problem-solving (Wenger et al., 2002; see Section 2.4). *Nou Hach’s* recognition of available workshops, as well as the CoP initiative, confirmed his perception that there was ongoing support and opportunities for this participating teacher to undertake his professional learning.

The second type of support that *Nou Hach* reported as being offered by his institution was the availability of research grants for teachers to conduct studies on topics of their interest:

This research grant is an initiative at my workplace. Teachers are invited to submit their research proposals; the proposals are then screened and selected by a committee. We then receive outcomes along with the feedback. There is minimal funding for the project. I then applied for a small grant to conduct research in CLT, which was a topic discussed recently.

Nou Hach stated that he had successfully secured a research grant and was engaged in a study that focused on communicative language teaching. Additionally, he mentioned that the support provided extended beyond financial assistance. He explained that interested researchers had been informed that the research grant committee would not only award the grant, but also provide guidance in formulating the study, analysing data, and offering ongoing support for writing the research report. *Nou Hach's* account of the support he had received demonstrated the institution's dedication to fostering the professional growth of its educators and to promoting research practices within the field of English language teaching.

During the discussion of opportunities for his professional learning, *Nou Hach* also identified two significant obstacles that he believed posed obvious barriers to his engagement in the learning process. First, he expressed apprehension about his heavy teaching workload and time constraints, which significantly restricted his ability to actively participate in professional learning activities:

Practically, I have no time to attend all the workshops I wish to. It is quite hard, it is time-consuming, and I must balance between my teaching and my own professional learning. In fact, I tend to have less time for TPL.

While exhibiting a strong desire to engage in professional learning opportunities, *Nou Hach* also acknowledged the need to balance these with his teaching responsibilities, which might hinder his participation. His concerns demonstrate his awareness of the importance of carefully evaluating the feasibility of attending workshops and training sessions.

Likewise, *Nou Hach* identified his perceived lack of confidence in seeking support from colleagues as another formidable challenge. Classifying himself as a novice teacher, he expressed his hesitations:

Normally, I dare not ask my colleagues to observe [their] classes as I don't want to make them feel uncomfortable, despite some recommendation from the head of the department and I genuinely wanted to do so. [...] I sometimes request materials from other experienced teachers, but I am not confident in doing so as I don't want to make them feel uncomfortable.

Nou Hach acknowledged that his reluctance to seek assistance or feedback hampered his active participation in professional learning, creating obstacles rather than opportunities for growth in his teaching career. His concerns may stem from his own overthinking. At one point in the interview, he mentioned the friendliness and supportiveness of his colleagues which suggests that *Nou Hach* should try to overcome his reservations in seeking support.

4.2.3 Strategies and activities

Maintaining his dedication to ongoing professional growth, *Nou Hach* shared the strategies and activities he employed in his quest for continuous learning. Firstly, he placed significant emphasis on securing funding opportunities to support his research proposals, recognising this as a highly effective means of acquiring essential knowledge in his field of interest. In addition, he observed that informal interactions with colleagues consistently served as a source of inspiration for his professional learning endeavours, providing valuable insights and knowledge. Lastly, *Nou Hach* also relied on online resources as another key component of his professional growth.

Nou Hach believed that involvement in a research project was a way for him to hone his professional knowledge and gain a deeper understanding of pedagogical approaches. “My plan is to [...] take advantage of my current research project on applying CLT and to observe more experienced teachers applying these teaching methods in their own classrooms.”

Additionally, *Nou Hach* shared one incident in his journey when applying for a research grant, which allowed him to explore the concepts and practices of a communicative language teaching (CLT) approach:

I am now focusing on the application of CLT - communicative language teaching. I am genuinely very interested in this approach, and I wish to study it in-depth. In my attempt to better understand the CLT approach and its classroom application, first I started to do some extra reading by myself [...] I then applied for a small grant to conduct my own research in this area. My proposed title is "Challenges and Practices of CLT for IFL lecturers.

Through his statement, *Nou Hach* demonstrates an active commitment to seeking new pedagogical knowledge that benefits his teaching practice. He also appreciates the research project as an empowering method for this process.

In a manner which is similar to *Kong Bunchhoeun*, who worked in the same institution, *Nou Hach* showed his appreciation toward his supportive colleagues and considered interactions with them as a strategy to address his classroom challenges, as well as to pursue new knowledge in his language teaching practice. "When I face a challenge in delivering a certain lesson, I sometimes reach out to my colleagues for techniques/strategies in dealing with such issues."

Additionally, *Nou Hach* observed that the informal interactions with his supportive colleagues further enabled collaboration and contributed to his professional growth:

My conversations with my colleagues result from my curiosity about my teaching practice. It is part of my routine to start discussing the teaching practice with my colleagues whenever possible, i.e. in the common area, canteen, and staff room. The conversations are normally with those teachers who teach the same subject as I do and have more experience.

Nou Hach believed that engaging in casual exchanges with his supportive team members was not only a fundamental aspect of his professional growth but also fostered a culture of collaboration and shared learning within the educational community.

Nou Hach additionally stated that he proactively sought effective approaches to engage in professional learning and growth by leveraging the availability of online resources:

In addition to asking my colleagues, I sometimes do some extra learning by watching YouTube videos or searching online for ideas and supplementary materials, e.g. those related to the techniques for using CLT in teaching grammar or vocabulary. However, I have never been trained to search online. I learned to do so from my own trials and experience and observation. [...] Also, I never question the materials' credibility - and my workplace also never questions my materials.

He suggested that actively seeking out information and supplementary materials beyond what he could learn from his colleagues was at times more effective in addressing his own challenges. However, he also implied that there needed to be appropriate training to facilitate this type of practice.

4.2.4 Professional learning and classroom practice

This section provides insights into *Nou Hach's* perspectives on how engaging in professional learning has beneficially impacted his classroom practice, supported by two classroom observations I conducted during the data collection process. First, he emphasised that undertaking his research project on CLT classroom applications not only satisfied his intellectual curiosity but also had a tangible impact on his instructions. In particular, he mentioned that his engagement in professional learning had led to changes in his teaching approach. He reflected on his teaching methods prior to becoming familiar with the CLT principles:

Before getting to know the CLT approach, I used to focus on explicitly explaining the rules and forms of the target items. I didn't allow much time for students to be involved in communicative activities. It was a lot about teacher talk.

Nou Hach went on to highlight that one of the most significant transformations he observed in his teaching was an increased emphasis on his students' communicative competence:

CLT helped me to realise that I should change the way I teach grammar. I then started to adopt the inductive approach to grammar teaching. I started to get students to apply the target language in their communication. I started to value

more on communicative competency, rather than grammar rules. I started to see that the goal of learning a language is to be able to communicate on a daily basis.

An illustrative instance emphasising *Nou Hach*'s assertion of adherence to the CLT principle was the occasion (also observed by me) when he instructed his students to engage in an educational game. In this activity, each player was challenged to provide examples of the target language. "What I did this morning was a result of my curiosity in applying CLT in teaching grammar. [...] I always wanted to apply this type of teaching method in my class [...]." He stated that he was continuing to fine-tune his teaching practice so that it would better enable learners to engage in meaningful communication with others.

Additionally, when asked about permitting his students to use smartphones for designated group work within an observed classroom setting, *Nou Hach* explained by emphasising the foundational principle drawn from CLT that the application of the target language should be prioritised in students' language acquisition. He believed that this principle served as a motivating factor for integrating technology into various classroom activities. "During the lesson...I was trying to incorporate technology in my teaching by asking my students, in groups, to go online and search for some explanations and definitions of the target language items on their mobile phones." He stated that employing technology in this manner offered numerous benefits, such as fostering active learning, providing access to an extensive reservoir of information, and encouraging collaborative problem-solving among students.

4.2.5 Views about fostering enhanced TPL

During the discussion on TPL facilitation, *Nou Hach* offered his views about potential measures that his educational institution could take to enhance support for both his and his colleagues' professional learning. First, he expressed a desire for dedicated space and assistance to facilitate his teaching experiments, in order to better enhance his creative

instructional delivery. Furthermore, while acknowledging satisfaction with his workplace's initiative in providing workshops, *Nou Hach* emphasised that reducing the teaching workload should be another crucial step for the institution in order to optimise teachers' participation in professional learning.

To demonstrate a genuine commitment to professional growth, *Nou Hach* expressed his desire to incorporate innovative teaching ideas into his instructional approach:

I sometimes like to try out my own ideas, my own creativity, for teaching. However, when it comes to the pedagogical appropriacy, I have no clue how to confirm that and I feel I have no one to discuss it with.

Nou Hach believed that creativity in teaching had the potential to stimulate students' curiosity, foster critical thinking, and make the learning experience more enjoyable. However, he also acknowledged that the challenge lay in navigating the area of pedagogical appropriateness.

Expressing awareness of the challenge which need to be addressed, *Nou Hach* desired to additionally seek guidance and mentorship from experienced colleagues or educational experts:

If I had a chance, I wish to show my own creativity for teaching to more senior staff or a member of management to seek their feedback and judgement. I see this as a challenge I wish to experiment with.

Through this statement, he is seeking validation from senior staff members for his experimentation in teaching.

Nou Hach accepted that the mere introduction of creative elements into teaching would not always guarantee enhanced learning outcomes, not to mention alignment with intended educational goals. Therefore, he called for collaborative discussions, peer observations, and ongoing professional training to be provided, which then could provide valuable insights into the alignment of creative teaching methods with educational objectives.

Nou Hach believed that a suitable balance both of workload and acceptable income was fundamental for teachers to be able to fulfil their teaching duties and at the same time commit to professional growth:

My current workplace does a very good job in offering a series of workshops but practically, I have no time to attend all the workshops I wish to. [...] To facilitate better TPL, I think the teaching load needs to be reduced, however, the compensation should stay the same, to allow extra time to access TPL. It will be not very useful to have a workshop, but teachers do not have time to attend.

He suggested that his educational institution should explore options such as flexible scheduling, dedicated paid time slots for professional development workshops, and providing educators with resources for self-directed learning to optimise their teachers' professional growth.

4.2.6 Summary of *Nou Hach's* responses

Nou Hach's interview offered insights into his views on professional growth. Despite having less experience than the other participants, what made him stand out was his enthusiasm for innovation and creativity in his teaching practice. Additionally, *Nou Hach* was observed to be motivated by personal curiosity, satisfaction, and eagerness to identify areas for improvement in teaching. He also mentioned that external factors like career advancement and alignment with institutional policies played a significant role in driving his dedication.

Despite challenges such as workload and confidence issues, *Nou Hach* explained that he actively pursued ongoing professional learning. His strategies for continuous learning comprised of measures such as taking advantages of research grants, informal interactions with colleagues, and utilising online resources.

To showcase how engaging in professional learning benefitted his teaching, *Nou Hach* also discussed the impact of his research project on Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in transforming his classroom practice. He announced that he shifted from explicit rule

explanation to prioritising communicative competence, employing an inductive approach and integrating CLT principles into activities like educational games and smartphone use for group work.

In terms of facilitating teachers' professional learning processes, *Nou Hach* recommended measures such as providing dedicated space and assistance for teaching experiments. Additionally, while appreciating workshops, he emphasised the importance of reducing teaching workload to enhance teacher participation in professional development.

4.3 Ven. Som

My commitment to work extends beyond financial incentives, guided by a personal principle that compels me to consistently deliver my best services in whatever I do and wherever I go.

~ Ven. Som, the research participant.

Venerable (Ven.) Som, currently employed at Institution 2 – *Prasat Bayon*, holds a master's degree in TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) from a higher education institution in Cambodia and a postgraduate diploma in Applied Linguistics from an English language teacher training and research institution in a Southeast Asian country. Throughout the interview, despite working at multiple schools, Ven. Som demonstrated a strong commitment to sustained professional improvement and took advantage of his multiple work environments to engage in professional learning.

4.3.1 Perspectives on professional growth

The analysis of Ven. Som's interview highlighted various themes related to his perspectives on professional growth and the motivational factors that drove his commitment to engage in continuous learning. Ven. Som considered the role of professional learning to be essential in addressing everyday difficulties encountered in the workplace: "In my view, [...] professional learning involves building the capacity to navigate day-to-day challenges within the classroom setting." Additionally, he placed significance on maintaining his personal values and a sense of responsibility as key driving forces for ongoing improvement.

Ven. Som reflected on the degree of satisfaction with his teaching:

[...] while I feel that I have improved tremendously over the last few years of my teaching, I still feel that there is a need for a great deal of improvement in my teaching. Particularly, I feel there is no consistency in my teaching performance [...].

From the statement above, *Ven. Som*'s self-evaluation of his teaching performance is a starting point for his sustained professional learning commitment.

Ven. Som explained that his profound sense of responsibility was another key driving force for his commitment to his continuous improvement. This attribute was reflected in his description:

The challenge I am facing at the moment is that there is a very passive class. [...] I could have two different reactions: on the one hand, I tend to just say, ok whatever! On the other hand, I still have this urge to improve this class. In the end, I tend to more or less do something to fix it.

Ven. Som explained that this type of incident and his feeling of accountability drove him to proactively seek ways to tackle challenges and consistently explore paths for enhancing his teaching methods and achieving his desired outcomes.

Additionally, *Ven. Som* stated that his commitment to excellence was a reflection of the intrinsic motivation that drove his passion for his work:

The reason I took action for this matter is that I have a sense of responsibility, and I want to execute the assigned job to the best of my ability. My commitment to work extends beyond financial incentives, guided by a personal principle that compels me to consistently deliver my best services in whatever I do and wherever I go.

Ven. Som also recognised the importance of personal motivation, dedication to performing his job to the best of his abilities, and the value of ongoing professional learning and improvement in his teaching practices.

Ven. Som specified a strong dedication to continuous improvement as a guiding principle and strategic approach for his professional growth. He stated that he was consistently committed to self-reflection and growth, as he strongly believed in the constant potential for improvement in teaching. He gave an example of how he adjusted class materials:

I have modified this lesson plan three times already. Every time I teach this lesson, I always notice that something could be done better, and I always try new techniques in this class. I plan to make another revision when I teach this class again, e.g., I may

have to change the video to a shorter one as I know there are different versions available online.

He also made a point that his commitment to continuous improvement served as the cornerstone for ongoing self-assessment and adaptation in his teaching practice.

4.3.2 Opportunities and challenges

During the analysis of the interview data with *Ven. Som*, themes concerning opportunities and challenges emerged. These themes encompassed aspects such as peer interactions and the accessibility of resources that he perceived as the enhancement of his professional growth. Simultaneously, the conversation offered insights into challenges that hindered his engagement in his professional learning endeavour. For instance, *Ven. Som* stated that some institutional environments posed obstacles to his commitment to professional learning.

Ven. Som described external factors that he believed would offer opportunities for him to become more innovative in his teaching and expand his professional knowledge. Specifically, he recognised favourable circumstances for both formal and informal interactions with peers in fostering his professional growth. However, he noted that these interactions did not occur within the university setting where this research project was conducted. Instead, he mentioned that his role as a teacher in other work environments facilitated greater opportunities for engaging with peers. “[...] At another workplace, I got observed multiple times. And that’s how I got feedback from different levels of facilitators.” For *Ven. Som*, this represented an invaluable occasion to participate in and derive benefits from professional learning activities, despite the limited interactions with peers and classroom observations at the current institution where the data collection for this research took place.

Additionally, *Ven. Som* shared another example of how his professional learning was further enhanced:

I also want to emphasise that in the [omitted previous organisation]'s mission, we have this chance to share accommodation [a live-in experience] that allows us to interact more often and on an informal basis, that's how we can exchange more ideas or thoughts about teaching. I was put with more experienced teachers, so it was a good opportunity for me to learn from their practical experience about teaching that I can apply in my own classroom as well.

Through his statement, *Ven. Som* expresses his gratitude for being assigned to work alongside more experienced teachers. According to *Ven. Som*, this collaborative setting fostered the free flow of ideas and thoughts about teaching among peers.

Ven. Som recognised the availability of technological resources as an opportunity to experiment with his teaching techniques and to craft more dynamic and engaging learning experiences for his students:

The reason I came up with the idea of using a video instead of a listening text is because I could see we have a big screen TV that allows me to play a video. So, I want to make use of this available technology that prompts me to take a step further in my teaching. [...] I hope to make my teaching more engaging.

Ven. Som's incorporation of multimedia content in his lessons exemplifies his recognition of the inherent potential in embracing resources to enrich his pedagogical approaches. It also highlights his enthusiasm for leveraging technology in order to enhance educational methods.

While emphasising his dedication to professional growth, *Ven. Som* also recognised certain factors that pose challenges to this endeavour. In the interview, he mentioned two key obstacles to his professional learning journey: time constraints and workload, both of which contributed to a sense of isolation in his work environment, and he perceived discouraging policies implemented within his workplace.

As was the case with *Nou Hach*, *Ven. Som* demonstrated his awareness of the influence that workload and time constraints could have on his participation in a professional learning process. Indicating the time constraints, he emphasised that his role as a part-time teacher placed certain limitations on his involvement in professional development:

[...] I am a part-time teacher, so whenever there is a spot in my time, I will accept a class in a different school. And it is the same case for everyone I know. So, it is difficult to dedicate time for meetings - even for our regular staff meetings. Everyone is busy; [...] no one works in one place these days - can be up to 3 or 4 places. [...] Ideally, I wish we had time to interact and exchange ideas about teaching.

The above quote demonstrates *Ven. Som*'s keen interest in dedicating more time to meaningful discussions about teaching, despite the restricted availability of meeting times.

Additionally, while discussing the burden of his teaching workload, *Ven. Som* also demonstrated feelings of guilt about not feeling fully prepared and confident at times, due to the demands of his overloaded schedule:

I believe that there are factors that influence my teaching performance, e.g., time constraints. - too many classes, and not enough time for preparation. [...] the class I just got out of was not a good one. I know that it was not good because I observed and reflected on it - and it was because I was not well prepared.

[...] There are times that my preparation could be done to a level that I am happy with, and I feel guilty about that - I feel like I am not fully prepared and confident enough but still need to go to teach. And it is a result of overloaded teaching – i.e., three teaching sessions per day - too much.

Through his statement, *Ven. Som* demonstrated his awareness of the challenge in balancing his desire for adequate preparation and the practical constraints of multiple teaching commitments.

Despite his appreciation for peer interactions and its role in his professional growth, *Ven. Som* admitted that he sometimes experienced loneliness in his teaching profession. He believed that his part-time teaching role, coupled with the demands of juggling responsibilities across three to four different institutions, contributed to a sense of isolation in his workplace. He further explained that this loneliness was particularly critical when he needed to confront specific challenges within his classroom:

When I face any challenges, I don't have anyone to talk to. Therefore, I only rely on the Internet. Also, I can't rely on my supervisors or managers as they are not always available and have no resources in place for me to go to.

For this precise reason, *Ven. Som* explained that he found himself with few alternatives but to turn to the Internet, including social media platforms, for his professional learning needs. However, he acknowledged that time constraints and workload might impact his ability to explore and utilise these tools fully.

Another factor that *Ven. Som* perceived as a challenge in his pursuit of professional learning was the atmosphere within the work environment:

[...] I believe the motivational atmosphere is also important for my learning. You see, we are likely to engage in learning when we see our peers doing it. On the opposite, when our colleagues are not motivated, they can also be discouraging as well.

Additionally, *Ven. Som* acknowledged the influence of institutional policies on motivation and professional growth. “Unlike us [the institution where the research took place], other institutions that I also work with have a clear policy and budget for developing their teachers.” He implied that the university setting where this research study was conducted may not effectively communicate the availability of strategies and resources for the professional growth of teachers, assuming such policies are in place.

Likewise, *Ven. Som* observed that restrictive policies, such as the one prohibiting outside employment, may contribute to demotivation among educators:

[My workplace] has a strict policy for teachers not to work elsewhere alongside the Uni. [...] Such policies can significantly impact our ability to explore additional professional opportunities beyond our primary institution.

This perspective, however, appears inconsistent with his complaints about having to work at more than one institution to keep up with the cost of living.

Additionally, *Ven. Som* described an instance that highlighted his perception of his work environment, which further discouraged his pursuit of professional learning:

At my other workplace, there was a point when I was prohibited from applying for a scholarship. [...] I was puzzled and trying to make sense of why they [the

management team] were not willing to let me undertake higher education. It really demotivated me - I felt like my professional learning was not valued.

Ven. Som's sentiment demonstrates the psychological impact of policies that limit teachers' autonomy and opportunities for growth.

4.3.3 Strategies and activities

When outlining his commitment to continuous professional growth, *Ven. Som* shared the intuitive strategies and activities which he had adopted for his professional learning. He placed great emphasis on self-reflection, using it to address classroom challenges and explore innovative teaching methods. He also embraced experimentation in teaching, believing that trying new approaches was essential for professional development. Additionally, he valued peer collaboration, engaging in conversations with colleagues to exchange ideas and enhance his practice. For him, "trust" was a crucial factor in receiving meaningful feedback from peers. Finally, he actively integrated Internet technologies into his teaching, using them both as a resource for solving day-to-day challenges and as a tool to enhance his instructional methods. To begin with, *Ven. Som* explained that his practice of "self-reflection" was a starting point that enabled him to identify areas for improvement. He gave an example by describing a classroom challenge:

I used to rely on techniques that I was familiar with and learnt from my trainers to deal with [latecomers]; however, I realised that it should not be that way so, I try to work out an appropriate way by myself [...]. As a result, I could see some changes in students' attitude to punctuality within a few students. I then approached the remaining students who were still late for the class [...].

Ven. Som exhibited a strong inclination toward an independent and introspective method for overcoming challenges and refining his teaching. He expressed this preference, "[...] my approaches to dealing with challenges—rather than depending on a teacher educator [my mentor] as I [used to do]—I tend to rely on my self-reflection rather than seeking assistance

from others.” Additionally, he appeared to be selective when receiving suggestions related to teaching materials and methods. “I don’t always accept feedback from my peers when I don’t see the logic or if it lacks clear underlying principles [...]” While *Ven. Som* appreciates the idea of peer interaction to support his professional growth, he is cautious about whom he interacts with and the feedback he accepts.

As a second TPL technique, *Ven. Som* adopts experimentation in teaching, as well as self-reflection. Showcasing his enthusiasm for experimenting with innovative teaching approaches, *Ven. Som* demonstrated a flexibility in introducing a classroom activity:

[...] when I noticed that my students were bored, and less engaged with my lesson, through their facial expressions, I tried introducing another activity [discussion questions]. [...] however, I was not entirely happy with this activity as I believe I could do a lot better than this, it could be more structured than this. So, when I introduce this activity again, I need to be more prepared; for example, I need to be clear from the start about the timing, materials and whether I want a group discussion or in pair.

Ven. Som’s description of this teaching approach indicates that self-reflection and experimentation in teaching were interconnected processes that help him to continuously improve his teaching practices and enhance the learning experience for his students.

The third strategy for *Ven. Som*’s engagement in TPL was peer collaboration. While expressing his appreciation for self-reflection and experimentation as primary methods for his professional growth, he also recognised the value of collaborative learning and informal interactions with colleagues. He outlined three elements of peer interaction and collaboration for his professional growth: (1) informal conversations, (2) meaningful peer feedback, and (3) the importance of trust.

Through casual interactions, *Ven. Som* acknowledged that he could gain practical tips related to his own classroom practice and knowledge for his teaching improvement. He shared an example:

I learned about a new search tool from one of my colleagues. [...] While I didn't explicitly ask him to teach me how to use Microsoft Bing for searching resources for my teaching, the topic naturally arose during our casual conversations.

Ven. Som observed that this method of learning not only enhanced his skill sets, specifically in online resource searching, but also fostered his dedication to continuous improvement in his teaching approach for the betterment of his students' learning experiences.

During the recall interview, which took place after the classroom observation, *Ven. Som* described an instance in which peer feedback influenced his classroom practice:

Among those who gave me feedback, I found my peer teachers gave me more meaningful feedback. What makes it meaningful is that, rather than relying on what's in the books, they give feedback that is more practical and can directly apply to my own teaching context.

Ven. Som believed that classroom observations should yield practical suggestions and tips that could be directly applied to improve teaching practices, and that classroom practitioners were in the right position to provide such guidance.

In a manner which is similar to *Kong Bunchhoeun*, *Ven. Som* recognised "trust in his colleagues" as a crucial element in fostering successful peer interaction and collaboration:

More importantly, I trust [my colleagues], I trust that they can give me meaningful feedback or teaching tips/techniques that I can use in my teaching. It is important that [we] have trust in who we talk to regarding teaching challenges. I started to gain trust in them after I tried their teaching techniques and it worked! [...] Then, I started to feel more comfortable exchanging my ideas and experience at the colleague level.

He believed that having "trust in colleagues" established a secure environment where he could confidently share his experiences, seek advice, and receive constructive feedback. According to *Ven. Som*, trustworthy interactions promoted active participation and created a collaborative environment conducive to the ongoing enhancement of teaching and learning within his teaching context.

Finally, *Ven. Som* employed Internet technologies as another key strategy in his professional learning endeavours. He believed that this approach enabled him to leverage online resources to address challenges and access materials relevant to his teaching profession:

Through my professional learning experience, it is the Internet that is my first port of call when it comes to seeking solutions to my teaching challenges, as well as sourcing materials for my teaching. [...] I'm confident that the access to Internet is really promising for my teaching.

Ven. Som specifically mentioned the Google search engine as his “go-to” tool. “When facing any challenge, I turn to technology, especially Google, which has become my first point of contact...from there, it leads me to various sources, such as books.” This practice indicates a shift in his pedagogy towards increased self-reliance and the integration of technology as a problem-solving tool.

Additionally, *Ven. Som* explained how such strategies enabled him to learn new technology. “I learned this new search tool - Microsoft Bing [...], and [this] AI – Artificial Intelligence – powered chatbot enhances my search capabilities and delivers more meaningful results.” *Ven. Som* views these tools as an integral set of strategies that empower him to expedite professional growth and efficiently access a wealth of information swiftly.

While acknowledging the significant value of Internet technologies for professional growth, *Ven. Som*, however, expressed a preference for a limited use of social media in his professional learning endeavours. “In terms of using social media for my professional learning, I don't really do that a lot.” He explained that credibility and reliability concerns surrounding information shared on social media platforms partly contributed to his decision to limit their use for his professional growth.

Furthermore, general concerns about the credibility and reliability of online information influenced *Ven. Som's* cautious approach towards selecting appropriate materials for

teaching. “Even though I like searching for materials online, I always make sure that the materials are suitable for my students before using them. Sometimes, I adapt or modify them as necessary.”

4.3.4 Professional learning and classroom practice

This section presents *Ven. Som*’s insights into the positive effects of his professional learning on his teaching approach. First, he noted that engaging in professional learning equipped him with crucial skills to manage classroom challenges. These included effectively handling issues related to classroom management, e.g., addressing passive students who may seem uninterested in traditional teaching methods. Another positive outcome of his professional learning engagement according to *Ven. Som* was the observable impact it had on his teaching practices. Specifically, he believed it heightened his ability to consistently tailor his teaching methods to cater to the diverse needs and preferences of his students. *Ven. Som*’s reflection on the influence of professional learning on his teaching practices was supported by the classroom observation that took place during the data collection process for this study.

Ven. Som believed that engaging in ongoing professional learning equipped him with the skills needed to innovate his teaching methods:

I have never been formally introduced to this concept of ‘listening and viewing;’ however, I’ve come across this instruction in a reading that I did; and I thought it was interesting, and I wanted to apply it in my classroom.

Additionally, one example of the positive effects of his professional learning on his teaching approach was an observation by *Ven. Som* as to his application of the ‘listening and viewing’ technique in a listening class in order to motivate uninterested students:

What I did this morning was part of an assignment I did for my MA program. I applied it in my own teaching; however, I have improved it quite a bit. In my assignment, it was listening and pictures- not a video. However, after searching online, I found this video, and I believe it would be more interesting for my students,

so I chose it. [...] It is also because of a new concept for teaching that I learnt about listening and viewing (videos). So, I hope to make my teaching more engaging.

Ven. Som observed that his decision to shift from conventional listening to integrating videos made his teaching more engaging for students. Moreover, he maintained that he actively sought innovative strategies to deal with passive students who might appear bored with traditional teaching approaches, as well as to improve overall student engagement.

During the post-classroom observation discussion, *Ven. Som* attributed another positive outcome of his professional learning process to its impact on his teaching practices. He elaborated on the incorporation of discussion questions at the outset of one of his observed listening classes:

I started to reflect on which theory of activating background knowledge prior to a listening class, and I wish to make my lesson matches with my students' interest. So, I apply in my teaching. [...] The design of the worksheet is a result of what I wanted to apply my knowledge gained from my study.

Thus, *Ven. Som* feels that the outcomes of his professional learning contribute to improving his ability to consistently adapt his teaching methods to meet the diverse needs and preferences of his students.

4.3.5 Views about fostering enhanced TPL

During the interview, *Ven. Som* stressed the significant role of professional learning and pointed to the essential responsibility of each particular educational institution in providing essential support to facilitate this process. He also listed a set of priorities and considerations crucial to his professional context. First and foremost, *Ven. Som* believed that achieving financial freedom would afford him the opportunity to concentrate his energy and efforts on refining his teaching techniques. "To me, first, we need financial sustainability."

While taking into account the pressure to ensure a stable and satisfactory income, *Ven. Som* acknowledged that the quest for a sufficient livelihood can serve as a significant motivator for

undertaking teaching assignments in various workplaces, despite the demanding nature of such a teaching schedule. In addressing this issue, he explicitly expressed a desire to work exclusively at a single institution. “Personally, and I’m sure it is the same for any other teachers, I want to work for just one place.” This inclination also reflects a yearning for continuity and a stable professional environment.

Secondly, *Ven. Som* believed that a well-adjusted workload was equally critical. “The workload needs to be balanced - achievable.” He explained that this approach ensured adequate time and energy for meaningful professional learning experiences, all the while safeguarding his fundamental responsibilities as a teacher. *Ven. Som’s* perspective reflected his understanding of the essential conditions necessary for fostering effective methods for his professional growth. In light of balancing workloads, *Ven. Som* additionally complained that, “We are involved too much in non-academic duties and very much distracts us from our professional learning.”

Furthermore, *Ven. Som* pointed to the need for the educational institution to establish a transparent blueprint for teachers’ professional development. “They also need to have a clear policy and budget for developing their teachers.” According to *Ven. Som*, this expectation was rooted in the necessity of providing the essential resources to support the teachers’ professional learning process.

Finally, *Ven. Som* also highlighted the significance of a motivational atmosphere in the workplace:

I also believe the motivational atmosphere is important for my professional learning. We are likely to engage in learning when we see our peers doing it. On the opposite, when our colleagues are not motivated, they can be discouraging as well.

Ven. Som's recognition of the influence of the overall workplace atmosphere on individual professional development underscored the need for a more supportive and motivating environment for teachers to actively participate in the professional learning process.

4.3.6 Summary of *Ven. Som*'s responses

In summary, *Ven. Som* highlighted the importance of professional learning in addressing workplace challenges and the emphasises on personal values, such as a sense of responsibility, as crucial drivers for improvement. He identified opportunities such as informal interactions with peers as favourable environmental factors supporting professional growth. Conversely, *Ven. Som* observed that certain factors, such as the institutional atmosphere, time constraints and workload, exerted a negative impact on his commitment to professional learning.

Ven. Som shared strategies for effective professional learning, including a commitment to continuous improvement through self-reflection, peer collaboration, and collegial trust and experimentation in teaching. He valued Internet technologies as resources for solving day-to-day challenges. According to *Ven. Som*, participation in professional learning activities equipped him with skills to handle classroom issues, address passive students, and tailor teaching methods to diverse student needs.

In addition, *Ven. Som* highlighted the significant impact of professional learning on his teaching practices and stressed the educational institution's responsibility in providing essential support. The interview with *Ven. Som* concluded with a comprehensive set of priorities and considerations he felt were crucial to his teaching context.

4.4 Chapter Summary

This chapter has presented findings from three research participants, listed as follows: 4.1 Kong Bunchhoeun, 4.2 Nou Hach, and 4.3 Ven. Som. The findings have been categorised into five distinct headings: (1) perspectives on professional growth, (2) opportunities and challenges, (3) strategies and activities in Teacher Professional Learning (TPL), (4) professional learning and classroom practice, and (5) views about fostering enhanced TPL.

Overall, in addition to the five themes, the findings have pointed to a significant concept related to TPL. Drawing upon interview data from the participants, I concluded that there was a substantial amount of evidence which closely aligned with the principle of teacher agency for professional learning. This concept is comprehensively examined in *Chapter VI - Discussion*. The subsequent chapter provides the remaining sections of findings from this research study.

CHAPTER FIVE:

DISCONNECTION AND LONELINESS

Narratives of Teachers with Limited Evidence of TPL

This chapter reports the findings from the four remaining participants, listed in the order of appearance: *Chuon Nath* (5.1), *Keng Vansak* (5.2), *Queen Indradevi* (5.3), and *Krom Ngoy* (5.4). Table 8 provides a summary of the participants' profiles. The chapter concludes with a summary of key findings presented in both *Chapters IV* and *V*.

Table 8

Summary of Participant Profiles Contributing to Findings Presented in Chapter V

Participants	Highest teaching qualifications	Years of teaching experience	Affiliation
<i>Chuon Nath</i>	MA TESOL, international.	Approximately two decades	<i>Prasat Banteay Srei</i>
<i>Keng Vansak</i>	BA TEFL, Local.	Over sixteen years	<i>Prasat Banteay Srei</i>
<i>Queen Indradevi</i>	MA TESOL, international.	Over seven years	<i>Prasat Bayon</i>
<i>Krom Ngoy</i>	MA TESOL, local.	Approximately two decades	<i>Prasat Angkor Wat</i>

As discussed in *Chapter IV*, the grouping of the participants presented in this chapter is also based on similarities in sub-themes that emerged from their interview data. All four participants discussed here reported experiences of loneliness in their profession. During the interviews, there was limited evidence to suggest that any of them actively engage in professional learning. Two distinct reasons for this emerged: time constraints as a barrier to professional learning (*Chuon Nath* and *Queen Indradevi*) and the perception of there being very little need to engage in further learning (*Keng Vansak* and *Krom Ngoy*). In navigating their professional practice, they emphasise the importance of understanding students' backgrounds and how this contributed to more effective instruction. Another shared perspective was an overreliance on their existing teaching repertoire during their instructional practice. Table 9 provides an overview of sub-themes related to each of the participants whose insights are presented in this chapter.

Table 9*Sub-Themes Emerging from each Participant Whose Insights Are Presented in Chapter V*

	Perspectives on professional growth	Opportunities and challenges	Strategies and activities in TPL	Professional learning and classroom practice	Views about fostering enhanced TPL
Chuong Nath	- Continuous improvement as a guiding principle - Workshops and formal qualifications as the sources of motivation and inspiration - Ego and a sense of self-satisfaction - Challenges in teaching: Frustration with student engagement	- Teacher trainer role - The long commutes' role in informal conversations - Limited training opportunities - Drawbacks of long-distance travels - Potential backlash and accusations	- The open-minded attitude as strategy - Classroom observation: A teacher trainer's point of view - Knowledge acquisition process - Informal conversations	- Understanding students' language proficiency and adjusting expectations - Innovative teaching methods - Flexibility in teaching techniques	- The need to foster teachers' informal interactions - Importance of knowledge sharing platforms
Keng Vansak	- Challenges in teaching as an opportunity for professional learning - Keeping up with the teaching requirements - Desire for engagement - Commitment to continuous improvement	- Resource limitations - Impact of teaching multiple subjects - Isolation and loneliness resulting from teaching multiple subjects - Time constraints and challenges in classroom observation	- Understanding students' backgrounds - Reflection and reviewing materials - Use of Internet technologies	- Incorporating Internet technologies in teaching method - Tailoring teaching materials - Keeping students engaged	- Fewer subject, more classes - Formal training on accessing online materials and incorporating technology - Peer Learning and observation - Expanding professional learning opportunities
Queen Indradevi	- Continuous improvement as a guiding principle - Sense of achievement - Challenges and Frustrations	- Informal interactions with peers - Leveraging on the role of a lead teacher - Limited training opportunities - Loneliness	- Reflecting on teaching practice - Use of technology and online resources - Observation of others - Peer Collaboration	- Flexibility in teaching techniques - Creativity in teaching practice - Experimentation in teaching practice	- Desire for more professional development workshops - Learning from practitioners and international collaboration - Formal training on accessing online materials and incorporating technology
Krom Ngoy	- Acknowledgment of the growth over time - The role of experience in professional growth - Challenges in teaching - Awareness of new development in teaching methodology	- Inadequacy of training events - Inadequacy of clear guidelines and policy - Time constraints	- Understanding students' backgrounds - Peer interactions and collaboration - Constructive feedback	- Tailoring teaching technique to meet the unique students' requirements - Adaptation of teaching materials - Implementation of techniques and ideas gained from workshops	- Impact of institutional support - Fostering a collaborative culture

5.1 Chuon Nath

Teaching is a demanding job. If you don't have a sense of professional development, you can't be a teacher!

~ *Chuon Nath*, the research participant.

Chuon Nath, currently working at Institution 4 – *Prasat Banteay Srei* – located approximately 120 kilometres west of his hometown, holds a master's degree in TESOL from an Australian university and has over two decades of experience in English language teaching, including serving for a period of time as a university lecturer. In addition to his teaching role at *Prasat Banteay Srei*, *Chuon Nath* holds an academic position at another higher education institution, works as an English language teacher trainer, and serves as the head of the teacher training department at a non-governmental organisation dedicated to supporting and training public school English teachers in Cambodia. During the interview, he emphasised the importance of formal qualifications and conveyed a strong sense of commitment to continuous professional growth. However, there is little evidence to indicate that he actively engages in professional learning himself.

5.1.1 Perspectives on professional growth

During my analysis of the interview with *Chuon Nath*, several themes related to his perspectives on professional growth emerged. First, he expressed a commitment to continuous professional development. Secondly, *Chuon Nath* stressed that the inspiration he gained while attending workshops and formal training programmes was one of the driving forces for his ongoing commitment to professional growth. Additionally, he maintained that his quest for professional growth in education was significantly shaped by personal motivations as well as the challenges he faced in his daily work. However, during the

interviews, there was minimal indication that he took an active role in his own professional learning.

Chuon Nath stated at the beginning of the interview that his motivation and inspiration for professional learning was his profound recognition of the importance of continuous improvement in his teaching career:

When I started teaching, I realised that it is important to keep developing my profession continuously. So, upon my graduation from my undergraduate program, I always try to further read and attend PD workshops or training whenever possible. I also attended formal training such as undertaking the PG Dip. at [an omitted institution], on Teaching Listening and Speaking, [...] and later on a master's programme in TESOL, in Australia.

With this statement, *Chuon Nath* recognised formal qualifications as being fundamental to his career but also emphasised the significance of continuous learning for his professional growth.

Apart from acknowledging formal degrees as the foundation for his profession, *Chuon Nath* had also considered attending professional development workshops and training sessions to progressively increase his motivation:

Those opportunities have made me become increasingly motivated. I see it as a trigger for my motivation because I could witness a change in my teaching practice after the course.

He further explained that he had observed improvements in his teaching methods resulting from both his formal degrees and attending professional development workshops and training sessions; consequently, those educational events became significant sources of inspiration for his professional learning. However, *Chuon Nath* clarified that the PD workshops and training sessions mentioned had occurred before he was employed by the university where the data collection for this study took place, indicating that this teaching context (Institution 4 - *Prasat Banteay Srei*) still did not provide such opportunities.

Chuon Nath stated that his pursuit of professional growth in education was also deeply influenced by personal motivations, such as ego and a sense of self-satisfaction. Viewing his ego as a positive force that drove him to excel as a teacher, *Chuon Nath* stated:

What makes me reach this level of professionalism is that I care so much about my ego as a teacher. In other words, I want to do my best at what I am doing.

Additionally, *Chuon Nath* mentioned that: “I need to fulfil this sense of self-satisfaction. So, I can do anything to make sure I grow professionally.” According to *Chuon Nath*, his aspiration to reach the pinnacle of professionalism is intrinsically tied to his personal sense of fulfilment and accomplishment as an educator.

Chuon Nath accepted that classroom challenges were frustrating, yet they were the driving force for his professional learning. He elaborated his point by describing a disappointing situation he experienced regarding students’ lack of readiness and limited engagement in his classroom:

In my capacity as a classroom practitioner, what frustrated me is that students are not yet ready to get the benefits my teaching. They tend to be less participative, they don't value their study because of their ignorance – lack of readiness.

In confronting these issues, *Chuon Nath* emphasised the necessity for devising pragmatic solutions:

To address the issue of poor participation from the students, I have tried different approaches. For example, I try to understand why they don’t write. I sometimes raised this concern with my “close” colleagues [...] The most practical approach is to lower my expectations.

Chuon Nath acknowledged that these challenges demanded creative approaches, such as seeking suggestions from colleagues, adapting teaching strategies, and gaining deeper insights into factors influencing student engagement. Furthermore, he outlined the process of adjusting his expectations to the situation. However, this description aligns more

appropriately with the theme of “Professional learning and classroom practice,” which is discussed in detail in Section 5.1.4.

5.1.2 Opportunities and challenges

The interview data with *Chuon Nath* shed light on several themes related to opportunities and challenges that impacted on his pursuit of professional growth. To begin with, *Chuon Nath* considered his role as a teacher trainer to be crucial for his professional growth, viewing it as a pivotal avenue for development across multiple dimensions. He believed that this role enabled him to refine practical skills essential for his work as a classroom instructor, enhanced the quality of his instructional methods as a teacher trainer, and elevated the effectiveness of the teacher training programme he managed.

Chuon Nath explained how assuming the role of a teacher trainer enhances his effectiveness as a classroom practitioner. Expressing his appreciation for this role as a mentor, he stated, “I have been fortunate to cultivate on my position as a teacher trainer to observe my teacher trainees and gain benefit for my own professional growth.”

Secondly, *Chuon Nath* elaborated on how this duty benefits his other role as a teacher trainer. He shared an example of an issue that came up during the training. “A group of my teacher trainees raised their concerns with me regarding the challenges of implementing some teaching principles or techniques in their own classrooms.” He explained that being aware of these obstacles from the practitioners’ perspectives obliged him to seek alternative approaches to executing these educational methodologies in order to address his trainees’ concerns. Additionally, *Chuon Nath* emphasised that his teacher trainees’ feedback served as a powerful stimulus for reflection in his role as a teacher trainer, enabling him to foster

educational excellence and equip his trainees with the knowledge and practical skills needed to excel in their own classroom.

Additionally, *Chuon Nath* stated that being involved in the teacher training programme also enhanced his leadership role as the department head, which included assessing trainees' progress and identifying areas for improvement within the training curriculum. In this capacity, he considered receiving feedback as an opportunity to reflect on the training programmes, enabling strategic decisions regarding programme structure. For instance, based on feedback from teacher trainees, he recognised the need for a one-to-one monitoring programme to support their training. *Chuon Nath* believed that engaging in the process of evaluation and self-assessment was a useful way to ensure that his training programmes remained effective and relevant.

During the interview, *Chuon Nath* shared his unique situation involving regular lengthy commutes of approximately one hundred and twenty kilometres from his hometown to his workplace. He valued the lengthy journeys he needed to travel as opportunities for informal dialogue with colleagues, often yielding practical solutions to both his own and his peers' classroom challenges. "This type of conversation happens quite often, especially to those who share the same transportation with me." He also mentioned that his informal discussions with colleagues during the shared transportation encompassed a range of topics, including work-related matters, personal experiences, and mutual interests. These interactions could be particularly valuable in addressing common challenges and finding solutions that benefit both himself and his colleagues.

While appreciating the opportunities for growth, *Chuon Nath* referred to his role as a teacher trainer as his only form of professional growth. However, he identified three obstacles that

he perceived as hindrances to his professional advancement. First, he viewed the absence of professional development sessions as a significant challenge which hindered any improvement in his teaching. He illustrated this by pointing out the limited availability of training opportunities in specific domains, such as using the internet for teaching preparation and attending webinars. “There are no PD workshops focusing on accessing material online. I recall training sessions on using Google Classroom, but such workshops were scarce. In fact, we rarely have any workshops.” *Chuon Nath* also noted the absence of online training sessions, such as webinars and other asynchronous training modes, as an element which was lacking in his professional advancement.

Secondly, while acknowledging the lengthy commutes as offering unique opportunities for informal conversations with colleagues, *Chuon Nath* considered these weekly long journeys to also present challenges for his professional learning and growth. He explained that the extended travel time usually resulted in fatigue and time constraints, impacting on his ability to participate in additional professional development activities or to spend time with his family. To compound matters, he expressed frustration regarding the absence of travel allowances or compensation for teachers in his category, which he considered as one of the reasons which demotivated him from further professional learning.

Another significant challenge for professional growth which *Chuon Nath* highlighted was a fear of the potential backlash he might experience by not conforming with the expectations of the management. He outlined two dimensions that could potentially affect his daily practice. First, he expressed a frustration because the administration did not approve of his grading policy, which was stricter than of his co-workers’. The end result was that he was not allowed to fail students that he believed were not competent. However, he was worried

about being labelled as an ineffective or incompetent teacher, which then created a reluctance on his part to maintain his rigorous assessment standards although he believed they were academically justified. “[...] Then it will go back to us - we will be accused of not knowing how to teach.”

Moreover, despite being unable to cite specific instances, he felt that his opinions would need to be suppressed at the workplace where the research study took place. He hinted at his apprehension about job security, thus emphasising his underlying concerns about his professional environment:

[...] there is no formal platform for me to raise issues - except for this staff meeting, at which I don't feel comfortable [...] - I just don't want to make noise.

According to *Chuon Nath*, the insecurity he felt about raising concerns at his workplace limited his creativity in teaching and finding solutions for problems. This appears to have negatively affected his interactions with management and was hindering his professional growth.

5.1.3 Strategies and activities

During the interview, *Chuon Nath* shared his intuitive strategies and activities for TPL. He began by emphasising the importance of an open-minded attitude as a key strategy for honing his knowledge and skills. Additionally, although they were part of his role as a teacher trainer, he underscored the value of classroom observations as also being useful for his own professional growth. Moreover, *Chuon Nath* identified himself as a strong advocate for implementing what he referred to as a three-step knowledge acquisition process to enhance his teaching career. Finally, he acknowledged the significance of informal interactions in addressing classroom challenges and discussing sensitive workplace issues.

Although *Chuon Nath* upheld his position as an experienced figure in the English language teaching (ELT) field when playing roles as a classroom practitioner, a teacher educator and a

teacher training programme leader, he noted that it was fundamental to exhibit a willingness to consider diverse perspectives and keep honing his professional knowledge on a daily basis. “Teaching is a demanding job. If you don't have a sense of professional development, you can't be a teacher! For my professional growth, I am open to feedback.” He further elaborated on an example of the type of knowledge he has acquired such as being open to feedback:

For instance, CLT - communicative language teaching: my teacher trainees reported that they understand the concept, framework and how it can be implemented; however, in real-life practice, they said some principles can hardly be translated into practice. They pointed out various factors that hamper the implementation of CLT, including students' background, and class sizes.

Chuon Nath explained that, through feedback statements from his trainees, he gained more insights into the factors hindering these pre-service teachers from the effective implementation of certain teaching principles. As a result, he observed that having an open-minded attitude is one of the strategies he adopts for his professional growth. “[...] From there, I can use the feedback to improve my instructions, and to evaluate my training program.” He regarded an open-minded attitude as a powerful strategy for unlocking one’s full potential and fostering collaboration, creativity, and innovation in a workplace.

He believed that making the most out of classroom observations, which he had done as a part of his duties as teacher trainer, was crucial for his own professional growth, viewing it as another valuable learning technique:

Observing my teacher trainees provided me with so many benefits. First, I can use that opportunity to reflect on the effects, outcomes of my teacher training program. Second, it also reflects on my teacher trainers' [my subordinates] practice, all of which reflect on programme development, in terms of content selection and delivery methods.

Through these statements, *Chuon Nath* suggests that while providing feedback to his trainees he is engaged in a degree of reflection on his own teaching practice and considers how to effectively improve it.

An additional strategy employed by *Chuon Nath* in fostering professional growth entailed the implementation of what he referred to as a framework comprising a three-step knowledge acquisition process (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999):

To achieve this, I seek knowledge for practice: So, I read, I observe other teachers then I apply and reflect on it. So, you acquire the knowledge, try it out, and reflect on it to evaluate its effectiveness.

[...] I follow this frame of “Knowledge for practice, knowledge in practice, knowledge of practice” for my professional development.

Chuon Nath believed that this process has effectively served as a structured approach for his own professional growth in his teaching career. He had advocated for the widespread promotion of the framework among his colleagues and other English language teachers in the field.

In addition, taking advantage of the unique opportunities presented by his lengthy commutes which involved sharing a ride with his close friend, *Chuon Nath* recognised the informal conversations with colleagues that occurred during travel as a beneficial strategy for his professional growth. While acknowledging that “this type of conversation happens quite often,” he emphasised that these spontaneous discussions provided a valuable platform for sharing experiences, brainstorming solutions, and offering emotional support to peers. Additionally, his statement — “I often discuss my concerns with my ‘close’ colleagues” — indicates the importance he placed on trust and camaraderie, which can be conducive to open and honest dialogue.

5.1.4 Professional learning and classroom practice

This section presents *Chuon Nath*’s self-assessment regarding the beneficial outcomes of his engagement in professional development in regard to his classroom methods. He described how he utilised his teaching background and insights into students’ academic readiness in

order to adapt his teaching techniques and address classroom hurdles. The analysis of data additionally suggested that his wide array of teaching strategies, methodologies, and resources enabled him to foster adaptability and creativity in his teaching role. *Chuon Nath's* reflections on the impact of professional development on his teaching methodologies were corroborated by classroom observations conducted during the data collection phase of this study.

Chuon Nath believed that it was fundamental to consider students' backgrounds and their language proficiency in his classroom practice:

To address the issue of poor participation from the students, I have tried different approaches. For example, I try to understand why they do not write in my writing class, and I learnt that it is because they're struggling so much with the basic English language structures – I'm talking about sentence level! Now I know that the issue lies in the students' basic English proficiency – and academic writing is already a challenging subject for most of the students.

Drawing from his teaching experience, *Chuon Nath* explained that taking into account students' language struggles when developing instructional materials was an effective way to tackle the challenge of poor class participation. Therefore, he believed that, instead of adhering rigidly to predefined expectations, the most practical approach was to lower his expectations. He described his method:

So, I need to adjust the level of difficulty for the task I assigned to them, and the most practical approach is to lower my expectations and I alter scoring rubric - rather than focusing on the quality, I now encourage to complete the task – marks are given if they complete the task.

Chuon Nath further explained that his willingness to accommodate students' learning needs and adjust his expectations shaped the design of his tasks and their levels of difficulty, making the materials more accessible to the majority of students. According to *Chuon Nath*, this approach not only enhanced the learning experience of individual students but also contributed to the overall inclusivity and diversity of his classroom setting.

He observed that after many years of experience of teaching the same subject, he had become more innovative in his teaching methods. During the post-observation interview, he recounted his transition from a traditional teaching approach, which focused on rules and conventions, to a student-centred approach that prioritised active learning and practical application of writing skills through project-based learning:

I have been teaching this Academic Writing subjects for so many years. And obviously, when I first taught it, I could see a lot of flaws in the course and keep improving it. For instance, initially I focused too much on the rules/conventions of writing – the form, the structure ... that left very little time for the actual practice for my students. Now, I adopt the project-based learning concept in the course design. So, my students are the ones who work harder, not me anymore – they are the ones who do most of the writing.

Chuon Nath stated that he acquainted himself with the concept of project-based learning through extensive reading and workshop attendance, and he realised that this was particularly suitable for the writing class that he was teaching.

Another example which illustrated how *Chuon Nath's* professional learning influenced his teaching practice was noted when he described the possibility of altering the sequence of his classroom activities. Specifically, when asked about possible improvements to the classroom activity which I observed, he offered an alternative as follows:

For this activity, we can adjust the order of the steps when introducing to the student. Say, for example, rather than follow the top-down process as I did this morning, we can try the bottom-up method by asking the student to produce a piece of writing and we can use those text as a teaching material – by getting other students to analyse the piece together in class.

Chuon Nath underscored the importance of his teaching repertoire in providing a certain degree of flexibility in his instructional methods:

I have this level of flexibility thanks to my seniority – my teaching experience, knowledge of the subject area and the knowledge of teaching methodologies.

As his statements demonstrates, *Chuon Nath's* teaching repertoire served as the basis for the entire classroom practice as described in this section. He explained that his diverse range of

teaching strategies, methods, and resources empowered him to cultivate flexibility and innovation in his role as a teacher in helping to meet the academic needs of the students.

5.1.5 Views about fostering enhanced TPL

During the interviews, *Chuon Nath* held some reservations about publicly expressing his views on TPL facilitation in his institution, for example, through his statement, “[...] except for this staff meeting, at which I don’t feel comfortable raising any issues - I just don't want to make noise.” However, he recommended some measures that Institution 4 - *Prasat Banteay Srei* – could implement to enhance teachers’ professional learning process. More importantly, he highlighted the need to foster informal interactions among teachers. As discussed in Section 5.1.3, *Chuon Nath* also considered “informal conversations” as an activity for his own professional learning. He believed that it was important to establish a confidential and secure environment where individuals could address personal frustrations, voice concerns, and seek advice on specific teaching challenges. Therefore, he urged the Institution to consider fostering a supportive atmosphere for such interactions to flourish. According to *Chuon Nath*, informal communication channels could emerge in various contexts, including casual encounters during commutes or breaks. These unplanned interactions contributed to the creation of a supportive community of educators who were better equipped to navigate the challenges of their profession.

As a result, although he maintained his own enthusiasm for sharing his knowledge and skills to his colleagues, *Chuon Nath* emphasised the need for a supportive workplace environment that facilitated such sharing platforms. Despite the observable regret seen in his statement, “I tried to share my knowledge with the management team, but they ignored my suggestions. [...] I am disappointed that I am not being challenged to my best capacity to deliver the best

result that I am capable of,” *Chuon Nath* remained committed to sharing his expertise with his colleagues. For instance, he advocated for the adoption of the three-step knowledge acquisition process (see Section 5.1.3) as an effective framework for professional growth among teachers. He stated that this approach remained unfamiliar to many educators, hindering its full potential. To bridge this gap, *Chuon Nath* offered to conduct workshops or presentations to demonstrate its efficacy. Therefore, he emphasised the importance of establishing knowledge-sharing platforms where experienced educators like himself could disseminate their knowledge and skills to peers and urged his workplace to give this proposal careful consideration.

5.1.6 Summary of *Chuon Nath*’s responses

This analysis of *Chuon Nath*’s interviews has led to an understanding of his perspectives on professional growth. First, he maintained his profound commitment to continuous learning. He stressed that his inspiration from workshops and formal training programs served as a driving force for his commitment to growth. Additionally, *Chuon Nath* highlighted his personal motivations and daily work challenges as significant influences on his pursuit of TPL.

Opportunities and challenges impacting *Chuon Nath*’s professional growth were also evident in the interview data. He considered his role as a teacher trainer as being crucial for growth, but he also faced impediments to deeper involvement in professional learning activities. He mentioned that the long commutes often led to exhaustion and limited time for him to engage in TPL.

At the same time, he shared his strategies and activities for TPL during the interview. He emphasised that an open-minded attitude, classroom observations, and a three-step knowledge acquisition process were valuable assets for teachers. Furthermore, *Chuon Nath*

acknowledged the significance of informal interactions in addressing classroom challenges and discussing workplace issues.

The dataset also shed light on *Chuon Nath*'s self-assessment of the positive outcomes of his engagement in professional learning of classroom methods. He adapted his classroom instruction based on his teaching background and insights into his students' academic situations, thus fostering adaptability and creativity. Classroom observations by the researcher during data collection supported the accuracy of *Chuon Nath*'s remarks on the impact of professional development on his teaching methodologies.

Sharing his perspectives on TPL facilitation, *Chuon Nath* recommended measures for the enhancement of teachers' professional learning. He emphasised the need to foster informal interactions among teachers and create a supportive workplace environment for sharing knowledge and skills.

5.2 Keng Vansak

When I feel that my teaching is not going as well as I expected, I normally review my materials; maybe it is too difficult or too boring for the students, so I tend to adjust materials or change them completely.

~ Keng Vansak, the research participant.

Keng Vansak, with a Bachelor of Education earned in the early 2000s from a higher education institution in Cambodia's capital, has over 16 years of experience as a university lecturer. Alongside his academic role at *Banteay Srei*, he also holds positions at three other educational institutions in his hometown. Like *Chuon Nath*, Keng Vansak travels 120 kilometres from his hometown to teach at *Banteay Srei* on a weekly basis. During the interview, while attributing his intensive workload and the time lost to travelling as barriers to professional learning, he believed that his existing knowledge was sufficient and saw little need for further learning.

5.2.1 Perspectives on professional growth

The examination of Keng Vansak's interview data provides insights into his perspectives on professional growth, revealing several themes related to the motivational factors shaping his dedication to TPL. Principally, he perceived challenges in teaching as a foundation for his professional learning rather than as obstacles in his teaching practice. Additionally, he considered the need to keep up with teaching requirements, a desire for engagement, and a commitment to continuous improvement as key driving factors for his involvement in various professional learning activities.

Keng Vansak viewed classroom challenges as opportunities for change. “When I face a challenge in my classroom, I tend to find the root cause of it, so that I can find a solution for it.” To come up with creative solutions, he believed in the need to understand the underlying issues contributing to difficulties in his students’ learning process, and he considered those confronting classroom issues he faced as the basis for his professional learning engagement.

He noted that another catalyst for his professional learning is the imperative to stay abreast of evolving teaching requirements. “The course and teaching materials require some changes to my teaching. It involves developing or sourcing new materials and adopting new teaching methods.” This participant conveyed that his engagement in professional learning activities was driven by his recognition of the need for changes in response to the course. He believed that the process enabled him to adjust his teaching materials and methods, aiming to better meet the evolving demands.

Additionally, *Keng Vansak* pointed to another factor that propelled his commitment to professional learning. “It is also part of my desire to make my class and teaching more engaging and attractive.” He believed that engaged students were more likely to retain information, develop critical thinking skills, and become active participants in their own learning. He considered these positive changes in students to be one of the key driving forces behind his pursuit of professional growth.

To achieve the goal of making classes engaging and attractive, *Keng Vansak* explained that he placed a strong emphasis on ongoing improvement in teaching materials and activities. “For future improvement, I still think it is important to improve my core teaching materials, supplementary resources, and class activities to make my class more engaging and attractive. I may need to source or develop my new classroom activities.” *Keng Vansak* also found

continuous efforts to improve his teaching materials and activities an effective way to provide his students with dynamic learning experiences.

5.2.2 Opportunities and challenges

During the analysis of the interview with *Keng Vansak*, a number of themes also emerged in regard to his perceptions of the opportunities and challenges for his professional learning journey. However, *Keng Vansak* offered limited insight into the opportunities for his professional learning engagement within the university where the data collection took place. Despite the uncertainty surrounding the existence of such opportunities, it could be speculated that *Keng Vansak* might not recognise or be fully aware of the potential avenues for professional growth within his teaching context. When he was probed about the factors enhancing his professional growth, he mainly highlighted his over two-decades-long teaching experience:

For example, when noticing that some particular students struggle to keep up with the class materials or assigned tasks, I rely on my own observation and my experience to come up with a solution by either adjust my teaching materials or change my instructional methods.

Additionally, at times, he emphasised how access to internet technology had provided opportunities to enhance his teaching practice and effectively address professional challenges. However, *Keng Vansak* also provided plentiful perspectives on challenges related to his professional growth.

In fact, *Keng Vansak* identified four obstacles that hindered his access to professional learning. First, he stated that inadequate physical and digital resources directly impeded his teaching and commitment to professional growth. Moreover, he expressed concern about being assigned to teach multiple subjects simultaneously, which created a workload challenge because of the demanding preparation required for each subject. Moreover, *Keng Vansak*

believed that this work arrangement partly contributed to his feelings of professional isolation, especially when encountering issues related to teaching. Finally, he mentioned that another challenge he faced was that of time constraints, which he believed were obstacles to his intentions to engage in peer observation. The subsequent sections expand on the four obstacles that *Keng Vansak* mentioned during the interview.

To begin with, one of the main challenges *Keng Vansak* considered as an obstacle for both his teaching and professional growth was the inadequacy of teaching and learning resources within his workplace, including both electronic materials and physical books, within his workplace. “There are not many resources in the library, and we cannot easily find what we want.” He further noted that the library at his current workplace was predominantly populated by dated books, making it challenging to find contemporary and relevant materials. Additionally, *Keng Vansak* mentioned that the institution did not subscribe to any paid academic journals, whether online or in print. According to *Keng Vansak*, the lack of resources in the library left him with few options, leading him to turn to the internet for the teaching and learning resources he desired.

The second challenge that *Keng Vansak* believed had affected his pursuit of professional growth and the quality of his teaching performance was his being assigned to instruct multiple subjects or courses:

If we teach one subject to six classes, it is far better than we teach one subject for one class, and we end up teaching six subjects to six classes. It requires a lot of preparation. Because we are on a small scale, like it or not we have no choice but to accept more subjects - it makes it more difficult if the subject is new. This factor has a big impact on how we teach.

Keng Vansak conveyed that this type of workload could affect the quality of his instruction, as he often found himself stretched thin when trying to allocate time and resources across multiple subjects. He also suggested that this work arrangement could lead to increased

stress and burnout and negatively impact a teacher's ability to create a positive and supportive learning environment. As a result, *Keng Vansak* admitted that finding dedicated time for professional learning was almost out of the question for him.

Another consequence resulting from teaching multiple subjects that *Keng Vansak* pointed to was the experience of physical isolation and loneliness in his profession, particularly when he faced challenges in his classroom. "In my case, it can be quite lonely, with no one to talk to when I face an issue." Furthermore, *Keng Vansak* believed that his professional growth was impeded by limited opportunities for collaboration with colleagues. He also stated that the absence of opportunities for feedback and materials exchange hindered his effectiveness in delivering instruction.

Keng Vansak considered time constraints as one of the challenges for him to share and learn from his colleagues. "I never asked to observe a teacher... because I do not have time to do so." Moreover, while expressing interest in observing other teachers' classes, *Keng Vansak* also acknowledged potential discomfort among colleagues if he were to ask to observe their teaching. "I am also concerned that the teachers I am asking will not feel comfortable for me to observe their teaching."

Keng Vansak speculated on two reasons that led him to believe that his colleagues may not be adequately prepared for his visits to their classes. First, as an hourly-paid teacher himself, he recognised the limitations of time and compensation associated with the profession. Understanding that his colleagues were not remunerated for preparation hours, he believed they were less inclined to dedicate extensive time to refining their teaching materials. Secondly, the challenge of inadequate preparation time was exacerbated by the necessity to commute between different workplaces. Drawing from personal experience, *Keng Vansak*

highlighted the physical distance he covered, commuting approximately a hundred and twenty kilometres every week between his residence in one province and his teaching duties in another.

5.2.3 Strategies and activities

In the interview, *Keng Vansak* described the techniques he employed to survive and thrive in his daily role as a teacher. First and foremost, he underscored the importance of understanding students' backgrounds to deliver effective instruction. Additionally, *Keng Vansak* believed that relying on his past teaching experience was crucial for being able to review materials and tailor them to meet specific learning needs based on students' profiles. Another strategy he highlighted was the utilisation of internet technologies to access teaching and learning resources.

Keng Vansak considered understanding students' backgrounds as one of the most important aspects in his instructional preparation which enabled him to teach them effectively:

We need to understand that students' [academic] profiles are always not the same, so we need to tailor our course design and carefully select materials that suit them. As a teacher, we also need to be flexible in how we deliver the lesson, mark students' assessment tasks, and apply rules and regulations.

Keng Vansak explained that, leveraging his over two decades of teaching experience, he observed a connection between students' backgrounds and their motivation, engagement, and willingness to participate actively in the learning process. He believed that understanding these underlying factors allowed him to tailor his teaching strategies and interventions to address specific issues effectively.

Keng Vansak stated that another strategy to ensure and maintain the quality in his teaching was the practice of regularly reflecting on and reviewing materials:

When I feel that my teaching is not going as well as I expected, I normally review my materials; maybe it is too difficult or too boring for the students, so I tend to adjust materials or change them completely.

Keng Vansak explained that his proactive approach to self-assessment and self-correction to teaching was necessary to enhance the learning experience for his students. Additionally, he considered these reflections fundamental to carefully assessing the unique needs, learning styles, and strengths of his students.

In the specific context of an under-resourced physical library, *Keng Vansak* recognised the effective use of Internet technologies as a valuable technique to access teaching materials for his students and learning resources for his own professional growth:

Normally, I source supplementary materials online. I see the Internet as an 'e-library.' It is very convenient, quick, and easy to use. You're very likely to get what you want in far less time than you would spend in the library. When using the Internet, all you need is a correct keyword, you will get plenty of resources for your teaching.

Keng Vansak appreciated that the Internet's vast and dynamic nature allowed him to access a plethora of digital resources, ranging from scholarly articles and e-books to multimedia presentations and interactive simulations. Additionally, he acknowledged that the Internet's immediacy and accessibility facilitated the incorporation of current events, real-world examples, and emerging research findings into the classroom, enriching the educational experience and enhancing the relevance of course content.

5.2.4 Professional learning and classroom practice

This section presents *Keng Vansak's* insights into the positive effects of his participation in professional learning on his classroom approaches. During the interview, *Keng Vansak* highlighted the transformative impact of Internet technology on his teaching methodologies. Beyond serving as an additional teaching aid, he explained how this platform served as a gateway to additional resources. According to *Keng Vansak*, these supplementary materials

not only enhanced the learning experience but also played a crucial role in sustaining his students' motivation and active engagement throughout the class. His reflection on the influence of professional learning on his teaching practices was supported by a classroom observation conducted by the researcher during the data collection process.

Keng Vansak's use of Internet technologies to access teaching materials and incorporate them into his teaching was evident in a class observed during the data collection period. During the lesson he played an audio file streamed from a website for a listening class, allowing his students to complete a pre-designed worksheet:

I adapted the lesson plan from [an omitted website] by adding some warm-up and vocabulary activities. I got to know this website through the Google search engine when I was looking for appropriate materials for my students. [...] The reason I tend to rely on Internet search is that the library is not very resourceful.

Keng Vansak expressed his profound gratitude for these readily available classroom materials that he could use for his own teaching at no cost. In addition to his appreciation, *Keng Vansak* also believed that this approach provided him with the flexibility to tailor his methods and materials to suit the diverse profiles and abilities of his students. During the discussion of his observed teaching, he explained:

We need to tailor our course design and carefully select materials that suit them. [...] I know that the supplemental materials from the website that I used in my classroom are suitable for my students based on my observations of their abilities, and I know their profiles.

Keng Vansak emphasised that, in addition to the official course syllabus, employing supplementary materials that aligned with the course objectives provided an avenue to stimulate students' curiosity and enthusiasm for their learning. "I tend to use supplementary materials in my class, in addition to the course book, to keep my students on their toes all the time."

5.2.5 Views about fostering enhanced TPL

During the interview, *Keng Vansak* shared his views on key priorities that his educational institution should consider in order to enhance teachers' engagement in the professional learning process. First and foremost, he emphasised the need for the administrators to address class timetabling issues. Furthermore, *Keng Vansak* advocated for formal training sessions focused on accessing online materials and integrating Internet technology into teaching. He also expressed a desire for increased peer interactions, internal (to his institution) professional development opportunities, and external conference attendance.

To specifically address the challenge of being assigned to teach multiple subjects, as also discussed in Section 5.2.2, *Keng Vansak* implied that timetabling needed careful attention. He expressed his preferences: "[...] we need a lot of teaching hours to secure our income, but, if possible, I want to teach only one or two subjects to, for example, five or six classes, so that I have more time to improve my teaching." According to *Keng Vansak*, being assigned to teach fewer diverse courses—while maintaining the same number of teaching hours— would translate into more time for TPL.

Although he was already consistently integrating Internet technology into his teaching, *Keng Vansak* advocated for formal training in accessing online materials and effectively incorporating Internet technology into classroom instruction:

For searching materials online, there is no formal training. I learnt it through my own observation, I observe what works and what doesn't. Sometimes, I learn from my peers.

[...] I agree there should be formal training on how to access materials online. There should also be training sessions on how to incorporate technology in teaching.

Inspired by informal peer learning, *Keng Vansak* recognised the benefits of a collaborative teaching community. He believed that in this environment, teachers could share insights, strategies, and experiences in utilising online materials to improve their teaching practices.

Additionally, *Keng Vansak* indicated that he longed for opportunities to interact and learn from his peers:

Informal interaction also happens but again it does not happen very often. It is because everyone is busy. [...] We would be able to share ideas and materials to make our teaching better.

Keng Vansak recognised the significance of having someone to talk to when facing teaching issues. He noted that peer support can take various forms, including collaboration with colleagues, mentorship programs, or participation in professional learning communities. *Keng Vansak* considered these avenues as opportunities for educators to share experiences, seek advice, and gain insights from others who would understand the difficulties of teaching.

In addition to his desire to learn his professional knowledge through peer interactions, and formal training offered by his workplace, *Keng Vansak's* perspective illustrated the imperative need for increased professional development opportunities for himself and his colleagues. "If possible, I would like to have PD workshops internally and also sponsor us to attend conferences outside our workplace." He considered that external conferences provided exposure to a broader educational community, offering fresh insights, networking opportunities, and exposure to cutting-edge educational practices.

5.2.6 Summary of *Keng Vansak's* responses

In summary, *Keng Vansak's* interviews indicated his dedication to continuous professional growth and learning. He believed that his motivation for professional learning stemmed from the need to keep up with teaching requirements, a desire for engagement, and a commitment

to continuous improvement. Additionally, he viewed challenges in teaching as opportunities for learning rather than obstacles.

While offering limited insights into university-based opportunities for professional learning, *Keng Vansak* identified challenges to his professional growth, including insufficient resources, teaching multiple subjects, workload challenges, professional isolation, and time constraints. Regarding the strategies for his professional growth, *Keng Vansak* emphasised understanding students' backgrounds, personal reflection about his teaching, and using internet technologies for teaching resources. He also highlighted the importance of his extensive teaching experience.

Keng Vansak observed that his participation in professional learning positively impacted his teaching approach, including the way Internet technology had transformed his methodologies and served as a gateway to additional resources. *Keng Vansak* also shared his views about TPL facilitation. He recommended that his Institution address timetabling issues, provide formal training on accessing online materials, foster increased peer interactions, and encourage internal professional development opportunities and external conference attendance.

5.3 Queen Indradevi

To me, professional growth is rooted in a formal qualification.

~ *Queen Indradevi*, the research participant.

Queen Indradevi had served as an educator at Institution 2 – *Prasat Bayon* – for more than seven years. She held a master's degree in English Education from a university in a Southeast Asian country, as well as another in TESOL from a local higher education institution in Cambodia. Like *Chuon Nath*, she highlighted the significance of formal qualifications during the interview and appeared to place high value on professional growth. However, there was limited evidence to indicate that she actively participated in professional learning herself.

5.3.1 Perspectives on professional growth

Sharing her perspectives on professional growth, *Queen Indradevi* expressed her firm belief in the significance of formal qualifications. She explained that those credentials served as a robust foundation to which she added a strong belief in continuous improvement for her professional growth. Moreover, she attributed her dedication to such improvement as being fuelled by the inspiration derived from a professional network such as an international exchange programme. *Queen Indradevi* also noted that her intrinsic motivation was deeply rooted in her passion for teaching and her dedication to her students' success. However, her drive for professional learning was not solely propelled by positive factors, as she also acknowledged that classroom challenges and frustrations compelled her to seek innovative solutions, further attesting to her resilience and determination in her educational pursuits.

Queen Indradevi expressed her belief that formal credentials provided a solid foundation for professional growth. "To me, professional growth is rooted in a formal qualification." Building

upon this groundwork, *Queen Indradevi* showed her commitment to continuous improvement in different aspects of her professional practice. To exemplify this, she described her ongoing efforts to improve her proficiency in English:

I also keep improving my English proficiency. During the time I take the extra English class for myself, I also take those opportunity to closely observe my teacher(s) to see how they deliver the lessons. I've learnt some effective teaching techniques they introduces by observing the students' response and reactions to the techniques being introduced. Especially, I see myself as a student in the class and reflect on how I feel as a student toward the teaching technique introduced by my teacher.

For *Queen Indradevi*, attending extra English classes served not only to develop her own language proficiency but also to enable her to observe how her teachers conducted their lessons. Meanwhile, she emphasised that by carefully observing and reflecting on her fellow classmates' responses to classroom activities, she could gain a deeper understanding of the effectiveness of certain teaching methods from the students' perspectives.

Queen Indradevi further explained that her dedication to continuous improvement was fuelled by the inspiration she had gained from participating in an international exchange program:

I have also been fortunate to be awarded an opportunity to participate in an exchange programme in [one of the Southeast Asian countries] for a semester. It was during the exchange programme that I witnessed an eye-opening teaching practice in a different country, and I found it very interesting. I could see the teaching techniques were very effective and the students were very participative.

Drawing from this experience, *Queen Indradevi* expressed a desire to stay on par professionally with her counterparts in the region, thus forming the basis for her desire for continuous improvement.

During the interview, *Queen Indradevi* described her intrinsic motivation as being rooted in her passion for teaching and enthusiasm for her students' success:

What motivates me to do better in my job is when I see my students succeed in their study. It makes me happy. I don't expect any reward from the school, I just love my job as a teacher.

Queen Indradevi believed that this intrinsic motivation served as a driving force that fuelled her dedication to the teaching profession and inspired her to continually seek ways to enhance her students' learning experiences.

Queen Indradevi indicated that her rationale for engaging in TPL was not always driven by positive factors. She described how classroom challenges and frustrations prompted her to seek solutions. "I was frustrated when some students did not hand in their tasks by the deadline. [...] In this case, I seek support and discuss the issues with other teachers, and they normally give some good advice." *Queen Indradevi* acknowledged that, despite these challenges being unpleasant, she considered them as triggers for professional learning and opportunities for her personal and professional growth. Moreover, these incidents highlighted the significance of having a supportive environment where she could seek guidance and share experiences.

5.3.2 Opportunities and challenges

In the interpretation of *Queen Indradevi's* interview data, several themes emerged regarding opportunities and challenges. While exhibiting a noticeable level of difficulties in articulating her perspectives on opportunities that enhanced her professional learning, she managed to express her appreciation for the informal interactions with her peers, despite their limited occurrence. In addition, she highlighted the fact that her role as a lead teacher was advantageous for her professional growth. Simultaneously, the conversation with the researcher shed light on the challenges that hindered *Queen Indradevi's* engagement in her workplace learning process. She identified two key obstacles impeding her professional

advancement: first, the inadequacy of TPL opportunities, and secondly, the feeling of isolation she experienced in her teaching practice.

In a similar way to *Keng Vansak* (see Section 5.2.2), *Queen Indradevi* found it difficult to articulate a range of opportunities she envisioned for enabling her TPL engagement. From an evaluative standpoint, *Queen Indradevi* might not recognise or be fully aware of potential avenues for accessing professional development within her workplace and perhaps be unclear as to whether such prospects even exist. Nevertheless, she emphasised the value of informal interactions with peers, despite their limited occurrence. *Queen Indradevi* appreciated the social interactions in her current workplace as an effective approach to engaging in informal professional learning with her colleagues:

I talk to my peers only during the workshops – not very often, for example, during the yearly workshops organised by [an omitted organisation]. In my current workplace, I also do not talk to my peers very often, for example, only during our mealtimes in the Canteen. [...] we just have those conversations as a part of a general talk, but it could lead to an interesting discussion, and it can help me a lot.

She appreciated these informal settings as opportunities to connect with her peers for the purpose of fostering her professional growth. Additionally, while expressing displeasure with the limited frequency of these occasions, *Queen Indradevi* conveyed her opinion that these conversations often revolve around classroom challenges and result in practical solutions.

Queen Indradevi also reflected on her role as a course leader as being another opportunity for her professional growth. She explained that this position allowed her to observe the strengths and weaknesses of other teachers. According to *Queen Indradevi*, these insights often led her to identify areas of improvement in her own teaching methods, ultimately enhancing the effectiveness and interactivity of her classes.

Data analysis further showed that *Queen Indradevi* recognised that her role as a lead teacher allowed her to take advantage of frequent peer observations, thus contributing to her professional growth. Consequently, this sub-theme is discussed in relation to techniques for professional learning in Section 5.3.3 – Strategies and activities.

Queen Indradevi identified two key obstacles that partly impeded her professional growth. More importantly, she highlighted the deficiency, if not the absence, of TPL opportunities as a significant hindrance. She illustrated this by pointing out the limited availability of training sessions in specific domains, such as utilising internet-based resources and attending webinars. “There are no PD workshops focusing on accessing material online. I recall training sessions on using Google Classroom, but they were scarce.” Similarly, *Queen Indradevi* also observed that the lack of webinars was a missing component in her workplace learning experiences.

Moreover, just as with *Keng Vansak* and *Ven. Som*, *Queen Indradevi* expressed the feeling that she often encountered a sense of isolation in the teaching profession. She considered loneliness within the teaching profession as a daily challenge, emphasising that it left her with no option but to seek solutions online. “What makes me watch YouTube videos because when I face a challenge, I have no one to talk to. So, I started searching for a video that provided solutions or suggestions to my challenges [...]” She speculated that the loneliness she experienced stemmed from the part-time nature of the job, so that her colleagues primarily focused on teaching their assigned classes rather than engaging in conversations with their peers. This made it difficult to build a feeling of camaraderie with her peers. Because of this, *Queen Indradevi* emphasised the importance she now placed on having peer support available, especially during challenging situations.

5.3.3 Strategies and activities

In the interview, *Queen Indradevi* described several strategies and activities she adopted to enhance her professional learning. She emphasised the importance of practising reflective teaching (See Section 1.4 for a definition), noting that it enabled her to refine her teaching approach and significantly improve her students' comprehension and engagement. *Queen Indradevi* also stressed the value of accessing online resources, citing the flexibility they offered in terms of pace and timing. Furthermore, despite acknowledging the limited access teachers have to observing each other, she recognised the potential benefits of peer collaboration for professional growth.

One of the strategies *Queen Indradevi* employed to sustain continuous improvement in her position was the practice of reflecting on her teaching. She explained that by building up her own teaching experience, she became more confident in adopting this approach for her professional growth. "Based on my training programme to become a teacher and subsequent experience, I tend to start to reflect on my teaching more than I did before. [...], it is something we learn from our own practice."

Queen Indradevi further explained that this self-reflective approach involved regular observation of her own teaching methods, identifying areas for improvement, and making adjustments accordingly. She described an example of how she had reflected on her teaching:

[...] after I have introduced a certain activity, I would ask myself "Did the students understand what I wanted them to learn?" If I could see a lot of negative reactions through their facial reactions, I would take it as the students didn't understand what I wanted them to do. That means I need to do something on the spot, say for example, I need to repeat, slow down or even start to give instructions in L1. [...] I always observe myself to see how I do it.

Queen Indradevi believed that through observation and reflection, she had developed the ability to identify weaknesses in her teaching practices and subsequently seek ways to

enhance them. According to *Queen Indradevi*, a critical examination of one's own pedagogical methods underscored the dynamic nature of the profession. In this way, she emphasised the crucial significance of continual self-assessment and refinement of teaching techniques. More importantly, she noted that this process had yielded substantial improvements in her students' comprehension and engagement.

In a manner that is similar to *Ven. Som* and *Keng Vansak*, both of whom were from the universities based in the provincial areas of Cambodia, *Queen Indradevi* reported that Internet technology and online resources had become essential tools for addressing her teaching challenges on a daily basis:

I started searching for a video that provided solutions or suggestions to my challenges... [...] Of all the TPL strategies that I have adopted, I found my online search, YouTube videos, as the most effective ways, [...] I tend to adopt this way of solving problems rather than talking to my peers...[...] then talking to my peers is next.

Queen Indradevi identified two significant reasons behind this adaptive approach. The first was that she found the technique itself helpful and convenient, as she could always access it at her own pace and in her own time. Secondly, it provided her with an alternative to relying solely on peers, who might not always be available to respond to her needs.

Queen Indradevi also recognised the significance of observing other teachers as another activity for her professional learning. She explained that, despite the absence of formal observations facilitated by the university, she capitalised on various capacities and platforms online to gain insights through this learning approach. In other words, she used technology as a form of peer observation. "I sometimes watch YouTube videos posted by those teachers in the western countries and European countries, to see what I can learn from them."

At the same time, she recognised that fulfilling her responsibility as a lead teacher to observe other instructors was another strategy for accessing observation:

I used to observe teachers in my capacity as the course leader. From that experience, I learnt a lot from other teachers' weaknesses for my own improvement. For example, during the observation, I could see how the class could be improved or make it more interactive.

Because of this insight, *Queen Indradevi* placed great emphasis on learning from both the strengths and weaknesses in other teachers she had observed.

Moreover, *Queen Indradevi* was continuing to study English and mentioned that she made the most of her role as an English language learner herself to observe her teachers and the whole classroom environment in order to enhance her professional growth:

As a student, when observing my English teachers, I always observe my classmates. If they appear to understand the instructions, I tend to agree that it is a good one that I can probably adapt the activity for my own teaching as well.

This statement illustrates how *Queen Indradevi* extended her observation beyond her own teaching, as well as her peers', by closely observing her teachers and classmates during English classes.

Queen Indradevi's multi-faceted approach to observation allowed her to gain diverse perspectives and insights into teaching techniques and student dynamics. She believed that every teaching experience, whether positive or challenging, offered opportunities for growth. According to *Queen Indradevi*, observation and reflection were indispensable tools for her to excel in her profession.

Despite being a less frequently utilised method, *Queen Indradevi* recognised peer collaboration as a potential avenue for professional growth. "I occasionally engage in discussions about my teaching performance and issues with my colleagues." She considered

these conversations as creating opportunities for both her and her co-workers to exchange constructive feedback, discuss good practices, and collaboratively tackle teaching hurdles.

5.3.4 Professional learning and classroom practice

During the interview, *Queen Indradevi* shared her perspectives and self-evaluation regarding the impact of her professional learning on classroom practice. She conveyed her view that such opportunities for professional growth allowed her to build her teaching repertoire, enabling her to become more flexible in her teaching approach. Furthermore, *Queen Indradevi* believed that by expanding her teaching repertoire, she became more creative and enthusiastic about experimenting with her instructional methods. Her reflections on the influence of professional learning on her teaching practice were supported by a classroom observation conducted by the researcher during the data collection process.

Applying her method of professional learning through “observation of others,” *Queen Indradevi* noted that this practice enhanced her flexibility in teaching:

When I attend PD workshops, sometimes I am more interested in the ways they run the workshops and present their content, particularly, how flexible they can be. Then, I thought I may adopt those kinds of flexibility in my teaching as well.

Furthermore, *Queen Indradevi* identified the ability to cultivate flexibility in teaching as one of the skills she acquired during her teacher training program. “Based on my experience and training during my teacher training program, we are recommended and trained to be flexible in our teaching.” When asked why she had incorporated an interview activity during a class which the researcher observed, *Queen Indradevi* explained that the task was an example of when she had adopted flexibility in her classroom approach:

[...] when I notice that my students become disengaged in my teaching, I know that I need to alter the classroom activities. So, instead of allowing them to work on their own, I turn the task into pair work and involve them in interviews.

This incident illustrates the way her professional learning enhances her adaptability in her teaching.

In addition, *Queen Indradevi* pointed to another type of flexibility in her instruction:

If I could see a lot of negative reactions through their facial expressions, I would take it as the students didn't understand what I wanted them to do. That means I need to do something on the spot, say for example, I might need to repeat, slow down, or even start to give instructions in L1 - *Khmer*.

This adaptive approach highlights *Queen Indradevi*'s responsiveness to student needs and her commitment to ensuring that learning objectives are met effectively.

As well as providing opportunities to demonstrate flexibility in her classroom teaching, *Queen Indradevi* emphasised that her teaching repertoire, resulting from her continuous professional learning, enabled her to foster creativity in instructional methods. In response to inquiries from the researcher about the use of visual aids during a lesson, *Queen Indradevi* explained, "Everyone has their own textbooks; however, I used slides [as visual aids] to further motivate and as a way to maintain their attention throughout the class." She considered visual aids as invaluable tools for engaging students and enriching their learning experiences. Moreover, she believed that these tools catered to diverse learning styles, rendering complex information more accessible and memorable.

Another instance of creativity in teaching was evidenced when *Queen Indradevi* was observed to incorporate physical movements into a classroom activity. "When I notice that my students are less interested, falling asleep during my lesson, I also alter some of the teaching activities to involve some physical movements." *Queen Indradevi* reemphasised her recognition of the importance of student engagement as the objective for adapting her teaching methods to include physical movement when students appear disengaged. She believed that physical

activities could reinvigorate students, enhance their attentiveness, and foster a dynamic learning environment.

Queen Indradevi restated her proactive approach to adapting and innovating teaching methodologies, drawing from her accumulated experiences and training. “Building upon what I learned from during the teacher training program, I wanted to try a different technique.” Additionally, in a way that is similar to *Nou Hach* – discussed in Section 4.2.5 of Chapter IV– *Queen Indradevi* noticed that engaging in professional learning had amplified her enthusiasm for experimenting with instructional methods:

For this technique, I figured it out by myself; and it turned out to work well. [...] This process involved a lot of thinking from the students, and interaction among themselves and with me, as their teacher, and it also helped them to stay focused on their task.

5.3.5 Views about fostering enhanced TPL

During the interview, *Queen Indradevi* shared her insights into the way her Institution could help facilitate her professional learning. She emphasised the need for expanded avenues of professional growth, by expressing a strong desire for more learning opportunities, including increased access to workshops and online training platforms. She regarded accessible, engaging, and varied avenues for enhancing her skills and knowledge as fundamental to her professional growth:

I hope my workplace will facilitate for more often sharing sessions, e.g., more PD workshops. To me, it is very beneficial as I could learn the success stories from the actual class practitioners.

Additionally, *Queen Indradevi* expressed her longing for her institution to improve the limited availability of online training opportunities, particularly through webinars. She believed that these online sessions could be the alternative structured environments for educators to

engage in collaborative learning, share experiences, and gain international insights into teaching practices.

In addition to her call for more sharing sessions, *Queen Indradevi* specifically requested that her institution consider facilitating platforms on which international collaboration could take place. “It would be good if we could have some teachers from Western countries/European countries to share teaching practices with us.” Furthermore, she mentioned that it would be beneficial to experience cross-cultural exchanges, allowing her and her colleagues to gain fresh perspectives and innovative ideas from their international counterparts. In these statements, *Queen Indradevi* places significant value on learning from other practitioners and sharing success stories.

Despite noting the fact that she consistently integrated Internet technology in order to aid her teaching and lesson preparation, *Queen Indradevi* indicated the need to address the limited training opportunities, as discussed in Section 5.3.2. In line with *Keng Vansak’s* remark (see Section 5.2.5), she believed that formal training in accessing online materials and effectively incorporating technology into classroom instruction would be especially beneficial.

5.3.6 Summary of *Queen Indradevi’s* responses

In summary, *Queen Indradevi*, in her discussion on professional growth, emphasised the strong principle of continuous improvement for professional growth. She drew inspiration from international exchange programmes and her passion for teaching to fuel her intrinsic motivation. Sharing her perspectives about factors that influenced her engagement in TPL, she acknowledged that challenges and frustrations in the classroom drove her to seek innovative solutions. Additionally, *Queen Indradevi* identified informal interactions with peers

and her role as a lead teacher as opportunities for growth but highlighted deficiencies in professional learning opportunities and feelings of isolation as challenges.

Queen Indradevi employed reflective teaching and accessing online resources as strategies to enhance her professional learning process, despite acknowledging limited access to peer observation and collaboration, beyond her role as a lead teacher. Reflecting on the impact of her professional learning, she believed that her engagement in continuous learning enhanced her teaching repertoire, promoting her flexibility, creativity, and enthusiasm about experimenting with instructional methods.

Regarding institutional facilitation of professional growth, *Queen Indradevi* advocated for expanded avenues such as workshops and online training platforms, emphasising the importance of formal training in utilising online resources and integrating technology into teaching. Moreover, she considered online training as a means to foster international collaboration among educators.

5.4 Krom Ngoy

It is important to discuss your teaching performance with other people [...] because it's about sharing your methodology and sharing your ways of teaching [...] so that you can learn from each other.

~ Krom Ngoy, the research participant.

Krom Ngoy, with a master's degree in TESOL as his highest academic qualification, has approximately two decades of teaching experience. As well as working as an EFL teacher at Institution 1 – *Prasat Angkor Wat*, he also holds lecturer positions at two other higher educational institutions. In addition to these jobs, Krom Ngoy has identified himself as having worked as an English language teacher educator at a teacher training centre in the capital of Cambodia since 2002. However, unlike *Chuon Nath* (see Section 5.1), who was also a teacher trainer, Krom Ngoy did not mention how this role had contributed to his professional growth. Instead, he believed that his existing knowledge was sufficient and saw little need for further learning.

5.4.1 Perspectives on professional growth

During the initial interview, Krom Ngoy shared his perspectives on professional advancement. Commencing with the acknowledgement of his career growth over time, Krom Ngoy placed a strong weight on the role of teaching experiences in his professional endeavours. He further analysed his commitment to continuous improvement by outlining various factors that led him to engage in professional learning activities. According to Krom Ngoy, the pursuit of his professional growth was sparked by a range of factors, such as the need to overcome challenges in teaching, his keen desire for better student engagement, and his awareness of new developments in teaching methodology.

Despite having numerous years of teaching experience, *Krom Ngoy* still considered the challenges he faced when starting his teaching career as an important milestone. “I started [...] from scratch, and it was very difficult.” He explained that the initial obstacles, however, did not deter him from pursuing his passion for education; “I have improved quite a lot from my teaching over the past years.”

Krom Ngoy also demonstrated his commitment to constant professional development. “Am I happy with my teaching performance? I think I need to learn more It's never enough ... you know ... we can always improve. But we still need to learn more, learn more.” He further explained that the transformative power of dedication, resilience, and a commitment to ongoing development were the foundations for the significant strides he had made in his teaching career. Through this self-evaluation of his teaching performance, *Krom Ngoy* showed that he believed that reflecting on classroom practice and understanding the importance of continuous improvement were essential for success in the field of education.

Sharing his perspectives on the attributes that influenced his professional growth, *Krom Ngoy* emphasised how classroom experience could be a good starting point for his professional learning:

[...] You know when you started teaching for the first time, you ... you are unfamiliar with the unit of teaching [the materials]. ... From my experience, I have learned a lot ... from the experiences, I meant like we ... we train ourselves.

Krom Ngoy, however, did not explicitly detail how reflecting on his teaching experience enabled him to identify the gaps in his professional practice.

Another factor that played a role in *Krom Ngoy's* professional learning endeavour was the effect of challenges he faced in his teaching practice. He expressed his concerns and

frustrations about the students' classroom behaviour, level of task engagement and motivation:

I think students get lazier and lazier [...] the things that I am dissatisfied with the most [is] when the students do not do what you want them to do [...], especially when we give them homework ... and they turn up without giving you the result [...].

Krom Ngoy, however, was not entirely negative about these obstacles. He, instead, considered it a challenge to come up with a proactive approach to teaching that prioritised students' class participation, personalised learning experiences, and the cultivation of their intrinsic motivation. "... We need to look at the students ...exactly what needs to be done according to our students because sometimes their knowledge is far behind the textbook ..." Through his insights, *Krom Ngoy* demonstrated his awareness of the gaps in his teaching that needed to be filled, and that was where the role of professional learning came into play. *Krom Ngoy* believed that this type of practice enabled him to embrace pedagogical strategies that promote active participation, relevance, and a sense of ownership in the learning process.

Krom Ngoy stated that his awareness of new developments in teaching methodology also influenced his motivation to engage in professional learning. "I am aware of [...] the new development of teaching methods." He explained that he strongly valued the vital importance of staying informed about new teaching methodologies and approaches.

5.4.2 Opportunities and challenges

In the analysis of the interview data with *Krom Ngoy*, certain themes emerged regarding opportunities and challenges in his professional learning experience. Although *Krom Ngoy* appeared to face some difficulties articulating any substantive insights related to prospects

for his professional growth, he was able to provide diverse perspectives on the challenges he encountered.

Krom Ngoy was unable to discuss in any detail the professional learning opportunities within the university where the data collection occurred. Even though it was unclear whether such prospects existed, a speculation could be that *Krom Ngoy* might not be aware of potential platforms for TPL within the research venue. Instead, he often referred to his role as a teacher trainer at a different institution. “I used to observe, I used to evaluate my teacher trainees at [omitted institution] because they have to have a practicum ... teaching practicum at high schools ... so... I think that it's important for my own professional growth as well.” In contrast, *Krom Ngoy* shared insightful perspectives on challenges related to his own personal professional development.

Krom Ngoy pointed out three main factors that hampered his engagement in TPL: the inadequacy of teacher training initiatives, lack of clear guidelines and policies, and time constraints. While acknowledging the importance of PD workshops for his professional growth, *Krom Ngoy* noted that he had observed a scarcity of such events as initiated by the university where the research was conducted. “Usually not here [*Prasat Angkor Wat*] ... [however], other universities, such as [omitted institution], where I [also] teach [...], [they] usually have ... workshops.” *Krom Ngoy's* observation pointed to the variations in the availability and accessibility of professional learning and development opportunities among different institutions in Cambodia.

When asked about his knowledge of university policies designed to bolster his professional development, *Krom Ngoy* expressed concerns regarding the lack of clear guidelines and policies governing the process. “In terms of professional learning, the policies that the

university has implemented to support my professional learning, I think ... too ... a little has been done about that [...].” He further explained that these issues negatively impacted his commitment and hindered his access to professional learning and attributed the cause to the challenges posed by the work environment.

While emphasising his commitment to continuous improvement, *Krom Ngoy* expressed his sentiments and frustrations related to time that surfaced in his workplace. The most pressing issue for him was the limited opportunity to interact with his colleagues during work hours:

... [There is a problem] about not having enough time to interact with peers because each has different teaching loads I see it as something that we're missing, that we cannot interact with other teachers ... with other colleagues... because I think we only come when we teach. So, we don't usually meet ... if we meet at all ... we meet during the meeting, you know, meeting about two or three times a year, especially and usually at the beginning of each term.

Krom Ngoy's frustration also reflected his perception that the current work arrangement imposed by his institution hampered his ability to pursue professional learning.

Additionally, *Krom Ngoy* explained that time constraints had also negatively impacted his intention to try out different teaching methods. “... Sometimes it's hard ... to apply ... I always want to do that, but ... I have never had enough time to do that.” He believed that applying new instructional techniques in his own classroom required time and commitment, as well as support from the workplace, in order to see if they were suitable for his own teaching context.

5.4.3 Strategies and activities

While discussing external barriers limiting the opportunities to engage in TPL, *Krom Ngoy* laid out his strategies and activities for his professional learning, affirming his commitment to his ongoing personal development. Three key themes emerged as integral components for enhancing *Krom Ngoy's* professional growth: understanding of students' backgrounds, peer interactions and collaboration, and constructive feedback to enhance teaching improvement.

In his endeavour to enhance his teaching abilities, *Krom Ngoy* emphasised the importance of acknowledging the diversity of students' backgrounds in his instructional approach:

... People come from different backgrounds; they have different learning styles. By understanding ... be aware of their ages ... their interests ... their personality... their backgrounds and social class so that we can teach them better and help students better.

Krom Ngoy explained that understanding students' backgrounds was not merely an exercise in empathy. He believed that the knowledge gained enabled him to design instructional techniques that resonated with students' interests and learning styles. According to *Krom Ngoy*, this practice led to increased engagement, improved comprehension, and, ultimately, enhanced academic achievement.

Despite recognising that there was limited opportunity to interact with peers, *Krom Ngoy* placed a strong emphasis on the importance of cultivating teacher interactions to facilitate the discussion of teaching performance and methodologies. He believed that this process provided valuable insights and growth opportunities. During the interview, *Krom Ngoy* shared his experiences of participating in workshops and training sessions to benefit from interactions with other teachers:

It is important to discuss your teaching performance with other people ... because it's about sharing your ... your methodology and sharing your ways of teaching with other teachers so that you can learn from each other.

To receive constructive feedback was another technique that *Krom Ngoy* recognised as an effective way in which he could refine his teaching practices:

... Usually they have evaluation, so a member in the management observes us in the classroom.... It's a formal one, and it was ... part of the evaluation for my teaching performance. ... Once every term, at the beginning of the course Then they give us the feedback ... usually at the end of the term.

According *Krom Ngoy*, the process of receiving feedback also enabled the exchange of good practices, helped identify blind spots in teaching, and fostered a culture of continuous

improvement among educators. Unfortunately, at the end of the interview, *Krom Ngoy* mentioned that this practice was put on hold by the institution during COVID-19 and was never resumed.

5.4.4 Professional learning and classroom practice

This section presents *Krom Ngoy's* self-assessment regarding the impact of professional learning on his classroom techniques. *Krom Ngoy* leveraged on his teaching experience and an understanding of students' backgrounds to refine his teaching strategies and customise classroom materials for an appropriate alignment with his learners' profiles. Moreover, *Krom Ngoy* believed that his involvement in professional learning directly translated into the implementation of newly acquired instructional methods in his teaching practice. His reflection on how professional learning influenced his teaching practices was substantiated by a classroom observation conducted by the researcher during the data collection process.

To demonstrate the impact of his professional learning on classroom practice, *Krom Ngoy* discussed the importance of understanding and adapting teaching methods to accommodate students' learning styles and backgrounds. He elaborated on how he applied this knowledge in his teaching:

One of the aims of today's lesson is to introduce a grammar item of past simple. I understand that this item may be new to my students. I start by introducing the form of past simple, how verbs are conjugated and how to form questions and negative sentences. We are not covering the use of past simple yet.

As with *Chuon Nath* (see Section 5.1.4), *Krom Ngoy* believed that by adjusting materials to suit his students' knowledge levels and specific needs, he could create learning experiences that were engaging, relevant, and effective.

Krom Ngoy stated that he also leveraged on his teaching experience and an understanding of students' backgrounds to tailor and refine teaching materials as needed. "You don't have to

follow the teachers' book as long as you know how to adapt the materials to teach our students." He emphasised that this adaptability empowered him to optimise the advantages of textbooks and other classroom resources, aligning them more closely with the specific context and teaching objectives of his teaching situation.

Along with *Kong Bunchhoeun* (see Section 4.1.4), *Krom Ngoy* conveyed that he incorporated new teaching techniques learned during his participation in workshops into his classroom whenever possible. Asked during the post-observation interview about the rationale behind the lesson which had been observed, *Krom Ngoy* explained, "My teaching is guided by an inquiry-based learning approach; I got to know this approach through my reading and attending a PD workshop." He further elaborated that, rather than simply imparting grammatical knowledge, he encouraged his students to explore the material, ask questions, and share ideas. His explanation justified the sequence of the grammar lesson, which I observed during the data collection.

Krom Ngoy, however, emphasised the significance of having a clear understanding of his instructional approach. "It is important that we get to know the approach and adapt it to fit in our teaching context." Additionally, he appeared to advocate for reflective practice in the implementation of newly acquired instructional methods. "I then try applying it and reflect on it."

5.4.5 Views about fostering enhanced TPL

During the interview, *Krom Ngoy* shared his insights regarding potential improvements so that his educational institution could better support his own and his colleagues' professional learning experiences. Data analysis revealed two key themes that *Krom Ngoy* identified as pivotal to influencing his professional growth: The impact of institutional support and the

fostering of a collaborative culture. He believed that a workplace should conscientiously address these factors to effectively facilitate the professional growth of its educators.

Krom Ngoy's responses highlighted his perspectives on the critical role of the institution in facilitating the professional learning and growth of teachers. "... The institution is the main factor that also drives the teachers' professional learning, not just the teachers themselves." He further illustrated how institutions can influence TPL by comparing the support he received from the institution where this research took place to that from another school where he is currently teaching. He also emphasised the need for educational institutions to offer sufficient opportunities for professional growth to enhance the overall learning experience of students.

Another initiative that *Krom Ngoy* expressed a desire for was that the educational institution should prioritise facilitating teacher interactions:

If I had a chance to exchange conversation with [my] colleagues, I think it would help with my teaching as well. But I think I see it as something that we're missing, that we cannot interact with other teachers.

Krom Ngoy suggested that to facilitate peer interaction, the institution could create an environment that nurtured professional growth, encouraged the exchange of ideas, and ultimately enhanced the quality of education provided to students:

I think the best way is to train us ... to conduct a workshop on teaching to allow us to meet and discuss the teaching situations with other colleagues... to share ideas in workshop or training.... maybe ... in a meeting ... a conference in which we conduct a workshop ... and we can work in pair or in group to discuss.... it should be like training ... workshop to help us.

Krom Ngoy believed that these interactions not only would benefit individual educators but also contributed to the promotion of better teaching practices at the institutional level. Furthermore, he explained that institutions could advocate for a spirit of continuous learning

and growth by providing opportunities for educators to engage in meaningful dialogue and to exchange ideas with colleagues and peers.

5.4.6 Summary of *Krom Ngoy's* responses

In the interviews, *Krom Ngoy* emphasised his commitment to continuous professional growth and learning as a teacher. He reflected on his career trajectory from its initial challenges to ongoing improvement, underscoring the significance for him of deriving lessons from teaching experiences and the necessity of staying abreast of evolving teaching methodologies.

While maintaining his commitment to continuous improvement in his professional practice, *Krom Ngoy* described several challenges that hindered his commitment and access to professional learning. These included the inadequacy of training events within the educational institution, a lack of clear guidelines and principles, and time constraints.

Sharing insights into the strategies fuelling his professional growth, *Krom Ngoy* identified three integral components: an understanding of students' backgrounds, meaningful peer interactions and collaboration, and constructive feedback to augment teaching improvement. He then provided a self-assessment on the impact of professional learning on his classroom techniques.

Concluding the discussion, when offering perspectives on TPL facilitation, *Krom Ngoy* expressed a strong desire for increased peer interactions and collaboration to discuss teaching performance, methodologies, and share materials. Furthermore, he advocated for greater institutional support and expanded opportunities for professional growth.

5.5 Chapter Summary

This chapter has presented the findings related to the remaining four research participants, listed as follows: 5.1 Chuon Nath, 5.2 Keng Vansak, 5.3 Queen Indradevi and 5.4 Krom Ngoy. The findings are categorised into five distinct headings: (1) perspectives on professional growth, (2) opportunities and challenges, (3) strategies and activities in Teacher Professional Learning (TPL), (4) professional learning and classroom practice, and (5) views about fostering enhanced TPL.

Overall, in addition to the five themes of Teacher Professional Learning identified in the research, all four participants—*Chuon Nath*, *Keng Vansak*, *Queen Indradevi* and *Krom Ngoy* — frequently highlighted the roles of teaching experience and repertoire in fostering flexibility, creativity, and experimentation in teaching and classroom practice. This interpretation suggests a relationship between professional learning, the development of a teaching repertoire, and classroom practice.

The subsequent section of this chapter presents a summary of key findings reported in both the previous chapter, *Chapter IV*, and now *Chapter V*. Then, a comprehensive discussion is presented in *Chapter VI*.

5.6 Observations on the Key Findings

The findings from this study contribute to an understanding of the perceptions of professional growth held by Cambodian English language teachers within the research context. While some of the teachers acknowledge formal education and training as the foundation of such growth, all the participants recognise the significance of continuous professional learning. They believe that their engagement in ongoing learning empowers them to navigate daily classroom challenges and to develop their teaching skills and instructional methods in the long term. Additionally, an examination of the data suggests that participants perceive environmental context, institutional policies and workplace support as factors influencing their engagement with professional learning and growth.

The analysis also sheds light on a multitude of aspirational factors that fuel Cambodian English language teachers' engagement in professional learning. These factors include a desire to positively influence their students' learning experience and a drive for continuous professional development, spurred on by personal curiosity and the pursuit of expertise in their field. Furthermore, identifying areas for improvement and recognising the need to stay abreast of emerging methodologies are fundamental for their participation in professional learning. They view professional growth as an ongoing journey, not a one-time destination.

As well as these affirmative motivations, the study also identifies an additional drive for professional learning stemming from the exigencies of navigating daily workplace challenges. Specifically, frustrations encountered in the classroom become stimuli for innovation, propelling teachers to seek creative solutions and enhance student learning experiences.

Furthermore, this research study outlines a range of strategies and activities that participating teachers engage in to enhance their professional growth. Teachers value both formal and

informal peer interactions in which they seek guidance and constructive feedback and exchange ideas to enrich their teaching repertoire. By fostering trust and collaboration, participants view these approaches as a method to create a supportive learning environment among colleagues. In a similar way, they consider participation in workshops and securing research grants as formal avenues to enhance their pedagogical knowledge and teaching methodology. In addition, teacher participants engage in some forms of learning from others without interaction. For instance, they listen to presentations, leverage online resources and Internet technologies, and observe other teachers without follow-up discussions. Finally, the teachers report adopting reflection and experimentation as professional learning activities to refine their instructional approaches.

Beyond the strategies themselves, this research study offers additional insights into the perceptions held by Cambodian English language teachers regarding the influence of professional learning on their classroom practice. Teacher participants perceive a profound impact on their teaching techniques, creativity, adaptability, and integration of technology following professional learning endeavours. In addition, professional learning equips educators with the tools to tackle daily classroom challenges and address the dynamic needs of their students. The teachers reported increased confidence in handling classroom issues, engaging passive students, and tailoring teaching methods to suit individual learning styles.

Finally, the research findings also illustrate Cambodian English language teachers' perspectives regarding the approaches that can better facilitate the professional learning process within the context of the study. It is clear that the teachers favour peer interactions and collaboration, emphasising the importance of discussing teaching performance, methodologies, and sharing classroom techniques and materials. In environments with

limited support, there is a clear demand for greater institutional backing, including expanded opportunities for PD workshops and conferences, strategically timed to meet educators' needs. Moreover, there is a recognised need for clear institutional guidelines on the effective implementation of professional learning activities. Furthermore, the teachers are calling for adjustments to work arrangements to enhance their professional growth. These adjustments include addressing timetabling issues, ensuring a balanced workload, and improvements that enable them to achieve greater financial security. These findings underscore the comprehensive approach required to support teachers' professional growth, encompassing collaborative opportunities, institutional support, clear guidance, and improvements in work conditions. More importantly, they contribute to the development of a "Comprehensive Model for Teacher Professional Learning," which is presented in the following chapter.

CHAPTER SIX: DISCUSSION

This section of the thesis discusses the research outcomes reported in *Chapters IV* and *V*. To briefly revisit, the project's core aim is to provide a comprehensive understanding of Teacher Professional Learning (TPL) within Cambodian Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). To achieve this, the study explored the TPL landscape of English language teachers in this context and addressed the following questions:

1. What are Cambodian English language teachers' views about "Teacher Professional Learning"?
2. What are the contextual factors that Cambodian English language teachers perceive to influence their professional learning engagement?
3. What are the aspirational and motivational factors that propel the teachers' engagement in professional learning?
4. What are the learning activities the participating teachers adopt for their professional growth?
5. What are the teachers' perceptions of the impact of professional learning activities on their classroom practice?
6. According to Cambodian English language teachers, how can Teacher Professional Learning be fostered in their teaching context?

To answer the research questions, the study – rooted in social constructivism – utilised an interpretive paradigm to explore Cambodian English language teachers' perspectives and personal experiences regarding their professional learning within their social and cultural environments. The study involved seven participants from whom the primary data for the

project were collected through: (1) semi-structured interviews with teachers; (2) classroom observations, followed by recall interviews, by the researcher; (3) weekly voice memos from participants; and (4) relevant documentation.

The research study has successfully fulfilled its primary aim of providing an in-depth understanding of the Teacher Professional Learning process within the study's context. The subsequent sections of this chapter illustrate the ways in which the study has achieved this objective. They highlight the empirical contributions of the key findings of the current study made to the body of literature in TPL research through a thematic discussion. More importantly, this study contributes to the field by presenting what I term a "Comprehensive Model for Teacher Professional Learning" framework, offering a theoretical advancement to the field. The final sections explain how these findings inform the development of the Model, followed by a summary of the chapter.

6.1 Cambodian EFL teachers' Perspectives on Professional Learning

The current research study offers insights into Cambodian EFL teachers' perspectives on professional learning. Evidence from this study points to two contrasting views about professional growth: (1) deliberate, continuous learning to foster professional growth, and (2) a reliance on teaching experience, without the necessity of conscious learning, to navigate daily practice. The teachers whose views and experiences related to TPL were presented in Chapter IV, that is, *Kong Bunchhoeun*, *Nou Hach*, and *Ven. Som*, perceive professional growth as the result of an ongoing journey of deliberate learning. They believe that both the necessity of learning and their ability to do so are key mechanisms for their professional growth (Bolhuis & Voeten, 2004; Dejene, 2020; Rojas et al., 2023; Zhang et al., 2021). These perceptions align with findings in previous studies which report that teachers consider lifelong learning as

essential for their professional growth and effectiveness in delivering knowledge (Alruqi & Alharbi, 2022; Er, 2024; Wichadee, 2011). Additionally, the findings of this study echo Farrell's (2022) emphasis on the need for ongoing professional improvement in language teaching in order for teachers to keep up with constantly evolving knowledge and the ever-changing world.

The other participants (i.e., *Chuon Nath*, *Keng Vansak*, *Queen Indradevi* and *Krom Ngoy*) demonstrated little evidence of active engagement in professional learning activities during their interviews. *Chuon Nath* and *Queen Indradevi*, for example, while acknowledging the importance of continuous professional growth, showed limited involvement in the TPL process, citing a lack of learning opportunities, heavy workloads, and time constraints as hindrances. In addition, teachers such as *Keng Vansak* and *Krom Ngoy* believe that their teaching methods improved over time through accumulated experience, without the need for explicit learning (Bakkenes et al., 2010; Meirink et al., 2007; Meirink et al., 2009; Van Eekelen et al., 2006). As Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2007) explain, unlike novice teachers, who rely more on external support and resources to feel confident in their abilities, experienced teachers primarily draw their confidence from their successful teaching experiences. Koffeman and Snoek (2019) also note that the personal experience domain is the most crucial source for professional growth.

However, it can be observed that, while these teachers may not label their activities as learning, they are still engaged in practices that the literature recognises as contributing to professional growth. As evidenced in this study, what often goes unrecognised is the deliberate process through which teachers identify and select effective teaching strategies from past experiences, which are then refined and repeated in subsequent lessons. Richards

(1995) and Richards and Farrell (2005) explain that experience alone is inadequate to drive significant teacher growth. Only when coupled with reflection does experience become a powerful impetus for professional advancement. (A thorough examination of how “reflection” can be used as an activity to enhance TPL is offered in Section 6.3). In a similar way, Brooke (1994) suggests that professional growth involves learning from experiences and discussing them with colleagues. In addition to drawing on their experience, this group of participants was also observed engaging in activities that involved learning from others without direct interaction with them, such as surfing on the Internet and watching teaching videos on YouTube (Bakkenes et al., 2010; Enthoven et al., 2023; Grosemans et al., 2015; Meirink et al., 2007; Richards, 2017a).

6.2 Teachers’ Perceptions about Contextual Factors Influencing Professional Learning

Understanding how contextual factors, among others, influence teachers’ engagement in professional learning offers a broader perspective on the process. Previous studies investigating conditions affecting teachers’ professional learning processes, such as those by Bellibaş and Gümüş (2023) and Hayes et al. (2024), found that elements of school contexts (e.g., principal leadership, curriculum, and collegial relationships) predicted the level of teachers’ engagement in their professional learning. Adding to this existing knowledge, all the participating teachers in this present study believed that their engagement in learning and opportunities for professional growth were significantly influenced by elements of the environmental context. Specifically, they noted that various workplace factors (e.g., organisational atmosphere, the level of deliberate workplace support, and collegial relationships) substantially impacted their engagement in professional learning in both

positive and negative ways. Figure 7 depicts the way that the participating teachers perceive the influence of contextual factors on their professional learning process.

Figure 7

Contextual Factors Influencing Teacher Professional Learning



6.2.1 Organisational atmosphere

Teachers' perceptions of the organisational atmosphere of their institution affects their engagement in their professional learning, both positively and negatively. Echoing the findings of previous studies, participants such as *Kong Bunchhoeun* and *Nou Hach*, appreciated the importance of their school environment and considered it a stimulating source of professional learning opportunities (Astuti & Drajiati, 2022; Furner & McCulla, 2019; Mulu et al., 2022). However, other teachers (e.g., *Keng Vansak*, *Queen Indradevi*, and *Krom Ngoy*) reported on their experiences of loneliness in their profession, indicating a less positive organisational atmosphere in their workplace. Similarly, *Ven. Som* and *Krom Ngoy* mentioned the negative impact of institutional policies and the contextual environment on their motivation for professional growth. This lack of motivation ultimately affects teachers' commitment and their choices of learning approaches (discussed in Section 6.4).

The study also identifies additional challenges that disrupt teachers' engagement in the professional learning process. In accordance with the findings in a study conducted by Alruqi and Alharbi (2022), this current research study recognises workload and time constraints as prevalent issues hindering teachers' engagement in professional learning. Five of the seven participants (*Kong Bunchhoeun*, *Ven. Som*, *Krom Ngoy*, *Nou Hach*, and *Keng Vansak*) noted these hindrances as significant barriers for them to be able to allocate sufficient time to hone their skills and knowledge. These obstacles are particularly prominent for educators who are tasked with teaching multiple subjects, such as *Keng Vansak*, as they must navigate diverse curricula and adapt their teaching strategies accordingly.

6.2.2 Deliberate workplace support

The participants indicated that deliberate workplace support (see Section 2.4.3) significantly influenced their engagement in professional learning. At the institutional level, factors such as the clarity of communicated deliberate workplace support play crucial roles in enhancing or hindering teachers' involvement in professional learning (Attard Tonna & Shanks, 2017; Day, 2002; Day & Gu, 2013; Eraut, 2000; Joo et al., 2011; Kwakman, 2003; Timperley, 2008). For example, if an institution clearly communicates the availability of workshops, designated learning spaces, and professional learning resources, teachers are more likely to participate in the TPL process. Otherwise, vague or inconsistent messaging about these opportunities and resources can lead to missed engagement and underutilisation.

In a similar way to the findings in the meta-ethnographic study by Enthoven et al. (2023), these teachers' involvement in the professional learning process is influenced by opportunities embedded in their work environment, contributing to their professional growth through both formal and informal means. *Kong Bunchhoeun* and *Nou Hach*, both from

Institution 3 – *Prasat Ta Prohm* – valued PD workshops and the establishment and sponsorship of a Community of Practice as key forms of workplace support. They viewed this type of support as an opportunity for teachers to advance their professional knowledge.

Another form of effective workplace support that emerged in this study is the availability of resources, which plays a pivotal role in shaping teachers' engagement in their professional learning (Belay et al., 2021; Grosemans et al., 2015; Hoekstra et al., 2009; Kwakman, 2003; Shirrell et al., 2019). *Ven. Som*, for example, mentioned that the existence of a wide-screen projector allowed him to experiment with a new way to deliver his listening class. Access to relevant materials, technology, funding, and time is essential to enable educators to pursue continuous learning and growth (Boeskens et al., 2020; Kennedy, 2014; Sitthiworachart et al., 2022). When these resources are readily accessible, teachers are better equipped to engage in meaningful professional development opportunities, thereby fostering a culture of lifelong learning within educational institutions.

The findings also pointed to significant limitations in the variety and diversity of resources available across the research venues. For instance, during the initial interview, *Keng Vansak* mentioned that the lack of a well-equipped library at his school was a major stumbling block, restricting his ability to provide him with adequate teaching resources and limiting his engagement in TPL. Additionally, the current study found no evidence of dedicated facilities specifically designed to support asynchronous TPL opportunities within the participating institutions (Cowan & Farrell, 2023; Mohammadi, 2023).

Moreover, there exists a clear variance in the extent of support provided in *Prasat Ta Prohm* compared to that offered in three other institutions. Educators affiliated with *Prasat Angkor Wat*, *Prasat Bayon*, and *Prasat Banteay Srei* have indicated a scarcity of institutional support

conducive to their professional learning. In fact, there is no reference to the establishment and facilitation of CoPs, or provision for attending external academic conferences in any of the institutions. This lack in the range of resources offered could hinder teachers' engagement in the professional learning process and impede institutions' abilities to provide tailored support that addresses their teachers' professional learning needs (Hoekstra et al., 2009).

6.2.3 Collegial relationship

At the collegial level, informal conversations among peers are widely recognised as essential for fostering continuous learning among educators. Teachers like *Kong Bunchhoeun* and *Nou Hach* valued the supportive colleagues with whom they engaged in discussions and recognised that these types of conversations contributed significantly to their professional growth. These informal interactions serve as valuable platforms for sharing experiences, exchanging ideas, and gaining insights not typically obtained in formal training sessions (Kennedy, 2014; Kyndt et al., 2016; Le Clus, 2011; Lee et al., 2011; Meirink et al., 2009; Vrikki et al., 2017). In a similar way, other educators in this study viewed informal conversations as instrumental in discovering new teaching methodologies and approaches, which they believed would address gaps in their teaching practices. *Nou Hach* and *Krom Ngoy*, for instance, attributed their awareness of innovative teaching methods to interactions with peers, which led them to explore and implement these concepts further in their teaching endeavours.

Teacher conversations, however, can only thrive in specific circumstances. Researchers such as Liu et al. (2016), Ninković et al. (2022), Thoonen et al. (2011) and Vangrieken et al. (2015) highlight the views that factors such as mutual trust, frequent interaction, and physical proximity are crucial for teacher conversations, particularly when aiming for collaboration. As

evidenced by this study, *Kong Bunchhoeun* and *Ven. Som* emphasised the importance of trust when seeking advice from colleagues. However, building trust within a Community of Practice in Cambodia faces several challenges rooted in historical, cultural, and institutional factors. It is widely known that during the Khmer Rouge era (1975-1979), espionage and the use of spies were strategies employed to extract intelligence, particularly among government officers, intellectuals and professionals. The Khmer Rouge regime created an atmosphere of pervasive distrust and surveillance, using spies to report on potential enemies of the revolution (Chandler, 1999). To some extent, the lingering effects of the regime have instilled a culture of fear and suspicion, making teachers cautious about sharing openly or collaborating due to concerns about judgment, criticism, or even being reported. *Chuon Nath*, for example, expressed a fear of potential backlash from management for voicing his opinions.

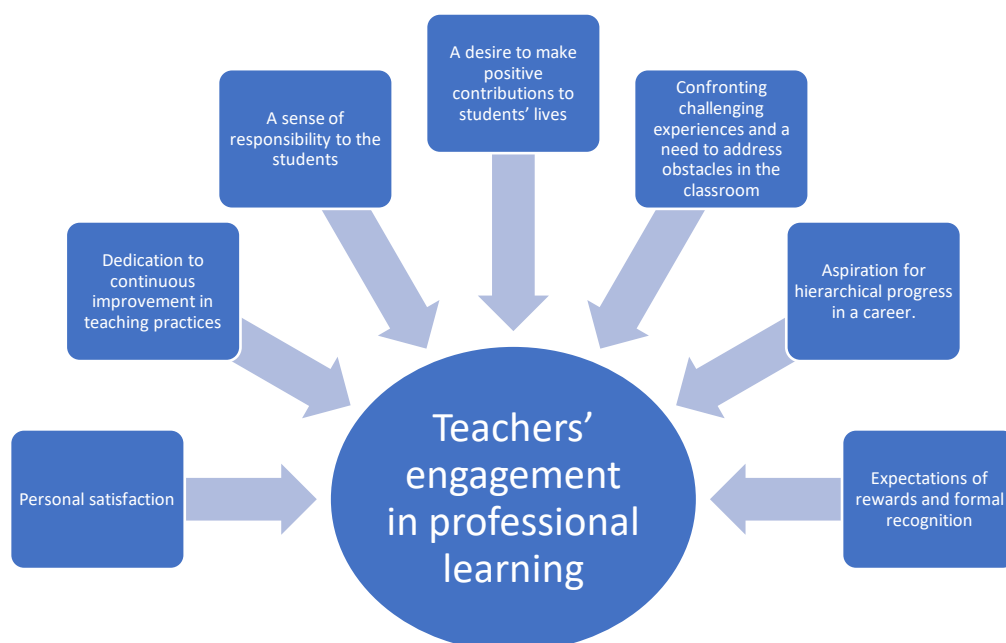
In addition, the data indicate that the frequency of teachers' interactions is hindered by certain contextual conditions. Five out of the seven participants are part-time teachers with multiple workplaces. For instance, *Ven. Som*, *Queen Indradevi* and *Krom Ngoy* each manage workloads at two additional workplaces to meet their financial needs. On top of this, accepting teaching assignments at multiple workplaces also involves the teachers in long-distance travelling. *Keng Vansak* and *Chuon Nath*, for example, commute approximately one hundred and twenty kilometres one way from their hometown to teach at the institution where the research took place, in addition to their other schools where they teach. Consequently, finding time for interaction and collaboration has become a significant challenge for these participants.

6.3 Teachers' Aspiration and Motivation for Professional Learning

This study identifies some of the fundamental elements that drive teachers' aspirations toward pursuing professional learning. Regardless of their years of experience, age, or gender, the teachers' commitment to continuous growth is largely motivated by factors such as a sense of responsibility, personal values, and the pursuit of personal satisfaction. These elements reflect the interconnectedness of teachers' beliefs, knowledge, attitudes, and values, as well as their commitment to ownership and decision-making in both their professional learning and teaching roles (Bandura, 2001, 2006; Beijaard et al., 2004; Biesta et al., 2015; Borg, 2003; Emirbayer & Mische, 1998; Flores & Day, 2006; Hallinger et al., 2019; Mulu et al., 2022). Figure 8 illustrates the reported factors that propel the teachers' engagement towards professional learning in the research venues. The following section discusses the key factors that have been found to motivate teachers to engage with their professional learning activities.

Figure 8

Factors that Encourage Teachers' Engagement in Professional Learning



The pursuit of personal satisfaction as teachers serves as a source of motivation for engaging in TPL (Appova & Arbaugh, 2018; Bentea & Anghelache, 2012; Monderna & Voinarovska, 2019; Pen, 2024; Proudfoot & Boyd, 2022; Qin & Noordin, 2024). In the current research study, participants such as *Ven. Som*, *Krom Ngoy*, *Queen Indradevi*, *Chuon Nath*, and *Keng Vansak* demonstrate this commitment to mastery in their teaching careers, alongside a desire for increased student engagement. This drive prompts them to participate in various TPL activities, including self-assessment, adaptation of teaching practices, and continuous improvement in teaching materials, all aimed at creating engaging and dynamic learning experiences for their students. In addition, for educators like *Nou Hach* and *Chuon Nath*, expertise in their profession is not only a responsibility but also a source of personal fulfilment. This type of motivation drives their pursuit of new knowledge and adaptation to emerging educational methodologies.

The data also suggest that a teacher's desire for quality in their teaching practice and core belief in continuous improvement drive their engagement towards ongoing professional learning. The teachers' aspiration to foster confidence and capability in their teaching practice – teachers' self-efficacy – is a significant motivational source for them to take ownership of their growth and actively seek improvement (Barni et al., 2019; Geijsel et al., 2009; Lap et al., 2022; Lazarides & Warner, 2020; Mather & Visone, 2024; Pokhrel, 2022; Thoonen et al. 2011; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001; Wang & Zhang, 2023; Zhang et al., 2021). In this study, the participants demonstrated a commitment that extended beyond financial incentives, their engagement with professional learning reflecting a personal ethos of delivering excellence in their profession. These findings affirm the significance of ongoing professional learning as advocated in previous studies such as those by Desimone (2011), Hargreaves and Fullan (2015), and Pen (2024).

In addition, the study shows that a sense of responsibility towards the students and dedication to continuous improvement in teaching practices motivates teachers to engage with their professional learning. For example, as demonstrated by participants, such as *Ven. Som, Keng Vansak* and *Chuon Nath*, a feeling of accountability compels them to proactively seek ways to address challenges and consistently explore methods for enhancing teaching effectiveness. As noted by Celik and Yildiz (2017), a conscientious teacher possesses a strong passion for teaching and learning and is likely to engage in ongoing professional development to foster an authentic and productive learning environment. In the same vein, researchers such as Lauermann (2014) and Matteucci et al. (2017) have stated that a teacher's sense of responsibility profoundly influences their well-being and serves as a motivating factor in their dedication to delivering high-quality education and instructional practices.

Moreover, teachers' sense of accountability when complying with institutional policy can be seen as the foundation of their commitment to staying abreast of current teaching practices and continuously enhancing their professional knowledge (Amponsah et al., 2023; Louws et al., 2017; McMillan et al., 2016; Njenga, 2023; Proudfoot & Boyd, 2022; Truong & Murray, 2019). However, the current research study found little evidence to sufficiently support this observation. Only *Nou Hach*, for example, acknowledged that management expectations and the educational institution's policies served as a guiding principle for his participation in training workshops. Proudfoot and Boyd (2024) speculate that some professional development programmes might be designed solely to fulfil a requirement or achieve a specific outcome, rather than to truly help people learn and grow in their professions. Hardy and Melville (2019) urge that instead of simply following orders, teachers need to understand the purpose and practicality of what they are expected to learn, adapt it to their classrooms, and share good practices with each other.

Additionally, the teachers are motivated by the belief that professional learning allows them to create a more rewarding learning experience for their students. Research studies that examine educators' pursuits for professional growth have identified a deep commitment to influencing students positively, while fostering their own growth as a motivational factor for teachers to engage in continuous learning (Altun, 2017; Heystek & Terhoven, 2015; Kareem et al., 2023; Setyorini & Khuriyah, 2023; Singh, 2023). Participants like *Queen Indradevi* and *Kong Bunchhoeun* described professional learning with a profound sense of achievement, viewing it as an ongoing journey fuelled by their dedication to student success and passion for teaching. Moreover, this finding echoes Proudfoot and Boyd's (2022) study, which highlighted how teachers with a sense of vocation are motivated by their commitment to students and the teaching profession.

Furthermore, teachers' commitment to professional growth can also arise from confronting challenging experiences and obstacles encountered in the classroom (McCormack et al., 2006; White et al., 2022). Teachers' perceived needs to understand new teaching content, curriculum, and assessment, along with their conceptualisation of student learning, are additional motivational sources driving their commitment to professional growth (Amponsah et al., 2023; Bolhuis & Voeten, 2004). It is also evident that teachers' commitment to professional growth arises from challenges as they grapple with issues such as low language proficiency levels and limited resources. Nonetheless, most of the teachers in this study, namely *Krom Ngoy*, *Queen Indradevi*, *Chuon Nath*, *Keng Vansak*, and *Kong Bunchhoeun*, confronted these challenges with a proactive mindset by seeing them as opportunities to engage in further learning for their professional growth.

Teachers' aspiration for hierarchical progress in a career is also understood to drive them to advance their professional knowledge with the belief that it will elevate their accomplishments to the next level (Makeeva et al., 2020; Newton et al., 2014; Watson & Drew, 2015). However, in this study, only *Nou Hach* believed that there was a direct connection between continuous professional learning and his success in achieving a leadership role in his field, while the other participants made no reference to this motivational element.

In the same way, while previous studies have often underscored the significance of incentives such as rewards, formal recognition, and career advancement in motivating teachers' engagement in professional learning (e.g., Figlio & Kenny, 2007; Gultekin & Acar, 2014; Zhang et al., 2021), the current research study presents a nuanced perspective. Contrary to expectations, the results obtained offered limited evidence of the efficacy of traditional motivational factors. Only a single participant, *Kong Bunchhoeun*, expressed a desire for a reward system and formal recognition, echoing similar findings in Pen's (2024) study. Proudfoot and Boyd (2024) explain that just dangling rewards in front of teachers is far from enough to make them truly invested in learning new things in their professional lives. While incentives might motivate some teachers to complete a training programme, it might not ultimately lead to their retaining the information or applying it in a meaningful way (Proudfoot & Boyd, 2024).

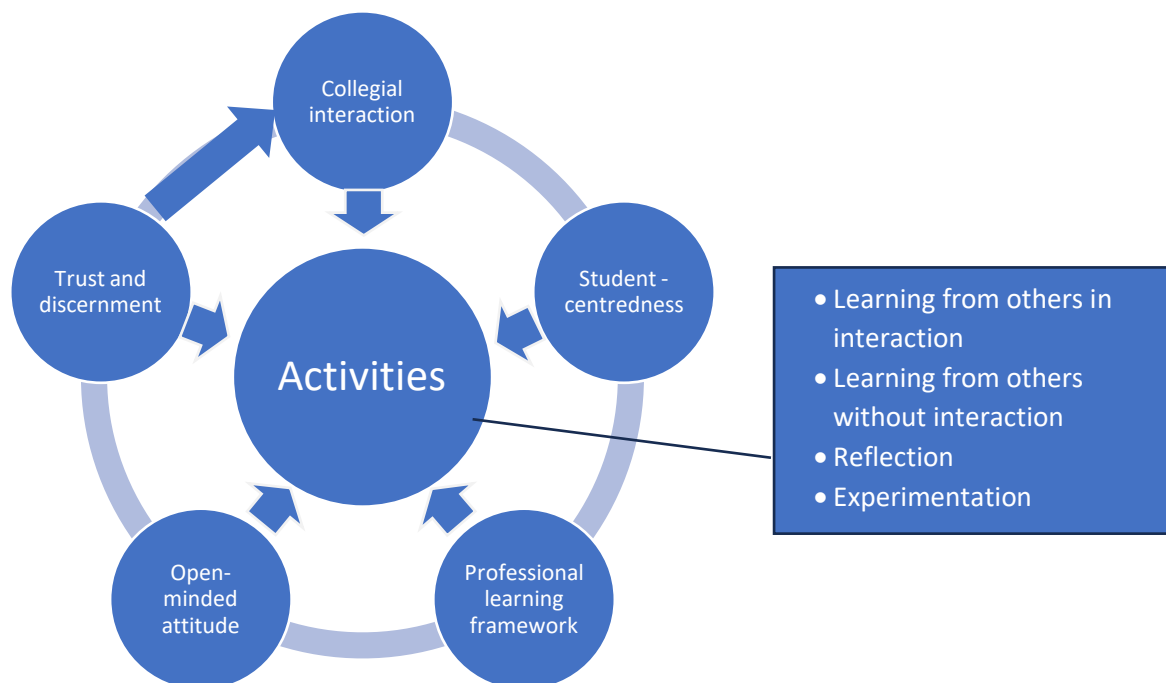
6.4 Strategies and Activities for Effective TPL

The effectiveness of continuous professional learning hinges on the strategies and activities employed. This section contributes to the empirical knowledge of Cambodian English language teachers' adoption of methods to foster their professional growth by examining the

possible reasons behind their choices. The following sections are divided into two parts: (1) an examination of the strategies (i.e., trust and discernment, collegial interaction, student-centredness, professional learning framework, and open-minded attitude) embraced by Cambodian ELT professionals (Section 6.4.1); and (2) a discussion of the activities (i.e., learning from others in interaction, learning from others without interaction, reflection and experimentation) they use for their professional development in the research context (Section 6.4.2). This thesis posits that the TPL strategies significantly influence how teachers select certain TPL approaches to enhance engagement in their professional growth. Figure 9 illustrates the strategies adopted by teachers and strategies' influence on TPL approaches that the participants utilised to engage in professional learning.

Figure 9

Strategies Driving Activities for Effective TPL



6.4.1 Strategies for teacher professional growth

This section of the thesis provides insights into the strategies used when engaging in the professional learning process within the English language teaching (ELT) context in Cambodia. First, suggested by three participants in this research (i.e., *Kong Bunchhoeun*, *Ven. Som* and *Chuon Nath*), informal dialogues are recognised as a valuable tool for exchanging ideas. However, *Kong Bunchhoeun* and *Ven. Som* considered the selection of interlocutors for professional advice to be even more significant to the efficacy of the professional learning process. The development of trust and discernment in selecting trustworthy colleagues, which Farrell (2018, p. 3) refers to as having “critical friends” for professional discourse, are perceived to contribute to the level of teachers’ engagement in professional learning activities. According to these participants (*Kong Bunchhoeun* and *Ven. Som*), only when trust has been established do these colleague-to-colleague exchanges yield meaningful outcomes that benefit their professional growth, such as identifying knowledge gaps and improving teaching practice. This strategy for professional learning aligns with that identified in various studies (Bolam et al., 2005; Desimone, 2011; MacPhail et al., 2024; Ninković et al., 2022; Picard & Kutsyuruba, 2017; Pischetola et al., 2023; Taylor, 2023; Vangrieken et al., 2015). Those studies concluded that trust serves as the foundation for collaborative efforts to thrive, enabling educators to openly share insights, experiences, and challenges. This emphasis on trust underscores the importance of creating a supportive and non-judgmental environment conducive to constructive dialogue and mutual learning.

Secondly, an open-minded attitude also emerges as a pivotal strategy for teacher professional growth in the Cambodia ELT context. Participants, such as *Chuon Nath* and *Kong Bunchhoeun*, believed that it is fundamental to exhibit a willingness to consider diverse perspectives and maintain a mindset of continuous learning to enrich their pedagogical practices. They

emphasised that this openness promotes collaboration, creativity, and innovation in the workplace, ultimately unlocking their full potential. As maintained by Bolam et al. (2005), Nurfaidah (2018) and Sadeghi et al. (2020), open-mindedness provides fundamental basis for teachers' reflection and critical thinking. Additionally, it fosters immediacy or positive rapport in the classroom among EFL (English as a foreign language) teachers and students, which can enhance the learning experience (Cui, 2022).

Furthermore, student-centredness is recognised as one of the strategies for success in teaching and professional growth. According to *Chuon Nath*, *Keng Vansak*, and *Krom Ngoy*, there is a relationship between students' backgrounds and their motivation, engagement, and willingness to participate actively in the learning process. These teachers believed that understanding students' circumstances drove them to adapt their instructional materials and approaches to match the students' interests, personalities, and learning styles. As evidenced in previous studies, tailoring instructional methodologies to primarily focus on specific learners' profiles often results in improved learning experiences and outcomes (Drissi & Amirat, 2016; Oliveira et al., 2023). However, it is essential to consider the role of educators' teaching experience in their ability to customise their educational materials. In this study, participants who advocated for the importance of understanding students' backgrounds and customising instructional resources were those teachers who possessed extensive teaching experience.

Finally, a structured approach to professional learning can involve adoption of a framework for TPL. For instance, *Chuon Nath* identifies himself as a strong advocate for implementing the knowledge acquisition process of "knowledge for practice, knowledge in practice, and knowledge of practice" as a theoretical foundation for his professional growth (Cochran-

Smith & Lytle, 1999). This framework emphasises the dynamic interplay between theoretical knowledge, practical application, and reflective practice in fostering pedagogical expertise (Daley 2000; Goodnough, 2010; Singh et al., 2019). *Chuon Nath* believed that engaging in this systematic knowledge acquisition process allowed him to cultivate an ethos of continuous improvement within his educational landscape and as a result to enhance his instructional effectiveness.

However, it is noteworthy that none of the participants in the study referenced frameworks such as reflective practice or teaching as inquiry in relation to their professional learning endeavours. While it is unclear from the collected data why these practices were not mentioned, other scholars have speculated that individuals can only make sense of their learning environment by utilising whatever resources that are available to fulfil their professional needs (Attard Tonna & Shanks, 2017; Fuller et al., 2007; Grosemans et al., 2015; Opfer & Pedder, 2011a, 2011b). In other words, it is the institution's role to provide intentional learning support to guide the TPL process (Kwakman, 2003); otherwise, teachers may adopt whatever professional learning methods come their way. To illustrate the significance of the role of institutional environment, the notion of teaching as inquiry—specifically the Spiral of Inquiry Model introduced by Timperley et al. (2014)—is widely implemented in New Zealand schools due to the support available at the institutional level (Brown et al., 2017; Brown & Zhang, 2017; Education Gazette editors, 2016; Ell et al., 2019; McChesney & Cross, 2023; Rincón-Gallardo & Fullan, 2016; Schnellert & Butler, 2021).

6.4.2 Techniques for teacher professional growth

As reported in my MRes project (see Section 1.1), there were five approaches to instructional practice (i.e., doing, learning from others in interaction, learning from others without

interaction, reflection, and experimentation) that Cambodian English language teachers adopted in this previous study in order to grow professionally (Chea, 2022; Meirink et al., 2007; Meirink et al., 2009).

The findings of the current study suggest that in the context of Cambodia's English Language Teaching (ELT) profession, educators employ various activities to engage in their professional learning within their workplace. However, as outlined in the preceding section, although some teachers may not have explicitly recognised their actions as methods of professional learning, the practice of refining their instructional methods based on prior experience constitutes a form of TPL (Bakkenes et al., 2010; Enthoven et al., 2023; Grosemans et al., 2015; Meirink et al., 2007; Richards, 2017a). Consequently, this study acknowledges that all the participating teachers were engaged in diverse professional learning activities. As a result, "Doing," which is described in the literature as an avoidance of explicit learning (Meirink et al., 2007, 2009), did not emerge as a distinct theme in this study (see Section 2.4.4 for a definition). Table 10 illustrates the professional learning activities adopted by teachers in this research, categorised by each type of approach.

Learning from others in interaction

This study offers an understanding into how teachers benefit from both structured discussions and casual exchanges for their professional growth. As discussed earlier in Section 1.4, 'learning from others in interaction' emphasises that the process of gaining knowledge happens specifically during an exchange or back-and-forth communication with others, and that this process can be undertaken both face-to-face and online (Cowan & Farrell, 2023; Grosemans et al., 2015; Meirink et al., 2007; Meirink et al., 2009; Mohammadi, 2023; Richards, 2017a). However, the study found no evidence of online interactions because the

participants specifically mentioned the absence of webinars, virtual conferences, online courses, and forums during data collection (Ab Rashid et al., 2016; Collins et al., 2016; Jones & Dexter, 2014; Kind & Evans, 2015; McGowan et al., 2012; Prestridge, 2019). Therefore, this thesis can only offer perspectives on face-to-face interactions. The following discussion on teachers' engagement in "learning from others in interaction" is divided into two parts: (1) formal interactions, and (2) informal interactions. Additionally, the section also considers which situation leads to more collaborative learning among teachers, as this has important implications for the effective facilitation and provision of support.

Table 10

Teacher Professional Learning Activities Classified under each Type

Types of Activities	Professional Learning Activities Adopted by Participating Teachers
Learning from others in interaction	- Independent PD workshops - Series of PD workshops and meetings initiated by the Institutions - formal CoP - Casual conversations with peers – Informal CoP
Learning from others without interaction	- Listening to presentations in PD sessions and conferences - Observing others without follow-up discussions - Using internet technologies to access online materials and watch videos about teaching techniques
Reflection	- Self-reflection - Reflection-in-action - Reflection-on-action
Experimentation	- Iterative process of integrating technology into instructional method - Trying out new ideas of teaching - Involvement in research project.

This study identifies two channels that enhance formal interactions in which teachers engage in their professional learning activities: (1) Professional development workshops, and (2) a sponsored Community of Practice. As elaborated in the introductory chapter (Chapter 1), PD workshops are designed to provide teachers with learning content and pedagogical skills, while CoPs offer a relaxed and flexible environment for teachers to discuss and collaboratively

learn new teaching methodologies or address classroom issues. PD workshops were historically regarded as one of the more effective means of fostering teachers' growth (Clarke & Hollingsworth, 2002; Guskey, 2002). In fact, as showed in this study, *Kong Bunchhoeun* and *Nou Hach*, both from Institution 3 – *Prasat Ta Prohm*, recognised PD workshops as a type of workplace support, which they regarded as an opportunity for teachers to advance their professional knowledge.

However, scholars are sceptical about the effectiveness of PD workshops (Clarke & Hollingsworth, 2002; Fullan, 2001; Knight, 2002; Richards, 2008; Roseler & Dentzau, 2013). Opfer and Pedder (2011b), for example, expressed a concern about the failure of some well-designed professional development programmes to achieve the desired outcomes in teacher learning and practice. On the other hand, this lack of effectiveness can also result in incidental learning, where workshop attendees gain knowledge beyond the intended content delivered during PD workshops. As demonstrated in this study, some participants experienced concomitant learning. *Chuon Nath*, for instance, found attending workshops and formal training programs a source of inspiration for his ongoing commitment to professional growth. Additionally, *Queen Indradevi* explained that her dedication to continuous improvement stemmed from the encouragement she gained from participating in an international professional development programme, which inspired her to remain on par with her counterparts in the region; this learning outcome, however, was not intended by the programme.

This study further identifies a Community of Practice established by an educational institution as a second channel for formal interactions that could enhance the TPL process. Collaborative environments like CoPs foster a conducive atmosphere for continuous professional

development by enabling educators to engage in collaborative work and reflection to address classroom challenges, exchange ideas, and share good practices (Bolam et al., 2005, James et al., 2007; Rone, 2009; Tang & Ye, 2023; Vangrieken et al., 2015; Wenger, 1998; Wenger et al., 2002). However, among the seven participants, only *Kong Bunchhoeun* discussed the introduction and implementation of a sponsored CoP at his workplace. He regarded this initiative as an occasion to further enhance his and his peers' engagement in professional learning.

Several potential explanations exist for the lack of discourse regarding CoPs among teachers from the institutions of the other teacher participants. This silence may stem from limited access to professional learning opportunities, leading to participants' unfamiliarity with the concept. Another possible reason for the absence of discussion around CoPs is that, although the participant may be aware of them, there is a lack of initiative to create them within these institutions' professional learning environments. Regardless of the underlying cause, such explanations highlight the critical role of the work environment and the institution's responsibility to provide intentional learning support to facilitate TPL processes (Attard Tonna & Shanks, 2017; Fuller et al., 2007; Grosemans et al., 2015; Kwakman, 2003; Opfer & Pedder, 2011b).

Despite the potential benefits of CoPs discussed, this study identified very little evidence of deep collaboration among teachers who were able to participate in such practices. According to *Kong Bunchhoeun's* observations, teachers' interactions within the reported CoP primarily involved resource exchange (e.g., lesson plans, worksheets) and classroom observation practices. The limited nature of this interaction, however, may be due to factors beyond the

teachers' control. Vangrieken et al. (2015) argue that the attitudes, skills and knowledge of CoP members influence their willingness or commitment to collaborate.

In general, teachers view informal conversations with colleagues, which can be considered a form of Community of Practice, as vital for supporting continuous professional learning and exchanging teaching strategies. These casual interactions provide opportunities for sharing experiences, exchanging ideas, and gaining insights which may not arise in formal training sessions (Kennedy, 2014; Kvam, 2018; Kyndt et al., 2016; Le Clus, 2011; Meirink et al., 2009; Vrikki et al., 2017). The participants in this study, such as *Chuon Nath*, *Ven. Som*, *Kong Bunchhoeun*, and *Nou Hach*, confirmed similar benefits arising from these informal interactions. They viewed informal conversations with colleagues as valuable channels for discovering new teaching methodologies and approaches, which they perceived as addressing gaps in their teaching practices. For example, *Nou Hach* and *Krom Ngoy* specifically mentioned that their awareness of new developments in teaching methodologies directly resulted from interactions with their peers, which led them to further explore and implement these newly acquired concepts in their teaching.

Moreover, as with previous studies, the data analysis of the current research suggests that informal interactions result in better collaboration (Hermansen, 2016; Vrikki et al., 2017). *Kong Bunchhoeun*, *Krom Ngoy*, *Queen Indradevi* and *Ven. Som*, for example, appreciated that informal interactions among their peers and mentors enhanced the exchange of advice and meaningful feedback that could be directly applied to improve their teaching practices. Pollard and Collins (2002) suggest that reflective teaching is fostered through collaboration and collegial discussions. Thus, in their study which explored the link between teacher collaboration and professional learning, De Jong et al. (2022) called attention to the

importance of meaningful dialogue within collaborative groups, where teachers challenge each other's perspectives and actively participate in discussions. Opportunities that encourage teachers to actively analyse teaching and learning, such as reviewing student work or receiving feedback on their teaching, provide a concrete foundation for professional growth based on active learning principles (Desimone et al., 2002; Garet et al., 2001; Hermansen, 2016; Vrikki et al., 2017).

Even though participating teachers recognise interactions with their peers as enhancing their professional growth, the current study highlights some obstacles in the process. In accordance with the findings of Alruqi and Alharbi (2022), an analysis of the data identified time constraints as a prevalent issue hindering teachers' engagement in professional learning. Five out of seven participants cited it as a significant barrier to their involvement in professional learning activities (*Kong Bunchhoeun, Ven. Som, Krom Ngoy, Nou Hach, Keng Vansak*). In particular, because of their heavy workloads and numerous responsibilities, these teachers often struggled to allocate sufficient time to enhance their skills and knowledge. This challenge was particularly pronounced for the ones tasked with teaching multiple subjects, as they had to navigate diverse curricula and adapt their teaching strategies accordingly. Such demands could have significantly limited their capacity to participate in comprehensive professional learning initiatives.

Learning from others without interaction

As discussed in the Literature Review (Section 2.4.4), 'learning from others without interaction' involves teachers gaining knowledge and skills without direct communication or collaboration through activities like observation, listening to presentations, reading, watching videos, or attending lectures and conferences (Bakkenes et al., 2010; Enthoven et al., 2023;

Grosemans et al., 2015; Meirink et al., 2007; Meirink et al., 2009; Richards, 2017a). This section provides insights into three professional learning approaches undertaken by Cambodian English language teachers without involving any interactions with their peers. These approaches include: (1) listening to presentations in professional development (PD) sessions and conferences, (2) observing others without follow-up discussions, and (3) using internet technologies to access online materials and watch videos about teaching techniques.

Two of the participants, i.e., as *Kong Bunchhoeun* and *Nou Hach*, regarded listening to presentations in professional development sessions and conferences as an effective method for professional learning. They appreciated this TPL activity as a way to give them exposure to innovative methodologies, pedagogical theories, and good practices in the field of English language teaching. While acknowledging that interactions can take place during such occasions, the participants reported their engagement as attendants, primarily just listening to the presentations. Geletu and Mihiretie (2023), however, argue that such engagement falls short of improving teachers' professional and academic capital, and curriculum implementation in classrooms. The authors maintain that applying the learnt content to real classroom contexts, coupled with reflection, is vital for the professional learning to be effective.

The Cambodian ELT professionals in this study also acknowledged the observation of their colleagues as an effective method to enhance their teaching repertoire. It is, however, interesting to note that not all the teachers had equal opportunities to observe their peers. For example, *Queen Indradevi* could only capitalise on her role as an English language student herself, as well as her role as the course leader, to observe other teachers, while *Chuon Nath* admitted that he leveraged his role as teacher trainer in order to benefit from this activity.

The remaining teachers reported limited access to observing their peers' classrooms. The participants hinted that the time constraints for both observers and those teachers being observed was one of the key reasons for the minimal number of opportunities for classroom observations. Additionally, Visone (2019), who conducted a study on peer observation as a form of professional learning, established a relationship between negative emotions, such as anxiety, and visits from colleagues. This conclusion is similar to the justification that *Keng Vansak* and *Nou Hach* provided for their reluctance even to approach their peers for an observation request.

Furthermore, while classroom observations can involve follow-up discussions and feedback sessions, *Queen Indradevi* reported that she solely adopted the process of observation without subsequent interaction. Once again, she mentioned that time constraints prevented her from engaging in follow-up discussions to provide and receive feedback. However, Bakkenes et al. (2010) consider this activity as a particularly effective way of getting ideas from others. In the case of my participants, though, limited time and possible discomfort with peer observation create barriers to meaningful classroom observations.

Another TPL activity which could be described as 'learning from others without interaction' is the use of the Internet technologies to access online materials and watch videos about teaching techniques, for example, on YouTube. Recognising the transformative potential of technology in English language education, the Cambodian ELT practitioners in this study utilised the Internet to access teaching and learning resources and augment their professional growth (Lantz-Andersson et al., 2018; Prestridge, 2019; Trust et al., 2018; Wang & Zhang, 2023). In fact, in the specific context of a less well-resourced physical library, such as those in universities based in the provincial areas of Cambodia where participants such as *Ven. Som*,

Keng Vansak, and *Queen Indradevi* are employed, Internet technology and online resources have become essential tools for addressing their teaching challenges on a daily basis, including the need to source relevant teaching materials. These reported benefits reinforce the findings of previous studies such as those by Kurian et al. (2020) and Özdemir and Pan (2016).

The current study also offers additional perspectives on the reasons behind this adaptive approach of using Internet technologies for teachers' professional growth. This particular method of learning has proven to be favourable compared to traditional modes of professional development. Similar to the findings of previous studies (e.g., Ahmad et al., 2023; Singh et al., 2022; Wang & Zhang, 2023), the participants who adopted this technique recognised its helpfulness and convenience, as they could always access it at their own pace and in their own time. For participants such as *Ven. Som*, *Keng Vansak*, and *Queen Indradevi*, utilising the Internet provides an alternative to relying solely on their peers, who may not always be available to respond to their needs. In addition, *Ven. Som* explained how the technique enabled him to learn to use new search tools, such as Microsoft Bing. He viewed these tools as integral to expediting his professional growth and allowing him to efficiently access a wealth of information.

With the proliferation of Internet technology, digitalisation offers educators new opportunities to engage in impactful learning events (Minea-Pic, 2020). However, this study found that participants primarily used Internet technologies to access free teaching materials. The teachers attributed this trend to the inadequate digital infrastructure at their workplaces. All the participants reported that their universities lacked subscriptions for paid academic journals. Additionally, while access to paid online learning platforms such as LinkedIn Learning

and other MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses), as well as learning management systems like Canvas, is common practice at tertiary educational institutions in New Zealand and other developed countries, the Cambodian HEIs, where this study took place, did not provide such access. These digital environments could have facilitated the sharing of in-house developed content, thus supporting an asynchronous professional learning process (Cowan & Farrell, 2023; Mohammadi, 2023).

Furthermore, it is worth noting that the study found little evidence of participants utilising other learning methods, such as the reading of methodology books and academic journal articles (Bakkenes et al., 2010; Meirink et al., 2007; Meirink et al., 2009; Richards, 2017a). The minimal use of this learning approach may be attributed to various factors. Reflecting on their experience with such methods, participants might not have regarded methodology books or academic journal articles as particularly useful for addressing immediate classroom challenges. In addition, the time required to engage with these texts might be seen as excessive, leading participants to feel that the effort was not worthwhile.

Reflection

This section offers insights into the participant teachers' perceptions of the method of reflection on teaching practices for their professional growth. Consistent with my preliminary research, this learning approach is also favoured by Cambodian English language teachers in the current study (Chea, 2022). Reflection, in which educators use introspection to examine their teaching methodologies in order to identify strengths and areas for improvement, is considered one of the essential components for the development of teachers' professional practice (Astuti & Drajiati, 2022; Farrell, 2013; 2024; Pokhrel, 2022; Thoonen et al., 2011; Warsi & Khurshid, 2022). *Ven. Som*, for instance, considers his "self-reflection" practice as a

starting point that enables him to identify any areas for improvement, to seek solutions to his classroom challenges and to explore innovative teaching methods. In addition, he notes that engaging in self-reflection inspires him to experiment with new ideas and approaches in his teaching practice. In a similar way, *Queen Indradevi* and *Keng Vansak* believe that a critical examination of their own pedagogical methods and classroom materials is fundamental to their teaching practice as it enables them to refine their instructional approach which in turn results in a significant improvement to their students' comprehension and engagement.

The participants, however, exhibited some inconsistencies in their reflection practices. Two of the teachers (i.e., *Nou Hach* and *Queen Indradevi*) seem to primarily engage in reflection-in-action (Grosemans et al., 2015; Schön, 1983). In this process, teachers assess their teaching methods during class time to ensure continuous improvement of activities and instruction. In contrast, two others (i.e., *Keng Vansak* and *Ven. Som*) extended their practice to adopt reflection-on-action. These teachers reported critically thinking about what was effective and what was not, with the aim of enhancing the following classes (Grosemans et al., 2015; Schön, 1983). Regardless of the mode of reflection, most of the teacher participants reported that they undertook the process individually. As a result, the current study observed minimal instances of teachers engaging in collaborative reflection, which had been recommended in Grosemans et al.'s (2015) study.

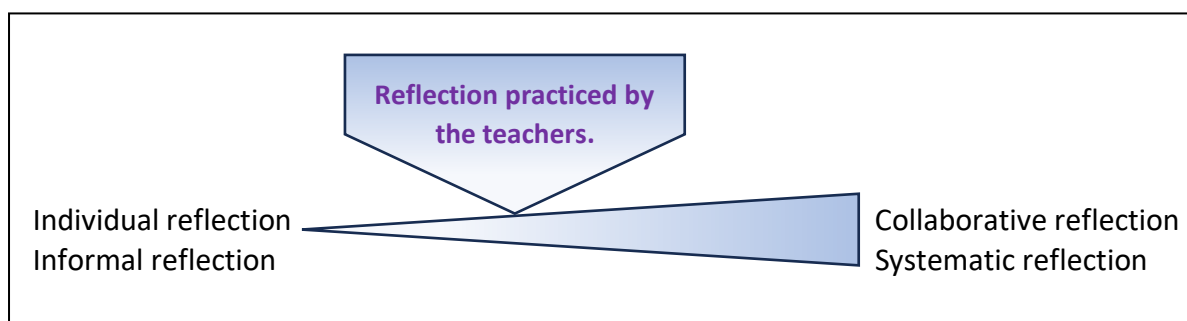
Moreover, while some participants reported engaging in self-reflection to improve their teaching, this study found little evidence of teachers explicitly documenting their reflection process. In the framework of reflective practice, systematic reflection extends beyond mere contemplation; it involves documenting and structurally reviewing purposefully collected information, including teaching materials, creating instructional modifications, implementing

them, and assessing their effectiveness (Farrell, 2013; 2024; Hayden et al., 2013; Mulu et al., 2022; Pokhrel, 2022; Pollard & Collins, 2002; Richards & Farrell, 2005). In this study, there was no obvious mention of full engagement in the complete process of systematic reflection among the teachers, only some reported partial engagement. It remains unclear whether the teachers were unaware of reflective practice as a potential framework for professional learning, or if the perceived workload associated with systematic reflection made it difficult to implement the process within their busy schedules.

To illustrate the teachers' adoption of reflection on teaching as a professional learning method in this research context, this study proposes a spectrum of reflective practices. Figure 10 depicts this spectrum, highlighting how teachers engage in reflection for their professional growth. One end represents unstructured reflection, where teachers reflect independently without a structured framework. The opposite end represents a systematic approach, which can also involve collaborative reflection. In this approach, teachers may reflect together using structured frameworks or prompts to guide their collaborative reflection process.

Figure 10

A Spectrum of Engagement in Reflective Practice among Cambodian ELT Professionals



However, as a qualitative case study, it is acknowledged that this research design precludes the adoption of additional data triangulation methods. Therefore, the representation of this

spectrum relies on observational assumptions by the researcher and informed by the teachers' descriptions. Furthermore, this spectrum includes the presumption that practising "reflection" and "self-reflection" also results in reflective teaching; therefore, this notion is examined thoroughly in Section 6.6.

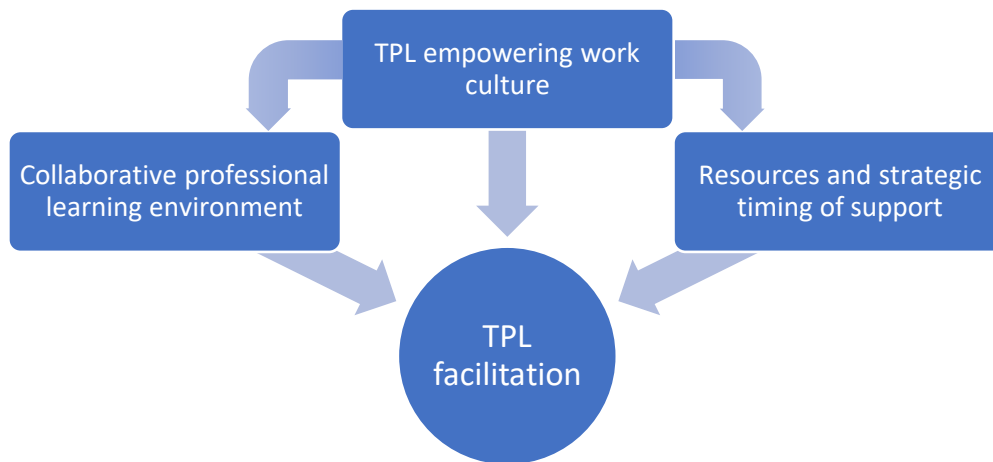
Experimentation

This project also illuminates teachers' perceptions of experimentation in teaching as an approach to professional growth. In the context of English language instruction, experimentation entails the adaptation of a peer's teaching approach, the implementation of a personally developed teaching methodology, or the testing of a newly crafted teaching method in a collaborative setting (Meirink et al., 2007). This process is undertaken either to improve instructional quality or to address challenges in one's own classroom practice (Bakkenes et al., 2010; Louws et al., 2017). The intended outcomes of employing experimental methodologies within classrooms are innovative teaching strategies to enhance student engagement and learning outcomes (Thoonen et al., 2011). In this study, *Ven. Som* was observed to have tried integrating technology into his instructional method in one of his listening classes. As a result, he reported that he achieved higher satisfaction with his teaching as he noticed his students appeared to be more motivated and engaged in classroom activities. Moreover, experimentation in teaching involves a degree of reflection rather than being an isolated process (Thoonen et al., 2011). For example, *Ven. Som's* description of the teaching approach illustrates the interconnected processes that involve reflection and experimentation in teaching. He engages in an iterative process to critically evaluate the effectiveness of his experimental techniques, allowing for continuous refinement and improvement in his teaching practices.

However, experimentation appears to be an unpopular professional learning activity in this study, as only *Ven. Som* reported employing this method in his teaching practice. Regardless of their intentions to experiment with their teaching, *Nou Hach* and *Krom Ngoy* blamed their heavy workload and time constraints as obstacles to this process. Furthermore, contrary to Meirink et al.'s (2007) study, this project found no evidence that collaborative discussions with peers led to experimentation, despite some participants expressing a desire for dedicated space and assistance to facilitate the process. For example, just as the case of *Ven. Som*, who undertook experimentation independently, *Nou Hach* could only request collaborative discussions, peer observations, and training on the teaching experimentation process. Being a novice teacher, *Nou Hach* acknowledges that his reluctance to experiment in his teaching stems from the challenge of navigating the scope of pedagogical appropriateness and the alignment of creative teaching methods with educational objectives.

6.5 Teacher Professional Learning Facilitation

This examination of key findings contributes to an understanding of Cambodian English teachers' perspectives on professional learning and how their aspirations for professional growth and contextual factors influence their engagement in the learning process. Drawing upon the teachers' perceptions of contextual factors which influenced their professional learning engagement (discussed in Section 6.3), three key features emerge that institutions could offer to better facilitate the process: (1) a culture that empowers professional learning; (2) collaborative environments; and (3) well-timed resources and support. Figure 11 illustrates the three key aspects of the facilitation of Teacher Professional Learning as discussed in this section.

Figure 11*Teacher Professional Learning Facilitation*

6.5.1 Professional learning empowering work culture

A conducive organisational environment is crucial for the fostering of professional learning in the workplace (Joo et al., 2011; Kwakman, 2003; McChesney & Cross, 2023; Taylor, 2023). The current study found that a school culture that deliberately ensures that there are opportunities for the professional learning desired by the participating teachers is characterised by the provision of manageable workloads and clear pathways for professional growth opportunities. The teachers in this study believe that such a culture may contribute to their financial well-being by reducing stress and burnout, which allows them to dedicate more energy to professional learning activities. Additionally, a work culture which empowers a professional learning is further enhanced by the provision of resources, strategically timed support, and the fostering of a collaborative professional learning environment.

The first way that institutions can nurture a culture of professional learning is by fairly distributing workloads among their teachers. Contrary to the findings of a study by Magalong and Torreon (2021), which suggested that teaching workload had a minimal impact on

teachers' wellbeing and effectiveness in the Philippines, teachers in the present study express a belief that balanced workloads, along with opportunities for greater financial stability, would provide them with the necessary time to engage in professional learning which is essential for refining their teaching skills. For example, in his appreciation of the workshop initiative, *Nou Hach* highlights his view that decreasing teaching workloads is another crucial measure the institution could undertake to enhance teacher engagement. This sentiment was echoed across all the teachers in all four research venues, with some teachers also making an explicit call for adjustments to work arrangements to support their professional growth. The teachers (e.g. *Ven. Som*) believe that addressing timetabling issues, ensuring workload balance, and implementing measures to enhance their financial security would grant them the freedom to focus their energy on improving their teaching techniques. This assertion aligns with a study by Brady and Wilson (2021), which advocates for a strong correlation between workload and teacher wellbeing, defined as an individual's sense of professional fulfilment, satisfaction, purpose, and happiness.

Another critical aspect that the educators in this study advocate for their institutions to address is the establishment of clearly communicated visions for professional growth. While some evidence of such support exists, the educators outside of *Prasat Ta Prohm* assert that their institutions could significantly enhance their facilitation of their professional learning processes. For instance, *Ven. Som* advocates for a transparent blueprint outlining teachers' professional growth, which would provide clearer direction for refining teaching techniques. Shared visions play a crucial role in guiding teachers' engagement in professional learning (Fairman et al., 2023; Watson, 2014). Moreover, Fairman et al. (2023) underscore the importance of communication and coordination initiated by school leadership in disseminating expectations and procedures for professional learning. However, Watson

(2014) cautions that while a unified vision fosters direction and efficiency, it may also limit the exploration of alternative paths. According to Watson, identifying the core values of a school poses a challenge, given the multitude of conflicting values. This complexity arises from the potential contradictions among these values, making it challenging to determine which hold greater significance.

In addition to the two elements discussed above, a work environment that empowers TPL is fundamental to the facilitation of this process. Thus, it should provide teacher collaboration sessions and adequate sources and organise the strategic timing of support. Collaborative opportunities allow teachers to share experiences, strategies, and insights, fostering a culture of continuous improvement. Furthermore, when support is strategically timed and readily available, teachers can address challenges promptly, integrate new knowledge effectively, and sustain their professional growth momentum. Both of these additional elements lead to the enhancement of Teacher Professional Learning. The following sections discuss how teachers perceive the needs for these two elements to be in place for their professional growth.

6.5.2 Collaborative professional learning environments

As discussed in Section 6.4, Cambodian English language teachers often engage in professional learning processes individually. However, the adoption of this approach is unlikely to represent their preferred option, as all participants appreciate the benefits of learning through peer interactions and collaboration. They emphasise the importance of discussing teaching performance, methodologies, and sharing classroom techniques and materials. While Szelei et al. (2020) speculate about conflicting agendas being a possible reason behind the limited degree of teacher collaboration and commitment, this holds only

some truth in the Cambodian ELT context. More significant hindrances are the lack of time and the absence of appropriate platforms for collaboration. Specifically, teachers from the three institutions – *Prasat Angkor Wat*, *Prasat Bayon*, and *Prasat Banteay Srei* – indicate that insufficient time and the unavailability of suitable tools or mediums for collaboration force them into individual professional learning, thus effectively precluding any opportunities for cohesive teamwork within their workplaces. This group of teachers, therefore, advocate for a work environment that fosters a culture of professional learning and collaboration. *Krom Ngoy* and *Chuon Nath*, for instance, point out that informal interactions among teachers often lead to cooperative efforts and urge their institutions to consider fostering a supportive atmosphere for such interactions to flourish.

Teacher collaboration is undeniably crucial in any Teacher Professional Learning context. A review by Cirkony et al. (2024) on TPL emphasises collaboration as one of its key features. In support of this view, *Ven. Som* further highlights the significance of a motivational atmosphere in the workplace for enhancing collaborative learning among colleagues. In such an interactive environment, teachers can work collaboratively by sharing teaching experiences and developing assessment tools and such activities play a vital role in promoting teacher professional growth (Bolam et al., 2005; Risnanosanti et al., 2023). Steyn (2017) offers recommendations for schools to support teacher learning by promoting collaboration, team learning, and collegial dialogue among staff, as well as creating continuous learning opportunities and instituting systems to facilitate learning and sharing. According to a study conducted by the OECD [Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development] (2020), there is strong evidence that collegial support is a powerful motivator for professional learning, and that collegial dialogue provides a source of meaningful feedback which leads to

a positive impact on teachers' practices. Indeed *Ven. Som*'s experience in this study supports this view.

6.5.3 Resources and strategically timing support

As illustrated in Figure 11, which appears at the beginning of this section (Section 6.5), the current study suggests that the educators value access to high-quality resources alongside as well as timely and targeted support in order to enhance their professional learning. Specifically, the teachers call for their institutions to establish a work environment that caters for both synchronous learning processes, through real-time interaction, and asynchronous learning processes, facilitated by virtual environments, as well as the opportunities that promote both synchronous and asynchronous professional learning. As LeVesseur et al. (2022) argue, it is essential that institutions provide modes of professional learning that align with teachers' preferences and needs.

First, the study identifies three key areas where teachers require assistance to enhance synchronous professional learning: facilitating experimentation with new teaching methods, fostering real-time collaboration among colleagues through appropriate platforms, and enabling international teacher collaboration. The first area of desired support concerns providing resources and guidance for trying out new pedagogical techniques. *Nou Hach*, for instance, expresses his desire for dedicated assistance to explore new teaching methods, as he believes that such opportunities will enable him to develop his creativity in instructional delivery. This aligns with a study by Szelei et al. (2020) which highlights the importance of fostering creativity in teaching. Furthermore, Penuel et al. (2007) suggest that schools offering technical support during the implementation of new skills learned in workshops can help teachers effectively use these abilities in their classrooms.

Secondly, this research emphasises the value of peer interaction for teachers. Teachers such as *Ven. Som*, *Kong Bunchhoeun*, and *Queen Indradevi* reported that casual interactions with colleagues often led to meaningful feedback with practical applications for their own classrooms. This aligns with Kwakman's (2003) concept of social support, which emphasises the importance of helpful interactions with colleagues within the workplace environment. *Chuon Nath*, for instance, added that a supportive workplace that facilitates collegial interactions would allow experienced educators like himself to share their knowledge and skills with their peers.

Thirdly, the study also highlights the teachers' desire for resources that support cross-cultural professional learning. *Queen Indradevi*, for example, emphasised the value of international collaboration and expressed a wish for platforms that facilitate such interactions. She believes that exchanging ideas with international colleagues could provide fresh perspectives and innovative approaches. This is part of her broader call for expanded avenues for professional development, including increased access to workshops, online training platforms, and specifically, formal training on accessing online materials and effectively integrating technology into classroom instruction.

Fourthly, in a teaching context where teachers need to juggle between multiple institutions to meet their living expenses – i.e., those who work at *Prasat Angkor Wat*, *Prasat Bayon*, and *Prasat Banteay Srei* – finding time to engage in learning activities to hone their professional knowledge can be a challenge. Acknowledging the importance of continuous improvement, these teachers, therefore, call for access to asynchronous professional learning opportunities. Such opportunities would provide flexibility and autonomy, allowing them to engage in continuous learning and professional growth in a way that fits their individual schedules and

preferences (Cowan & Farrell, 2023; Mohammadi, 2023; Vanoostveen, 2019; Wang & Zhang, 2023). For example, *Queen Indradevi* notes that the absence of webinars at her institution costs her the opportunity to engage in multinational collaborative learning, share experiences, and gain international insights into teaching practices. In the same way, the other teachers in this study recognise that insufficient resources (e.g., no subscription to paid academic journals, outdated printed resources, and the absence of online learning platforms) are hindering their engagement in professional learning. They, therefore, appeal to their institutions to consider providing such opportunities.

Additionally, this examination of teachers' perceptions of better ways to facilitate their professional learning process also highlights the importance of blended professional learning environments. These spaces promote both synchronous and asynchronous professional learning opportunities, through both face-to-face and online interaction. Studies conducted in different contexts have offered practical approaches in this area. For example, Cowan and Farrell's research from 2023 demonstrates how immersive technologies like virtual reality (VR) can be integrated effectively into combined professional learning environments. This integration aids in developing resources that are easily accessible by the teachers and allows for self-paced study, thereby bolstering the learning experience (Cowan & Farrell, 2023). Additionally, Mohammadi (2023) concluded that the modality of what he refers to as "*bichronous*" – the blend of synchronous and asynchronous – online learning significantly benefited teachers in acquiring knowledge of the theory and practice of teaching and learning in his study. He also argues that synchronous and asynchronous methods of learning support each other and should not be interchangeable. As evidenced by this study, teachers are keen to engage with the evolving nature of learning. For instance, *Ven. Som* has taken a proactive step by integrating Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools into his teaching methods to address

classroom challenges. Moreover, other teachers such as *Kong Bunchhoeun*, *Queen Indradevi*, and *Chuon Nath* acknowledge the potential of webinars and online platforms for sharing and acquiring pedagogical knowledge with their peers and international counterparts.

This study also suggests that the effectiveness of teacher professional facilitation lies in the strategic timing of support. Teachers such as *Kong Bunchhoeun* and *Nou Hach* recommend that professional development sessions or sponsorship to attend conferences be offered at the right time, when teachers are available to accept the offer. Supporting this idea, a study by Taylor (2023) argues that time and place opportunities are critical to facilitating TPL. By offering support when teachers are most receptive and have time to implement new strategies, the impact of professional development is maximised.

6.6 The Impact of Professional Learning on Classroom Practice

One of the research objectives of this study was to seek an understanding of Cambodian English language teachers' perceptions of the impact of professional learning on their classroom practice. It was found that teachers involved in this study believe their professional learning has transformed their teaching methods across immediate and long-term horizons. In the short term, the immediate effects include the ability to effectively navigate daily classroom challenges and meet teaching requirements, leading to perceptible shifts in classroom dynamics. Over the long term, participants perceive professional learning to enhance their self-efficacy and equip them with supplementary skills, including presentation techniques, IT proficiency, stronger English language competency, and research capabilities.

An immediate effect of professional learning on classroom practice as perceived by these Cambodian English language teachers is the ability to navigate daily classroom challenges. In alignment with findings in previous research studies by Al Asmari (2016), Paramita et al.

(2023), and Rani et al. (2023), teachers, such as *Kong Bunchhoeun*, *Ven. Som*, *Keng Vansak* and *Nou Hach*, reported that participating in professional learning activities allows them to refine their teaching strategies and adapt classroom materials to cater to students' individual needs. Consequently, they noticed a positive shift in student engagement in their classroom. Other teachers (e.g., *Ven. Som* and *Keng Vansak*) felt more equipped to address challenges such as disengaged learners, suggesting that professional learning enhanced their classroom management skills.

In addition, the participants reported that their engagement in professional learning significantly enhances their classroom practice by facilitating compliance with teaching requirements. As with findings by Bergmark (2023) and those by Yu and Chao (2023), teachers such as *Kong Bunchhoeun*, *Krom Ngoy*, and *Nou Hach* noted that they felt confident in applying the knowledge and skills acquired through professional learning to deliver the required curriculum content. This suggests that professional learning equips teachers to meet the expectations outlined in the curriculum.

This research study also sheds lights on the long-term benefits associated with professional learning. The findings of the study suggest that teachers' engagement in professional learning results in their perceived self-efficacy. In support of findings from Barni et al. (2019), De Vries et al. (2014), Rani et al. (2023), Tran (2014), and Zonoubi et al. (2017), the teachers reported a significant increase in confidence in their instructional abilities after engaging in the professional learning process. *Kong Bunchhoeun* and *Chuon Nath*, for example, directly attributed their belief in their ability for student engagement to their ongoing participation in professional learning activities. Alruqi and Alharbi (2022) reported their findings in a study

that resonate with this case. Their participants exhibited a belief in their greater capacity to handle tasks, obligations, and challenges effectively within their professional activities.

Furthermore, consistent with the results presented in the research carried out by Anderson et al. (2022) and Massie et al., (2022), which examined teacher creativity and teachers' creative agency, teachers like *Kong Bunchhoeun*, *Ven. Som*, *Nou Hach*, and *Queen Indradevi* observed that continuous professional learning fostered more flexibility and creativity in their teaching. This shift also empowered them to experiment with new teaching methods and expand their teaching repertoire, ultimately leading to a more dynamic and engaging learning environment for their students.

Overall, this research study has provided evidence for the way in which Teacher Professional Learning enhances reflective teaching. In contrast to technically focused teaching, reflective teaching involves a teacher's integrating their values and goals that guide the practice, critically examining their assumptions, and carefully considering their teaching contexts (Zeichner & Liston, 2014). As can be seen in this study, all the participants demonstrated their ability to adapt their teaching practices in order to address the specific needs and backgrounds of their students in their respective contexts. For instance, *Krom Ngoy*, *Chuon Nath*, and *Keng Vansak* emphasised the importance of considering students' learning profiles in their teaching practice by adapting classroom materials and assessments. In the same way, by challenging their prior assumption about students' laziness, *Queen Indradevi*, *Kong Bunchhoeun*, and *Ven. Som* adjusted their teaching methods to enhance student engagement. Highlighting the benefits of their ongoing professional learning, these educators acknowledged that their adaptation of instruction and teaching materials has been guided by

their values and commitment to teaching and their willingness to reexamine their conceptions of their students' engagement levels.

The current study has also been able to pinpoint the notion that the impact of professional learning can extend beyond the domain of pedagogical methods and classroom management strategies. Just as in the findings of Wichadee's (2011) study, teachers involved in this research project reported that they had gained additional skills such as presentation techniques, internet technology (IT) competency, English language proficiency, and research capabilities. *Kong Bunchhoeun*, for instance, highlighted how his involvement in a Community of Practice (CoP) improved his public speaking skills in English. *Ven. Som*, on the other hand, found that professional learning helped him to develop additional IT skills and the ability to integrate technology for enhanced learning experiences of his student. *Queen Indradevi* specifically noted that her improved English language proficiency was a direct result of her own professional learning and participation in other exchange programmes. Furthermore, in support of Bergmark's (2023) study, a finding in the current research indicates that *Nou Hach* valued the opportunity to conduct research on Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), gaining not only theoretical knowledge but also practical experience in research methodology.

6.7 Toward a Comprehensive Model of Cambodian Teacher Professional Learning

Thus far, this thesis has examined key findings that contribute to the empirical knowledge of Cambodian English teachers' perspectives on professional learning (Section 6.1), their perceptions of the contextual factors influencing their engagement in the learning process (Section 6.2), and their aspirations and motivation for professional growth (Section 6.3). It has also offered insights into the strategies and activities they adopt for professional growth

(Section 6.4), the teachers' perceptions of the effective facilitation of professional learning processes (Section 6.5), and the impact of professional learning on their classroom practice (Section 6.6). As the core aim of this project is to provide a comprehensive understanding of TPL within the Cambodian ELT context, this section explains how the discussion of these findings contributes to the development of the Comprehensive Model of Cambodia Teacher Professional Learning, thus making a significant theoretical contribution to the field.

As outlined in Section 2.3.10, the conceptual framework I have proposed takes into consideration interrelated factors influencing Teacher Professional Learning and consists of five primary components:

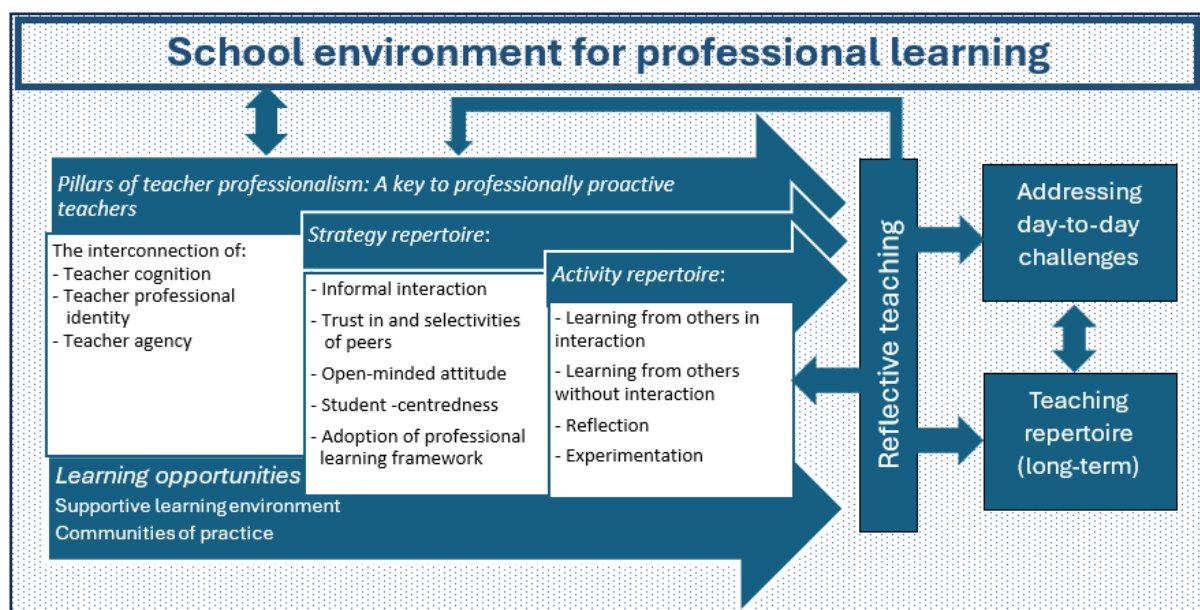
1. The *Pillars of Teacher Professionalism* include the interconnectedness of teacher cognition, professional identity, and agency, emphasising their harmony in fostering Teacher Professional Learning.
2. The second component, *Professional Learning Repertoire*, refers to the collection of teaching strategies, activities, and practices that educators use to facilitate their professional learning. It includes both formal and informal methods aimed at enhancing professional growth.
3. The *Professional Learning Opportunities* available within the work context highlight the importance of collegial learning, collaborative interactions and support networks, such as communities of practice, in advancing professional practice.
4. This journey culminates in *Reflective Teaching*, where teachers build their efficacy, and the framework promotes the goal of sustainability through a feedback loop that encourages revisiting core principles – the *Pillars of Teacher Professionalism*, thus reinforcing the cycle of professional growth.

5. Recognising that each school has its unique culture, policies, and community dynamics, the framework allows for the fact that the contextual environment significantly influences the professional learning process by shaping the resources, challenges, and support available to teachers.

Building upon my proposed conceptual framework, the remaining section of this chapter explains how the findings from the current study have contributed to the development of the Comprehensive Model of Cambodian Teacher Professional Learning. Figure 12 illustrates how this model includes the interrelated factors influencing TPL and how this process impacts classroom practice.

Figure 12

Comprehensive Model of Cambodian Teacher Professional Learning



The *Pillars of Teacher Professionalism* are foundational elements that ignite and fuel teachers' engagement in their professional learning initiatives. A teacher's cognition, professional identity, and agency largely shape and drive their aspirations, influencing their participation

in these endeavours. As discussed in Section 6.2, the work environment undeniably plays a significant role in shaping Cambodian EFL teachers' commitment to professional learning (Attard Tonna & Shanks, 2017; Bellibaş & Gümüş, 2023; Fuller et al., 2007; Grosemans et al., 2015; Hayes et al., 2024; Kwakman, 2003; Opfer & Pedder, 2011b). However, as outlined in Sections 6.1 and 6.2, a more nuanced factor lies beneath the surface: the individual teacher's interpretation of the learning environment co-shapes their selection of learning approaches (Beijaard et al., 2004). Moreover, it is important to highlight the proposition that the environment's influence on Teacher Professional Learning is not a one-way process; it also involves teachers themselves actively making sense of their surroundings, reorganising existing knowledge, and acquiring new knowledge to address their classroom challenges (Attard Tonna & Shanks, 2017, Kvam, 2018).

This interpretation results from an interplay of the foundational elements of the *Pillars of Teacher Professionalism*—teachers' beliefs, knowledge, and attitudes, as well as their sense of identity and agency (Bandura, 2001, 2006; Beijaard et al., 2004; Biesta et al., 2015; Borg, 2003; Emirbayer & Mische, 1998; Flores & Day, 2006; Hallinger et al., 2019). For example, as shown in the summary tables of sub-themes emerging from *Chapters IV* and *V* (Tables 5 and 7), each participant exhibits distinct perspectives of their professional learning journey. These variations in their perceptions of professional growth, opportunities, and challenges—particularly among those working in the same institution but holding different views—highlight how individuals interpret their professional environments. For instance, some teachers may not recognise the refinement of their instructional methods, which are based on prior experiences as a form of professional learning, as discussed in Section 6.1. This misconception underscores broader challenges in their acknowledging diverse approaches to

professional growth and reflects a belief that professional learning must follow formal structures, rather than recognising the value of informal, experiential learning.

Furthermore, as indicated by the learning methods which the teachers made reference to and those which were noticeably absent from the discussions (Section 6.4), a specific work environment shapes the teachers' awareness of various professional learning strategies and activities – their *Professional Learning Repertoire*. However, teachers' viewpoints on the effectiveness of specific learning approaches further illustrate their personal interpretation of their professional learning choices (Chea, 2022; Ehlert & Souvignier, 2023; Hefnawi, 2017; Mokhele & Jita, 2012; Nezhad & Stolz, 2024; Rani et al., 2023). For example, while some participants may not value the reading of methodology books or academic journal articles as effective learning methods, others prefer accessing online materials rather than relying on peer interactions to address classroom challenges. This divergence in views suggests that teachers' preferences are not merely about the activities themselves; they are also influenced by their prior experiences and the perceived relevance of these activities to their specific contexts. In the same way, although teachers acknowledge the importance of observing colleagues, engaging in experimentation, and collaborating with peers, they often tend to blame time constraints for their inability to pursue these activities.

Finally, while the workplace may seem entirely responsible for providing teachers with *Professional Learning Opportunities*, the interplay of foundational elements within the *Pillars of Teacher Professionalism*, as well as individual interpretations of the learning environment, also partly influence teachers' perceptions of available opportunities (Barth et al., 2024; P. Taylor, 2017). While all the participants in this study recognise the importance of collegial interaction and support, the extent of their pursuit varies among individuals (discussed in

Section 6.4). For example, the justifications provided by *Keng Vansak* and *Nou Hach* for their reluctance to approach peers for observation requests merely reflect their unique perceptions, contrasting with those of other participants from their respective institutions. Moreover, the expressions of loneliness which they feel in their profession as voiced by *Keng Vansak* and *Ven. Som* illustrate how the cultural context can shape perceptions, making teachers less inclined to seek help.

While this study does not explicitly adopt Ecological Systems Theory as a guiding framework, the Comprehensive Model of Cambodia Teacher Professional Learning shares key parallels with its core assumptions. Specifically, the Model recognises the layered influence of contextual factors on Teacher Professional Learning, aligning with the ecological perspective that individuals are shaped by interactions within and across multiple systems (Bronfenbrenner, 1977). The Model's components, such as *Professional Learning Opportunities* (meso-level factors) and the broader institutional and cultural environment (macro-level factors), reflect the systemic affordances and constraints observed in the Cambodian HE context. These levels interact with individual teacher characteristics (micro-level), supporting a nuanced understanding of how TPL emerges in contextually embedded ways.

6.8 Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I have introduced the Comprehensive Model of Cambodian Teacher Professional Learning, which considers interrelated factors contributing to the understanding of professional growth for teachers, particularly within the context of Cambodian English language teaching. The development of this model is derived from the empirical knowledge I have gained of the professional learning process as investigated in this research context. First,

this examination has provided an understanding that there is a subtle contradiction in teachers' perceptions of professional growth. While some teachers believe that improvements in their teaching methods automatically accumulate with the number of years of their teaching experience, others consider it to be the result of a deliberate process of active engagement in learning activities. The TPL process is also influenced by contextual factors such as workplace support, organisational atmosphere (both positive and negative aspects), and the quality of collegial relationships, including trust and selectivity among colleagues.

In addition, the chapter has discussed the factors that drive Cambodian EFL teachers to engage in TPL. This study indicates that these teachers' motivation for professional learning extends beyond mere personal growth, to include a commitment to continuous improvement in teaching practices, a focus on student-centred approaches, and a determination to address classroom challenges. Moreover, the teachers engage in professional learning to fulfil their personal satisfaction, uphold a sense of responsibility towards students, and cultivate a desire to make a positive impact. The discussion in this chapter also illuminates the influence of other factors such as the expectations of rewards, recognition, and aspirations for career advancement that can drive teacher engagement in TPL.

Beyond identifying influencing factors, this chapter has investigated the practical aspects of effective TPL, emphasising collaborative interaction based on trust and strategic selection of colleagues as peer mentors. An open-minded attitude and a student-centred focus are highlighted as being crucial, in addition to adopting a structured professional learning framework. Moving beyond strategies, the chapter has affirmed the teachers' adoption of the

four types of key activities for their TPL: (1) learning from others in interaction; (2) learning from others without interaction; (3) reflection, (4) and active experimentation.

The chapter has also examined the impact of TPL on teachers' classroom practice, considering both short-term and long-term benefits. In the short term, TPL equips teachers with skills to navigate daily challenges and meet teaching requirements. In the long term, it enhances teachers' self-efficacy and equips them with a broader skill set, including presentation techniques, IT proficiency, English language competency, and research capabilities.

With emphasis on the crucial role of institutions in facilitating effective TPL, this chapter has highlighted the importance of fostering a professional learning culture and providing opportunities for collaborative learning among teachers. It has also underlined the need for strategic support, ensuring access to adequate resources and support at times of greatest impact.

In the following conclusion chapter, I discuss the implications of the key contributions from the research findings, as well as the limitations of the current study.

CHAPTER SEVEN: CONCLUSION

This thesis has presented my study of Teacher Professional Learning (TPL) in the context of English language teaching at higher education institutions in Cambodia. Grounded in social constructivism, this study adopted an interpretive paradigm to focus on understanding and interpreting Cambodian English language teachers' perspectives and subjective experiences within their social and cultural contexts. The project utilised a qualitative case study design and involved seven Cambodian teachers of English as a foreign language in collecting primary data through: (1) initial semi-structured interviews with the participating teachers; (2) classroom observations, followed by recall interviews, conducted by the researcher; (3) weekly voice memos provided by the participants; and (4) documentation such as lesson plans, worksheets, handouts, textbooks, course outlines, and official policy documents relating to teachers' professional development from the universities.

This research study has achieved its core aim of providing a comprehensive understanding of the process within the research context. It explored Cambodian English language teachers' perceptions of their professional growth, examined the diverse strategies and professional learning activities they have adopted, and analysed the aspirational and contextual factors driving their commitment to growth. Furthermore, it studied the participants' insights concerning the impact of professional learning on their instructional methodologies, while also examining their perceptions of approaches for fostering TPL within the research context.

In addition to these empirical contributions, a significant contribution of this study has been the development of a conceptual framework (Section 2.3.11) that illuminates the key components involved in the process of Teacher Professional Learning. This framework encapsulates the multifaceted nature of professional growth, highlighting how the foundational *Pillars of Teacher Professionalism* and *Professional Learning Opportunities* intertwine to shape the teachers' *Professional Learning Repertoire*. It offers a structured lens through which stakeholders in Cambodian higher education, as well as other similar contexts, can better understand and promote effective professional learning for English language educators. The following sections revisit the summary of the key findings, which are presented in relation to the research questions.

7.1 Summary of Key Findings

The data collected in this study were analysed using a hybrid coding method, which combines elements of both inductive and deductive coding. As a result, this research provides comprehensive answers to the questions posed at the start of the project. The key findings from this study are organised according to their relevance to each research question, as follows:

Research Question 1: What are Cambodian English language teachers' views about "Teacher Professional Learning"?

The results contribute to an understanding of how Cambodian English language teachers perceive professional growth within the research context. The evidence highlights two contrasting perspectives. All three participants who are discussed in Chapter IV, i.e., *Kong Bunchhoeun*, *Nou Hach* and *Ven. Som*, shared the view that deliberate and continuous learning is essential for fostering professional growth, demonstrating a strong commitment

to TPL. They believed that their continuous engagement in learning enables them to navigate daily classroom challenges and develop their teaching skills and instructional methods in the long term. The remaining four participants, however, while acknowledging the importance of continuous professional growth, showed limited involvement in the TPL process. They cited time constraints as a barrier to professional learning and perceived that there was little need to engage in further learning. For example, *Krom Ngoy* and *Keng Vansak* believed that even without explicit learning, their teaching methods improved over time through accumulated experience.

Research Question 2: What are the contextual factors that Cambodian English language teachers perceive to influence their professional learning engagement?

The examination of the data suggests that the participants perceive environmental context, institutional policies, and workplace support as key factors influencing their engagement with professional learning and growth. First, while the nature of their environmental context is complex, participants in this study recognise that factors such as workload and collegial relationships significantly affect their involvement in professional learning. For instance, all the participants identified their heavy teaching load as one of the main barriers to their professional development. Additionally, while participants such as *Kong Bunchhoeun* and *Nou Hach*—both from the same institution—appreciate positive collegial relationships, teachers such as *Ven. Som* and *Keng Vansak*—each from different research sites—reported feelings of isolation. Another factor that emerged in the study is the role of institutional policies related to professional learning, particularly the clarity in which support was communicated. All the participants acknowledge that institutional policies can either enhance or hinder their engagement in professional learning. Furthermore, the level of workplace support plays a

critical role. The participants note that inadequate teaching and learning resources, along with the lack of dedicated facilities for asynchronous professional learning, have hindered their professional growth within the participating institutions.

Research Question 3: What are the aspirational and motivational factors that propel the teachers' engagement in professional learning?

The analysis of the data sheds light on several key factors that fuel Cambodian English language teachers' passion for continuous professional growth. First, the participants view the process of growing professionally as an ongoing journey, rather than a one-time achievement. A major driving force is their desire to positively impact students' lives, as well as a high aspiration for continuous learning, fuelled by curiosity and the pursuit of mastery. Moreover, they recognise areas for improvement and that their need to stay up-to-date with emerging methodologies is central to their engagement in professional learning. Beyond these positive motivations, the study also identifies challenges in the workplace as additional drivers for professional learning. In particular, the frustrations teachers face in the classroom often spark innovative thinking, motivating them to seek creative solutions that enhance their students' learning experiences.

Research Question 4: What are the learning activities the participating teachers adopt for their professional growth?

This research study identifies a range of strategies and activities that participating teachers use to enhance their professional growth. To begin with, the participants adopt various professional learning strategies, such as building trust with reliable colleagues, maintaining an open-minded attitude, and adapting professional learning frameworks to stay current with their teaching practices. In terms of professional learning activities, the teachers are seen to

adopt various methods. First, they recognise the importance of ‘learning from their colleagues in interaction’ and value both formal and informal peer interactions, where they are able to seek guidance, receive constructive feedback, and exchange ideas to enrich their teaching repertoire. By fostering trust and collaboration, the participants believe they can use these approaches to create a supportive learning environment among colleagues. In the same way, they view participation in workshops and being involved in research activities as formal avenues to enhance their pedagogical knowledge and teaching methodologies. Furthermore, teacher participants engage in some forms of ‘learning from others without interaction,’ such as listening to presentations, utilising online resources and internet technologies, and observing other teachers without follow-up discussions. Finally, the teachers report using ‘reflection’ and ‘experimentation in teaching’ as methods to refine their instructional approaches.

Research Question 5: What are the teachers’ perceptions of the impact of professional learning activities on their classroom practice?

This research study provides insights into how Cambodian English language teachers perceive the impact of their engagement in professional learning activities on their classroom practice. In fact, they believe that it has fundamentally transformed their teaching methods, both in the short and long term. In the short term, teachers reported improvements in navigating daily challenges, meeting requirements, and experiencing shifts in classroom dynamics. The participants noted a significant enhancement in their teaching techniques, creativity, adaptability, and technology integration. They also appreciate that professional learning boosts their confidence in addressing classroom issues, engaging passive students, and tailoring methods to individual learning styles. Over the long term, teachers feel that it

enhances their self-efficacy and equips them with essential skills, including presentation techniques, IT proficiency, stronger English language competency, and research capabilities.

Research Question 6: According to Cambodian English language teachers, how can Teacher Professional Learning be fostered in their teaching context?

The research findings shed light on Cambodian English language teachers' perspectives on how their professional learning can be better facilitated within the studied context. Evidence shows that teachers need support in terms of resources and learning opportunities. First, there is a recognised need for clear guidelines to navigate the professional learning process effectively. Teachers also called for adjustments to their work arrangements to enhance professional growth, including addressing timetabling issues, ensuring a balanced workload, and implementing improvements that provide greater financial security.

In terms of professional learning opportunities, teachers believe that access to more collegial learning is also a key to their professional growth. As they favour peer interactions and collaboration, the teachers emphasise the importance of discussing teaching performance, methodologies, and sharing teaching techniques and materials with their colleagues. In environments with limited support, there is a clear demand for increased institutional backing, such as expanded opportunities for professional learning workshops and conferences, strategically timed to meet the educators' needs.

The synthesis of these findings provides a comprehensive overview of the TPL process in the Cambodian ELT context. It supports the observation that teachers' aspirations for learning are shaped by the interconnected elements of their cognition, professional identity, and agency. Driven by these combined elements, teachers embark on their TPL journey by utilising the strategies and approaches within their *Professional Learning Repertoire* and capitalising on

Professional Learning Opportunities as they arise. This process leads to *Reflective Teaching*, enabling them to address day-to-day classroom challenges and further enrich their *Professional Learning Repertoire*. The analysis of the findings also highlights the key role of the school environment in shaping every aspect of the TPL process.

7.2 Contributions of this Study

This study makes significant contributions to the field of Teacher Professional Learning at three levels: empirical, theoretical, and methodological. As for the empirical contributions, this research addresses the geographical imbalance in existing TPL literature and provides a nuanced understanding of the complexities surrounding professional learning in underrepresented settings such as the Cambodian English Language Teaching (ELT) context. The thesis proposes the application of the Comprehensive Model of Cambodian Teacher Professional Learning, in addition to a conceptual framework, in order to enhance an understanding of the interconnected constructs which influence TPL. Moreover, the methodological approaches employed in this study provide a practical model for future research in similar contexts. The following section elaborates on the contributions of this study across these three levels, highlighting its unique findings and their implications for the broader field of TPL.

7.2.1 Empirical contributions

This study represents the first comprehensive qualitative investigation into Teacher Professional Learning within Cambodian higher education institutions, specifically in the field of English language teaching. By focusing on a setting where there was an apparent scarcity of similar studies, this project makes significant an empirical contribution to the field of Teacher Professional Learning by incorporating the perspective of the Cambodian English

Language Teaching (ELT) context. Most importantly, it addresses the “geographical imbalance” in the current TPL literature by being the first comprehensive study of its kind in Cambodia (Hallinger & Kulophas, 2019, p. 1). This research helps to fill a critical gap and provides a foundation for future comparative studies with neighbouring Southeast Asian countries, such as Vietnam and Thailand, where TPL has been explored more extensively (Hallinger et al., 2019; Hallinger et al., 2023; Nguyen & Newton, 2021; Tran et al., 2018; Truong & Murray, 2019).

Another empirical contribution of this research is the identification of the way in which teachers’ conceptions of professional learning shape their attitudes and engagement in the process. While the study takes a broader perspective of the participants, it also provides insight into teachers’ misconception that cultivating their teaching experience does not constitute professional learning, and that only attending workshops or pursuing formal training qualifies as such.

The findings additionally contribute to a deeper understanding of what drives teachers to pursue professional learning, even in the face of challenges and limited support from their workplaces, as observed in the Cambodian ELT context. Furthermore, this research study supports the findings of previous studies that highlight the importance of the school environment (Bellibaş and Gümüş, 2023; Hayes et al., 2024). It also adds a nuanced perspective by examining how specific cultural factors, particularly those unique to Cambodia, influence teachers’ adoption of professional learning strategies.

This study contributes to the literature by exploring practical strategies and activities for professional learning, specifically for Cambodian English language teachers, that they can use to address daily challenges and improve their practice in the long term (Bolam et al., 2005;

Desimone, 2011; MacPhail et al., 2024; Meirink et al., 2007; Meirink et al., 2009; Ninković et al., 2022; Picard & Kutsyuruba, 2017; Pischetola et al., 2023; Taylor, 2023; Vangrieken et al., 2015). Additionally, it offers new insights into how cultural factors, such as those specific to the Cambodian context, shape the adoption of these strategies. As evidenced by this study, Cambodian EFL teachers place a strong emphasis on trust as a core value in their collegial interactions.

7.2.2 Theoretical contributions

The significant theoretical contribution of this thesis is the introduction of the Comprehensive Model of Cambodian Teacher Professional Learning ([Section 6.7](#)), which directly addresses the calls for an overarching framework for TPL made in previous studies (Asterhan & Lefstein, 2024; Cirkony et al., 2024; Kennedy, 2014; Timperley et al., 2008). Unlike existing models, which often focus on individual constructs in isolation, this framework emphasises the dynamic interplay between teacher cognition, professional identity, and agency as the *Pillars of Teacher Professionalism* (Bandura, 2001, 2006; Beijaard et al., 2004; Biesta et al., 2015; Borg, 2003; Emirbayer & Mische, 1998; Flores & Day, 2006; Hallinger et al., 2019). Findings from this study demonstrate that these constructs not only influence each other but also serve as essential drivers of professional learning in under-researched contexts such as Cambodia, offering a new perspective on the foundational *Pillars of Teacher Professionalism*.

The framework further contributes to the field by identifying teachers' *Professional Learning Repertoire* and highlighting the importance of both formal and informal learning strategies, as seen in the participants' accounts of their professional learning experiences. The data suggests that teachers blend self-directed learning, teaching as inquiry, and reflective practice, along with other less structured learning approaches, to overcome contextual

challenges (Caffarella, 1993; Ermeling, 2010; Farrell, 2011; Freire, 1970; Garrison, 1997; Meirink et al., 2007; Meirink et al., 2009; Schön, 1983; Timperley et al., 2014). This framework thus offers a flexible approach that accounts for the fluidity of professional growth, particularly in environments where structured learning opportunities are limited.

The inclusion of *Professional Learning Opportunities* within the proposed framework also emerges as a critical component, reinforced by this study's findings. Collegial interactions, collaboration, and a Community of Practice were found to enhance the *Professional Learning Opportunities* and play a pivotal role in fostering professional growth, even when formal development programmes were not available (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1999). This challenges the traditional reliance on forms of structured professional development and suggests that unstructured, peer-driven learning can be equally, if not more, impactful.

The framework also advances theoretical discussions on teacher efficacy, illustrating how *Reflective Teaching* serves as both an outcome and a catalyst for continued professional growth (Bandura, 1991, 1997; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). This cyclical feedback loop, confirmed through participants' reflections, demonstrates the sustainability of professional learning over time. As such, the study offers a valuable contribution by foregrounding the iterative, self-reinforcing nature of teacher professional growth.

Furthermore, this study extends current understandings of Teacher Professional Learning through the development of an integrative conceptual framework ([Section 2.3.11](#)), which draws on key theoretical constructs while addressing critical gaps in the literature. The proposed conceptual framework highlights how contextual factors, such as school culture and available resources, shape teachers' professional identities and learning processes. Because it was sited in the Cambodian context, this study addresses the geographical imbalance in TPL

research and provides a foundation for future studies in similar contexts, offering a model that is adaptable yet grounded in real-world constraints.

7.3 Practical Implications

The findings and the proposed conceptual framework of this study offer various levels of practical implications that can be effectively utilised within the Cambodian English Language Teaching (ELT) context and beyond.

For Cambodian English language teachers, the proposed framework underscores the importance of the pillars of teacher professionalism—teacher cognition, professional identity, and agency—as fundamental elements of professional learning. Teachers are encouraged to actively cultivate these pillars, which are vital for their professional growth. It is essential for educators to utilise, maintain, and expand their *Professional Learning Repertoire* by embracing emerging professional learning opportunities.

The findings from this study can help build teachers' confidence in their initiatives regarding professional learning, by emphasising the value and significance of collegial learning and collaboration. Engaging in collegial interactions is particularly important, as it facilitates the sharing of teaching materials to address classroom needs and promotes the exchange of strategies and activities that contribute to building a robust *Professional Learning Repertoire*.

At the institutional level, their leaders play a crucial role in shaping the school environment, which significantly influences the *Pillars of Teacher Professionalism*, *Professional Learning Repertoire*, and *Professional Learning Opportunities*. The conceptual framework provides a model for leaders seeking to enhance these aspects within their institutions. Leaders should focus on motivating teachers to cultivate their *Pillars of Professionalism* and enhance their

Professional Learning Opportunities, ensuring that teachers have the resources they need to maintain and grow their *Professional Learning Repertoire*.

An important consideration is how institutions define and approach *Professional Learning Opportunities*. Rather than viewing them as events where content is imposed on teachers—through sessions, seminars, or workshops—leaders should take on a more facilitative role. Institutions are encouraged to mediate the learning process by providing the necessary resources and creating a supportive environment. This shift in approach enables teachers to engage in professional learning that is self-directed and responsive to their own needs and challenges. For example, institutions may consider providing a designated physical area where teachers can engage together in collegial interactions. Such common spaces can facilitate informal discussions and collaboration, fostering a supportive environment for professional learning.

For researchers in the field, this conceptual framework can serve as a practical tool for researchers examining TPL practices within the Cambodian ELT context. It offers a structured approach to the investigation of the complexities of professional learning, taking into account the unique cultural factors that shape educators' experiences. Researchers can utilise this framework to inform their studies, contributing to a deeper understanding of TPL in similar contexts.

Finally, the research and the proposed conceptual framework may have practical implications for similar contexts within the region. By applying this framework to other Southeast Asian countries, researchers and educators can explore how contextual factors influence Teacher Professional Learning, ultimately contributing to a more comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon across diverse educational settings.

7.4 Limitations and Recommendations for Further Research

While this research has made important contributions to understanding Teacher Professional Learning in the Cambodian English Language Teaching (ELT) context, there are several limitations and areas for future inquiry that merit consideration.

First, it is important to acknowledge the limitations inherent in working with a small sample size. While this study presents a Comprehensive Model of Cambodian Teacher Professional Learning that captures the depth and complexity of TPL as experienced by Cambodian university English language teachers, the inclusion of seven participants was never intended to support broad generalisations across diverse educational contexts or teaching populations. Nonetheless, the aim of this research was to develop a context-sensitive model that offers a holistic representation of how TPL unfolds within a specific sociocultural and institutional setting. Accordingly, the value of the model lies not in its statistical generalisability, but in its transferability—providing a conceptual lens that may inform or inspire contextually relevant inquiries in similar settings.

In addition, there are also limitations in regard to the conceptual framework proposed in this thesis which provides insights into the complexity of TPL, particularly regarding teachers' aspirations to learn in the Cambodian ELT context. The framework suggests that the interplay between teacher professional identity, cognition, and agency encourages teachers to engage in the professional learning process. While this study speculates on how these *Pillars of Teacher Professionalism* drive engagement, it lacks empirical evidence to fully validate this assumption. Future research could focus on empirically investigating these interactions, examining how these factors specifically influence teachers' motivations to engage in professional learning.

Secondly, although this study offers a comprehensive exploration of the TPL process, it does not fully examine the influence of teachers' personal and professional experiences on their engagement with professional learning. Kayi-Aydar (2019) suggests that ethnic and racial backgrounds, past experiences, and power disparities significantly influence the formation of teacher agency and identities. Future research could explore how individual life experiences, both within and outside the teaching profession, as well as their educational background, shape a teacher's motivation and approach to professional learning, thereby adding further depth to the understanding of this process in the Cambodian ELT context.

Thirdly, this study was conducted specifically in the field of English language teaching, where methodological knowledge often takes precedence over content knowledge. In the context of language teaching, developing pedagogical skills is critical for effective instruction. However, this may differ in other subject areas where content knowledge might play a more significant role. Future research could explore this distinction further, comparing the balance in professional learning between methodological and content knowledge in different teaching disciplines to determine whether this emphasis shifts across subjects.

Fourthly, another limitation of this study is the reliance on self-reported data regarding the impact of professional learning on teacher efficacy. While the participants reported increased self-efficacy as a result of their engagement in professional learning, the project's scope precluded the utilisation of any teacher efficacy scales such as that developed by Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2001) to verify the claims made by the teachers. As such, the findings are based solely on self-perception by the participant teachers without triangulation from additional data sources. Future research could incorporate validated scales and alternative

assessment methods to provide a more robust understanding of the relationship between professional learning and teacher efficacy.

Fifthly, while the teachers in this study reported improvements in their teaching practices following professional learning experiences, the impact of these changes on student outcomes was not measured. In future research, it would be important to measure the impact on learning as improvements in teaching are ultimately aimed at enhancing student learning. Future research could address this gap by investigating the direct effects of TPL on student outcomes, a crucial area highlighted by previous studies (e.g., Rani et al., 2023).

Finally, this study was sited within the unique cultural context of Cambodia. However, cross-cultural research into Teacher Professional Learning, particularly in neighbouring Southeast Asian countries where TPL has been more extensively studied (Hallinger et al., 2019; Hallinger et al., 2023; Nguyen & Newton, 2021; Tran et al., 2018; Truong & Murray, 2019), would provide valuable comparative insights. Such research could help to identify both commonalities and context-specific differences, further enhancing the understanding of TPL across diverse educational settings. Future research can build on the foundations laid by this study, enriching the broader field of TPL in Cambodia and beyond.

7.5 Methodological Considerations for Future Research

Reflecting upon the data collection procedures and tools, there are some key methodological considerations that could benefit future research. Classroom observations and recall interviews conducted in this study provided valuable insights into the impact of professional learning on classroom practice, allowing me the researcher and the research participants to fully discuss what contributed to certain types of classroom behaviour. For example, *Kong Bunchhoeun*'s adoption of the 'exit ticket' technique, which helped students reflect on what

they had learned during the class, would not have emerged without the classroom observation and the recall interview (as discussed in Section 4.1.4). Similarly, my classroom observation enabled an in-depth discussion with *Nou Hach* about his rationale for allowing students to use smartphones during classroom instruction (Section 4.2.4). This practice had not been mentioned during the initial interview, but the observation provided an opportunity for further exploration. Another example illustrating how classroom observation contributed to a deeper understanding of the way professional learning influenced teaching practice was when *Chuon Nath* described the possibility of altering the sequence of his classroom activities during the observation (Section 5.1.4). These observations and subsequent discussion sessions directly led to findings that demonstrated how these research tools facilitated a deeper understanding of the topic being studied, which would not have been possible through the initial interviews alone.

However, I was only able to observe each participant's class once, with the exception of *Nou Hach*, whose class was observed twice. Reflecting on the quality of the data collected, it is clear that multiple classroom observations could have yielded more comprehensive insights. For instance, a second observation of *Kong Bunchhoeun's* class might have shed light on how consistently the 'exit ticket' technique was applied or whether its effectiveness altered over time. That being said, I am mindful of the potential pressure and discomfort this might place on teachers, as well as the logistical challenges for both the researcher and the participants.

In addition, this study highlights the challenges of using voice memos as a data collection tool. While voice memos are convenient and easy to use, the low response rates using this tool suggest that teachers may deprioritise the task, viewing it as a non-urgent obligation. As a result, the lack of immediacy may lead to forgetfulness or neglect. This finding underscores

the importance of considering participant engagement and accountability when designing data collection methods.

Finally, another consideration for future studies is narrowing the gap of gender imbalance among participants. While this study offers valuable insights into teacher professional learning, the gender disparity may limit the depth of insights into female teachers' perspectives, as their experiences and challenges may differ from those of their male counterparts. Given the structural and cultural factors influencing female teachers' availability and willingness to engage in research within Cambodian context, future studies could adopt targeted recruitment strategies to ensure more balanced participation.

7.6 Personal Reflection

As I conclude this thesis, I feel a profound sense of pride in the research project that has brought me to this point. Through this work, I have finally been able to answer a question that has long intrigued me—the nature of the professional learning journey which I, as an English language teacher, have experienced. This reflection has enabled me to view this journey not only from my own perspective but also through the eyes of my peers and from my role as a researcher.

Throughout this PhD journey, I have demonstrated the practicality of the Comprehensive Model of Cambodian Teacher Professional Learning in my own project. I have been able to visualise the impact of the interconnectedness of the notions of teacher cognition, professional identity, and teacher agency, which form the *Pillars of Teacher Professionalism*, and which have fuelled my journey. These fundamental elements have encouraged me to step out of my comfort zone to pursue the study on a topic of my interest, and they have propelled me to pursue this degree and transition into a researcher in order to examine the

complexities of TPL. The *Pillars* also support me in making effective use of the available support and learning opportunities provided by my supportive supervisors, the PhD programme, and the learning-conducive environment at AUT. On the other hand, the triad has also empowered me to utilise appropriate approaches from my own learning repertoire – i.e., the existing learning theories – to fulfil my ambition of transforming myself from an English teacher and teacher educator into a researcher in the field. As a result, I have emerged as a reflective researcher, ready now to contribute further to the body of research in this field.

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APPENDICES



**Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee
(AUTEC)**

10 March 2023

Graeme Couper
Faculty of Culture and Society

Dear Graeme

Re Ethics Application: **23/8 Investigating ELT Teachers' Professional Learning Practice in Cambodian Higher Education**

Thank you responding to AUTEC's conditions.

Your ethics application has been approved for three years until 9 March 2026.

Standard Conditions of Approval

1. The research is to be undertaken in accordance with the [Auckland University of Technology Code of Conduct for Research](#) and as approved by AUTEC.
2. All public facing documents must have the AUTEC approval number and be of a high standard of spelling and grammar. Dates on the Information Sheet(s) and Consent Form(s) must be consistent.
3. Any amendments to the project must be approved by AUTEC prior to being implemented.
4. A progress report is due annually on the anniversary of the approval date.
5. A final report is due at the expiration of the approval period, or, upon completion of project.
6. Any serious or adverse events must be reported to AUTEC, this includes unforeseen issues that might affect continued ethical acceptability of the project.
7. AUTEC grants ethical approval only. You are responsible for obtaining management permission for access from any institution or organisation at which your research is being conducted and you need to meet all ethical, legal, public health, and locality obligations or requirements for the jurisdictions in which the research is being undertaken.

The application number and title need to be referenced on all correspondence related to this project.

All forms are available online <http://www.aut.ac.nz/research/researchethics>

For any enquiries, please contact ethics@aut.ac.nz

(This is a computer-generated letter for which no signature is required)

The AUTEC Secretariat

Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee

Cc: thearchiea@gmail.com



ព្រះរាជាណាចក្រកម្ពុជា
ជាតិ សាសនា ព្រះមហាក្សត្រ

ក្រសួងអប់រំ យុវជន និងកីឡា
លេខ: ១៤៨២/អបក.បក

ប្រកាស
ស្តីពី
ការជ្រើសរើសនិងផ្តល់ឋានៈសាស្ត្រាចារ្យក្នុងវិស័យអប់រំ
រដ្ឋមន្ត្រីក្រសួងអប់រំ យុវជន និងកីឡា

- បានឃើញរដ្ឋធម្មនុញ្ញនៃព្រះរាជាណាចក្រកម្ពុជា
- បានឃើញព្រះរាជក្រឹត្យលេខ នស/រកត/០៩១៨/៩២៥ ចុះថ្ងៃទី០៦ ខែកញ្ញា ឆ្នាំ២០១៨ ស្តីពីការតែងតាំងរាជរដ្ឋាភិបាលនៃព្រះរាជាណាចក្រកម្ពុជា
- បានឃើញព្រះរាជក្រឹត្យលេខ នស/រកត/០៣២០/៤២១ ចុះថ្ងៃទី៣០ ខែមីនា ឆ្នាំ២០២០ ស្តីពីការតែងតាំងនិងកែសម្រួលសមាសភាពរាជរដ្ឋាភិបាលនៃព្រះរាជាណាចក្រកម្ពុជា
- បានឃើញព្រះរាជក្រមលេខ នស/រកម/០៦១៨/០១២ ចុះថ្ងៃទី២៨ ខែមិថុនា ឆ្នាំ២០១៨ ដែលប្រកាសឱ្យប្រើច្បាប់ស្តីពីការរៀបចំនិងការប្រព្រឹត្តទៅនៃគណៈរដ្ឋមន្ត្រី
- បានឃើញព្រះរាជក្រមលេខ នស/រកម/០១៩៦/០១ ចុះថ្ងៃទី២៤ ខែមករា ឆ្នាំ១៩៩៦ ដែលប្រកាសឱ្យប្រើច្បាប់ស្តីពីការបង្កើតក្រសួងអប់រំ យុវជន និងកីឡា
- បានឃើញព្រះរាជក្រមលេខ នស/រកម/១២០៧/០៣២ ចុះថ្ងៃទី០៨ ខែធ្នូ ឆ្នាំ២០០៧ ដែលប្រកាសឱ្យប្រើច្បាប់ស្តីពីការអប់រំ
- បានឃើញព្រះរាជក្រឹត្យលេខ នស/រកត/០១១៣/០៩២ ចុះថ្ងៃទី២៣ ខែមករា ឆ្នាំ២០១៣ ស្តីពីការផ្តល់ឋានៈសាស្ត្រាចារ្យ
- បានឃើញព្រះរាជក្រឹត្យលេខ នស/រកត/០៣០៣/១២៩ ចុះថ្ងៃទី៣១ ខែមីនា ឆ្នាំ២០០៣ ស្តីពីការទទួលស្គាល់គុណភាពអប់រំឧត្តមសិក្សា
- បានឃើញព្រះរាជក្រឹត្យលេខ នស/រកត/០៣០៩/៣៤៩ ចុះថ្ងៃទី២៧ ខែមីនា ឆ្នាំ២០០៩ ស្តីពីការបង្កើតឧត្តមក្រុមប្រឹក្សាជាតិអប់រំ
- បានឃើញអនុក្រឹត្យលេខ ១៥៦ អនក្រ.បក ចុះថ្ងៃទី១៨ ខែកក្កដា ឆ្នាំ២០១៦ ស្តីពីការរៀបចំនិងការប្រព្រឹត្តទៅរបស់ក្រសួងអប់រំ យុវជន និងកីឡា

១/៧

- បានឃើញអនុក្រឹត្យលេខ៥៤ អនក្រ.បក ចុះថ្ងៃទី១៣ ខែមិថុនា ឆ្នាំ២០០២ ស្តីពីលក្ខណវិនិច្ឆ័យនៃការបង្កើតសាកលវិទ្យាល័យ
- យោងតាមការចាំបាច់របស់ក្រសួងអប់រំ យុវជន និងកីឡា

សម្រេច
ជំពូកទី១
បទប្បញ្ញត្តិទូទៅ

ប្រការ១ .-

ប្រកាសនេះមានគោលបំណងកំណត់គោលការណ៍ និងលក្ខណវិនិច្ឆ័យសម្រាប់វាយតម្លៃផ្តល់ឋានៈសាស្ត្រាចារ្យទៅតាមកម្រិតនីមួយៗក្នុងវិស័យអប់រំ ដូចមានចែងក្នុងមាត្រា១៣នៃព្រះរាជក្រឹត្យស្តីពីការផ្តល់ឋានៈសាស្ត្រាចារ្យ ដើម្បីរៀបចំស្នើតែងតាំងជាសាស្ត្រាចារ្យជំនួយ សាស្ត្រាចារ្យរង និងសាស្ត្រាចារ្យ។

ប្រការ២ .-

ប្រកាសនេះមានគោលដៅរៀបចំសំណើតែងតាំងផ្តល់ឋានៈជាសាស្ត្រាចារ្យជំនួយ សាស្ត្រាចារ្យរង និងសាស្ត្រាចារ្យ តាមការចាំបាច់ស្របតាមមាត្រា២៣នៃព្រះរាជក្រឹត្យស្តីពីការផ្តល់ឋានៈសាស្ត្រាចារ្យ។

ប្រការ៣ .-

ប្រកាសនេះមានវិសាលភាពអនុវត្តសម្រាប់ស្នើតែងតាំងផ្តល់ឋានៈជាសាស្ត្រាចារ្យជំនួយ សាស្ត្រាចារ្យរង និងសាស្ត្រាចារ្យលើកដំបូងក្នុងវិស័យអប់រំ។

ជំពូកទី២
គណៈកម្មការត្រួតពិនិត្យនិងផ្តល់ឋានៈសាស្ត្រាចារ្យ

ប្រការ៤ .-

គណៈកម្មការត្រួតពិនិត្យនិងផ្តល់ឋានៈសាស្ត្រាចារ្យក្នុងវិស័យអប់រំ មានសមាសភាពដូចខាងក្រោម៖

- | | |
|---|-----------|
| - រដ្ឋមន្ត្រីក្រសួងអប់រំ យុវជន និងកីឡា | ប្រធាន |
| - រដ្ឋលេខាធិការទទួលបន្ទុកអនុវិស័យឧត្តមសិក្សា | អនុប្រធាន |
| - អនុរដ្ឋលេខាធិការជួយការងារអនុវិស័យឧត្តមសិក្សា ១រូប | សមាជិក |
| - អគ្គនាយកនៃអគ្គនាយកដ្ឋានឧត្តមសិក្សា | សមាជិក |
| - អគ្គនាយកនៃអគ្គនាយកដ្ឋានរដ្ឋបាលនិងហិរញ្ញវត្ថុ | សមាជិក |
| - តំណាងក្រុមប្រឹក្សាសាកលវិទ្យាធិការនៃកម្ពុជា (យ៉ាងតិច៥នាក់) | សមាជិក |
| - ប្រធាននាយកដ្ឋានស្រាវជ្រាវវិទ្យាសាស្ត្រ | លេខាធិការ |

សមាសភាពជាក់ស្តែងនៃគណៈកម្មការត្រួតពិនិត្យនិងផ្តល់ឋានៈសាស្ត្រាចារ្យក្នុងវិស័យអប់រំ ត្រូវកំណត់ដោយសេចក្តីសម្រេចរបស់រដ្ឋមន្ត្រីក្រសួងអប់រំ យុវជន និងកីឡា។

ប្រការ៥ .-

គណៈកម្មការត្រួតពិនិត្យនិងផ្តល់ឋានៈសាស្ត្រាចារ្យក្នុងវិស័យអប់រំ មានភារកិច្ចដូចខាងក្រោម៖

- លើកសំណើតែងតាំងនិងផ្តល់ឋានៈសាស្ត្រាចារ្យជូនរាជរដ្ឋាភិបាល
- លើកសំណើកំណត់ចំនួននៃការជ្រើសរើសសាស្ត្រាចារ្យជូនរាជរដ្ឋាភិបាល
- ផ្សព្វផ្សាយការដាក់ឱ្យអនុវត្តការផ្តល់ឋានៈសាស្ត្រាចារ្យដល់គ្រឹះស្ថានឧត្តមសិក្សា
- ណែនាំ ផ្តល់ការគាំទ្រ និងជំនួយបច្ចេកទេសដល់ក្រុមប្រឹក្សាវិទ្យាសាស្ត្រ និងគណៈកម្មការវាយតម្លៃផ្តល់ឋានៈសាស្ត្រាចារ្យប្រចាំមហាវិទ្យាល័យនៅតាមគ្រឹះស្ថានឧត្តមសិក្សានានាក្រោមឱវាទក្រសួងអប់រំ យុវជន និងកីឡា
- ទទួលនិងដោះស្រាយពាក្យប្តឹងរបស់គណៈកម្មការវាយតម្លៃផ្តល់ឋានៈសាស្ត្រាចារ្យឬបេក្ខជន
- ទទួលអនុវត្តភារកិច្ចផ្សេងៗទៀតដែលរាជរដ្ឋាភិបាលប្រគល់ជូន។

ជំពូកទី៣

ការកំណត់ចំនួននៃការជ្រើសរើសសាស្ត្រាចារ្យ

ប្រការ៦ .-

ក្រុមប្រឹក្សាសាកលវិទ្យាធិការនៃកម្ពុជាត្រូវដាក់សំណើចំនួនសាស្ត្រាចារ្យដែលត្រូវជ្រើសរើស តាមរយៈរដ្ឋមន្ត្រីក្រសួងអប់រំ យុវជន និងកីឡា ជូនរាជរដ្ឋាភិបាល ដើម្បីពិនិត្យនិងសម្រេច។

ចំនួនសាស្ត្រាចារ្យជំនួយ សាស្ត្រាចារ្យរង និងសាស្ត្រាចារ្យត្រូវកំណត់ដោយផ្អែកលើចរនាសម្ព័ន្ធ និងតម្រូវការតាមដេប៉ាតឺម៉ង់ និងមហាវិទ្យាល័យនៃគ្រឹះស្ថានឧត្តមសិក្សា។

ជំពូកទី៤

គោលការណ៍ នីតិវិធីអនុវត្ត និងការវាយតម្លៃផ្តល់ឋានៈសាស្ត្រាចារ្យ

ប្រការ៧ .-

ការវាយតម្លៃផ្តល់ឋានៈសាស្ត្រាចារ្យជំនួយ សាស្ត្រាចារ្យរង និងសាស្ត្រាចារ្យ ត្រូវអនុវត្តតាម ៣ ដំណាក់កាលដូចខាងក្រោម៖

- ដំណាក់កាលទី១៖ ការវាយតម្លៃនៅតាមមហាវិទ្យាល័យនៃគ្រឹះស្ថានឧត្តមសិក្សា ត្រូវអនុវត្តដោយគណៈកម្មការវាយតម្លៃផ្តល់ឋានៈសាស្ត្រាចារ្យប្រចាំមហាវិទ្យាល័យនីមួយៗ ដែលមានសមាសភាពយ៉ាងតិច៥រូប គឺ៖

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| ▪ ព្រឹទ្ធបុរសមហាវិទ្យាល័យ | ប្រធាន |
| ▪ ព្រឹទ្ធបុរសរងមហាវិទ្យាល័យ | អនុប្រធាន |
| ▪ ប្រធានដេប៉ាតឺម៉ង់ចំណុះមហាវិទ្យាល័យ | សមាជិក |
| ▪ តំណាងគ្រូបង្រៀនកម្រិតឧត្តមមានសញ្ញាបត្របណ្ឌិត ឬមានបទពិសោធន៍បង្រៀននិងស្រាវជ្រាវយ៉ាងតិច៥ឆ្នាំ | សមាជិក |

៣/៧ ២០១៩

- តំណាងអង្គភាពគ្រប់គ្រងបុគ្គលិករបស់គ្រឹះស្ថានឧត្តមសិក្សា លេខាគត់ត្រា

សមាសភាពជាក់ស្តែងនៃគណៈកម្មការនេះ ត្រូវកំណត់ដោយលិខិតបង្គាប់ការរបស់សាកលវិទ្យាធិការ និងទទួលស្គាល់ដោយក្រុមប្រឹក្សាភិបាល។

- ដំណាក់កាលទី២៖ ការវាយតម្លៃនៅតាមគ្រឹះស្ថានឧត្តមសិក្សា ត្រូវអនុវត្តដោយក្រុមប្រឹក្សាវិទ្យាសាស្ត្រដែលបង្កើតឡើងដោយគ្រឹះស្ថានឧត្តមសិក្សាសាមី និងមានការទទួលស្គាល់ពីក្រសួងអប់រំ យុវជន និងកីឡា
- ដំណាក់កាលទី៣៖ គណៈកម្មការត្រួតពិនិត្យនិងផ្តល់ឋានៈសាស្ត្រាចារ្យក្នុងវិស័យអប់រំ ត្រួតពិនិត្យ វាយតម្លៃ និងលើកសំណើតែងតាំងនិងផ្តល់ឋានៈសាស្ត្រាចារ្យជូនរាជរដ្ឋាភិបាល។

ប្រការ៨ .-

ការវាយតម្លៃផ្តល់ឋានៈសាស្ត្រាចារ្យជំនួយ សាស្ត្រាចារ្យរង និងសាស្ត្រាចារ្យ តាមដំណាក់កាលនីមួយៗ ត្រូវអនុវត្តដូចខាងក្រោម៖

ដំណាក់កាលទី១៖ ការវាយតម្លៃនៅតាមមហាវិទ្យាល័យនៃគ្រឹះស្ថានឧត្តមសិក្សា

គណៈកម្មការវាយតម្លៃផ្តល់ឋានៈសាស្ត្រាចារ្យប្រចាំមហាវិទ្យាល័យ ត្រូវអនុវត្តការងារដូចតទៅ៖

- ផ្សព្វផ្សាយ និងផ្តល់ព័ត៌មានទាំងឡាយពាក់ព័ន្ធនឹងការវាយតម្លៃផ្តល់ឋានៈសាស្ត្រាចារ្យដល់បុគ្គលិកអប់រំនៅក្នុងមហាវិទ្យាល័យ ក្នុងខែមករានៃឆ្នាំសិក្សា
- ទទួលពាក្យស្នើសុំចុះឈ្មោះប្រកួតប្រជែងទទួលឋានៈសាស្ត្រាចារ្យពីបេក្ខជន យ៉ាងយូរនៅដំណាច់ខែមករានៃឆ្នាំសិក្សា
- ធ្វើការពិនិត្យនិងជ្រើសរើសសម្រាប់បេក្ខភាពតាមចំនួនដែលកំណត់ដោយគណៈកម្មការត្រួតពិនិត្យនិងផ្តល់ឋានៈសាស្ត្រាចារ្យក្នុងវិស័យអប់រំ រួចបញ្ជូនបន្តទៅវាយតម្លៃដំណាក់កាលទី២ ដោយភ្ជាប់នូវឯកសារគាំទ្រពាក់ព័ន្ធ យ៉ាងយូរនៅដំណាច់ខែកុម្ភៈនៃឆ្នាំសិក្សា។

ដំណាក់កាលទី២៖ ការវាយតម្លៃនៅតាមគ្រឹះស្ថានឧត្តមសិក្សាដោយក្រុមប្រឹក្សាវិទ្យាសាស្ត្រដែលបង្កើតឡើងដោយគ្រឹះស្ថានឧត្តមសិក្សាសាមីនិងមានការទទួលស្គាល់ពីក្រសួងអប់រំ យុវជន និងកីឡា ត្រូវអនុវត្តការងារដូចតទៅ៖

- ធ្វើការពិនិត្យនិងផ្ទៀងផ្ទាត់បញ្ជីសម្រាប់បេក្ខភាព និងឯកសារគាំទ្រពាក់ព័ន្ធ ដែលបានទទួលពីគណៈកម្មការវាយតម្លៃផ្តល់ឋានៈសាស្ត្រាចារ្យប្រចាំមហាវិទ្យាល័យនីមួយៗ យ៉ាងយូរនៅដំណាច់ខែមីនានៃឆ្នាំសិក្សា។
- បញ្ជូនបន្តទៅវាយតម្លៃដំណាក់កាលទី៣ នូវបញ្ជីសម្រាប់បេក្ខភាពតាមចំនួនដែលកំណត់ដោយគណៈកម្មការត្រួតពិនិត្យនិងផ្តល់ឋានៈសាស្ត្រាចារ្យក្នុងវិស័យអប់រំ ដោយភ្ជាប់នូវឯកសារគាំទ្រពាក់ព័ន្ធយ៉ាងយូរនៅដំណាច់ខែមេសានៃឆ្នាំសិក្សា។

ដំណាក់កាលទី៣៖ ការវាយតម្លៃដោយគណៈកម្មការត្រួតពិនិត្យនិងផ្តល់ឋានៈសាស្ត្រាចារ្យក្នុងវិស័យ
អប់រំ ដោយគណៈកម្មការត្រួតពិនិត្យនិងផ្តល់ឋានៈសាស្ត្រាចារ្យក្នុងវិស័យអប់រំ ត្រូវអនុវត្តការងារដូចតទៅ៖

- ធ្វើការពិនិត្យ ផ្ទៀងផ្ទាត់ និងសម្រេចលើបញ្ជីសម្រាំងបេក្ខភាព និងឯកសារគាំទ្រពាក់ព័ន្ធ ដែលបានទទួលពីក្រុមប្រឹក្សាវិទ្យាសាស្ត្រនៃគ្រឹះស្ថានឧត្តមសិក្សានីមួយៗ យ៉ាងយូរនៅដំណាច់ខែឧសភានៃឆ្នាំសិក្សា
- អញ្ជើញក្រុមប្រឹក្សាវិទ្យាសាស្ត្រ និងគណៈកម្មការវាយតម្លៃផ្តល់ឋានៈសាស្ត្រាចារ្យប្រចាំមហាវិទ្យាល័យមកសាកសួរក្នុងករណីមានវិការៈក្នុងបញ្ជីសម្រាំងបេក្ខភាព យ៉ាងយូរនៅដំណាច់ខែមិថុនានៃឆ្នាំសិក្សា
- លើកសំណើតែងតាំងបេក្ខជនជ័យលាភី ជាសាស្ត្រាចារ្យជំនួយ សាស្ត្រាចារ្យរង ឬសាស្ត្រាចារ្យ យ៉ាងយូរនៅដំណាច់ខែមិថុនានៃឆ្នាំសិក្សា។

ជំពូកទី៥

ការលើកទឹកចិត្តចំពោះសាស្ត្រាចារ្យ

ប្រការ៩ .-

បេក្ខជនដែលទទួលបានឋានៈជាសាស្ត្រាចារ្យជំនួយ សាស្ត្រាចារ្យរង និងសាស្ត្រាចារ្យ ត្រូវទទួលបានប្រាក់បំណាច់មុខងារស្របតាមអនុក្រឹត្យស្តីពីប្រាក់បំណាច់មុខងារមន្ត្រីរាជការស៊ីវិល ដោយគិតចាប់ពីថ្ងៃដែលត្រូវបានតែងតាំងជាសាស្ត្រាចារ្យជំនួយ សាស្ត្រាចារ្យរង និងសាស្ត្រាចារ្យ ដោយព្រះរាជក្រឹត្យ។

ជំពូកទី៦

លក្ខខណ្ឌអប្បបរមាសម្រាប់វាយតម្លៃផ្តល់ឋានៈសាស្ត្រាចារ្យ

ប្រការ១០ .-

បេក្ខជនដែលអាចចូលរួមប្រកួតប្រជែងជាសាស្ត្រាចារ្យទៅតាមឋានៈនីមួយៗរបស់គ្រឹះស្ថានឧត្តមសិក្សា ត្រូវបំពេញលក្ខខណ្ឌអប្បបរមាដូចខាងក្រោម៖

ក. សាស្ត្រាចារ្យជំនួយ៖

- មានសញ្ញាបត្របណ្ឌិតយ៉ាងតិចរយៈពេល២ឆ្នាំ ឬមានសញ្ញាបត្របរិញ្ញាបត្រជាន់ខ្ពស់យ៉ាងតិចរយៈពេល៥ឆ្នាំ
- មានស្នាដៃបោះពុម្ពអត្ថបទស្រាវជ្រាវក្នុងទស្សនាវដ្តីវិទ្យាសាស្ត្រកម្រិតជាតិ ឬអន្តរជាតិក្នុងវិស័យជំនាញរបស់ខ្លួនយ៉ាងតិច៣អត្ថបទ ឬបានបោះពុម្ពសៀវភៅសិក្សាពាក់ព័ន្ធនឹងមុខជំនាញរបស់ខ្លួន ដែលមានការទទួលស្គាល់ យ៉ាងហោចណាស់១ចំណងជើង

២/៧ ២១

- មានបទពិសោធន៍បង្រៀន និងស្រាវជ្រាវយ៉ាងតិច៥ឆ្នាំ ដោយមានការទទួលស្គាល់ពីក្រុមប្រឹក្សាវិទ្យាសាស្ត្រ
- មិនធ្លាប់មានកំហុសវិជ្ជាជីវៈឬមិនធ្លាប់ត្រូវបានផ្ដន្ទាទោសជាប់ពន្ធនាគារពីបទឧក្រិដ្ឋ ឬបទមជ្ឈិម។

ខ. សាស្ត្រាចារ្យចុះ

- មានសញ្ញាបត្របណ្ឌិតយ៉ាងតិចរយៈពេល៥ឆ្នាំ ឬមានសញ្ញាបត្របរិញ្ញាបត្រជាន់ខ្ពស់យ៉ាងតិចរយៈពេល១០ឆ្នាំ
- មានស្នាដៃបោះពុម្ពអត្ថបទស្រាវជ្រាវក្នុងទស្សនាវដ្តីវិទ្យាសាស្ត្រកម្រិតជាតិ ឬអន្តរជាតិក្នុងវិស័យជំនាញរបស់ខ្លួន យ៉ាងតិច៥អត្ថបទ
- ធ្លាប់ធ្វើបទបង្ហាញ ឬជាភាគីក្នុងសន្និសីទជាតិ ឬអន្តរជាតិយ៉ាងតិច៥ ដង
- បានបោះពុម្ពសៀវភៅសិក្សាពាក់ព័ន្ធនឹងមុខជំនាញរបស់ខ្លួន ដែលមានការទទួលស្គាល់យ៉ាងហោចណាស់១០០ណងជើង
- មិនធ្លាប់មានកំហុសវិជ្ជាជីវៈឬមិនធ្លាប់ត្រូវបានផ្ដន្ទាទោសជាប់ពន្ធនាគារពីបទឧក្រិដ្ឋ ឬបទមជ្ឈិម។

គ. សាស្ត្រាចារ្យ៖

- មានសញ្ញាបត្របណ្ឌិតយ៉ាងតិចរយៈពេល១០ឆ្នាំ
- មានស្នាដៃបោះពុម្ពអត្ថបទស្រាវជ្រាវក្នុងទស្សនាវដ្តីវិទ្យាសាស្ត្រកម្រិតជាតិ ឬអន្តរជាតិក្នុងវិស័យជំនាញរបស់ខ្លួនយ៉ាងតិច៧អត្ថបទ
- ធ្លាប់ធ្វើបទបង្ហាញ ឬជាភាគីក្នុងសន្និសីទជាតិ ឬអន្តរជាតិយ៉ាងតិច៧ ដង
- បានបោះពុម្ពសៀវភៅសិក្សាពាក់ព័ន្ធនឹងមុខជំនាញរបស់ខ្លួន ដែលមានការទទួលស្គាល់យ៉ាងហោចណាស់២០០ណងជើង
- ជាបុគ្គលដែលត្រូវបានគេទទួលស្គាល់ក្នុងជំនាញរបស់ខ្លួន
- មិនធ្លាប់មានកំហុសវិជ្ជាជីវៈឬមិនធ្លាប់ត្រូវបានផ្ដន្ទាទោសជាប់ពន្ធនាគារពីបទឧក្រិដ្ឋ ឬបទមជ្ឈិម។

ជំពូកទី៧
អវសានប្បញ្ញត្តិ

ប្រការ១១ .-

បទប្បញ្ញត្តិទាំងឡាយណា ដែលផ្ទុយនឹងប្រកាសនេះ ត្រូវទុកជានិរាករណ៍។

ប្រការ១២ .-

អគ្គនាយកនៃអគ្គនាយកដ្ឋានរដ្ឋបាលនិងហិរញ្ញវត្ថុ អគ្គនាយកនៃអគ្គនាយកដ្ឋានឧត្តមសិក្សា អគ្គនាយកនៃអគ្គនាយកដ្ឋានអប់រំ អគ្គនាយកនៃអគ្គនាយកដ្ឋានគោលនយោបាយនិងផែនការ អគ្គនាយកនៃ

៦/៧ 

អគ្គនាយកដ្ឋានយុវជន អគ្គនាយកនៃអគ្គនាយកដ្ឋានកីឡា អគ្គាធិការនៃអគ្គាធិការដ្ឋាន ប្រធានក្រុមប្រឹក្សា
សាកលវិទ្យាធិការនៃកម្ពុជា សាកលវិទ្យាធិការ នាយកគ្រឹះស្ថានឧត្តមសិក្សា និងប្រធានគ្រប់អង្គភាពដែល
ពាក់ព័ន្ធ ត្រូវអនុវត្តប្រកាសនេះ ចាប់ពីថ្ងៃចុះហត្ថលេខាតទៅ។ ២៣/៩

ថ្ងៃសៅរ៍ ១០កើត ខែឧសភា ឆ្នាំជូត ទោស័ក ព.ស.២៥៦៤
ធ្វើនៅរាជធានីភ្នំពេញ ថ្ងៃទី ២៧ ខែ សីហា ឆ្នាំ២០២០ ២៣/៩

កន្លែងទទួល៖

- ទីស្តីការគណៈរដ្ឋមន្ត្រី
- ក្រសួងសេដ្ឋកិច្ច និងហិរញ្ញវត្ថុ
- ក្រសួងមុខងារសាធារណៈ
- ឧទ្ធរណ៍យន្តការឧត្តមបណ្ឌិតសភាចារ្យរដ្ឋមន្ត្រី
- គ្រប់អង្គភាពក្រោមឱវាទក្រសួងអប់រំ យុវជន និងកីឡា
“ដើម្បីជូនជ្រាប”
- ដូចប្រការ១២
“ដើម្បីអនុវត្ត”
- ឯកសារ កាលប្បវត្តិ នា.វីតិកម្ម



បណ្ឌិតសភាចារ្យ ហង់ជួន ណារ៉ុន

APPENDIX C: BRIEF DESCRIPTIONS OF THE HISTORY OF EACH TEMPLE, THE NAMES OF WHICH ARE USED TO ANONYMISE THE RESEARCH VENUES

Prasat Angkor Wat – representing Institution 1 in this research – is located in the Angkor complex, near Siem Reap, Cambodia. It was built in the twelfth century by King Suryavarman II (Angkor Wat, n.d.; UNESCO World Heritage, 2024). Angkor Wat can also refer to the temple complex, known as the world's largest religious structure and one of the great cultural wonders of the world, comprising more than a thousand buildings and covering some four thousand acres.

Prasat Bayon – representing Institution 2 in this research – is a richly decorated Khmer temple located at the centre of Angkor Thom, near Siem Reap, Cambodia. It was built in the late twelfth or early thirteenth century as the state temple of King Jayavarman VII (Bayon Temple, n.d.; Meyer & Meyer, 2020). The most distinctive feature of Bayon is the multitude of serene and smiling stone faces, approximately two hundred, of the Buddha, believed to be modelled on the king himself.

Prasat Ta Prohm, also known as the “Jungle Temple,” – representing Institution 3 in this research – is a twelfth-century Buddhist temple located in the Angkor Archaeological Park, Cambodia (Lonely Planet, n.d.; Tourism of Cambodia, n.d.). It was built by King Jayavarman VII and is well known for its unique blend of architecture and the massive trees and roots that have grown over and around its structures, creating a captivating sight.

Prasat Banteay Srei, also known as the “Citadel of the Women,” – representing Institution 4 in this research – is a tenth-century Hindu temple located in the Angkor Archaeological Park, about twenty five kilometres northeast of Siem Reap city (Canby, 2009; Lonely Planet, 2022). It is renowned for its intricate and well-preserved decorative carvings, which cover the walls like tapestries. Built largely of red sandstone and known for its pinkish hue, *Banteay Srei* is

considered a “precious gem” and a “jewel in Khmer art” due to its small size, remarkable state of preservation, and the excellence of its decoration.

APPENDIX D: BRIEF BIOGRAPHICAL DESCRIPTION OF DECEASED CAMBODIAN SCHOLARS, POETS, AND WRITERS.

Kong Bunchhoeun (1939 – 2016) was a talented Cambodian artist known for his contributions as a writer, novelist, songwriter, filmmaker, painter, and poet. During the 1960s and 1970s, he composed over two hundred songs, significantly enriching Cambodia's cultural landscape during its “Golden Age” of films and music (Wilson, 2016).

Venerable Som (1852 – 1932), also known as *Preah Botumthera Som*, *Brah Padummatthera*, or simply *Som*, was a celebrated Cambodian writer renowned for his mastery of the *Khmer* language. His most notable work, the novel “Tum Teav,” completed in 1915, remains a foundation of Cambodian literature (Preah Botumthera Som, n.d.; Litlover, n.d.).

Nou Hach (1916 – 1975) was an influential Cambodian author, best remembered for his novel “Phka Sropoun” (The Fading/Wilting Flowers). His legacy includes serving as the secretary of the Ministry of Public Works and Communication, appointed by King Norodom Sihanouk in 1952, and his membership in the Khmer Writer Association, established in 1954 (Nou Hach, n.d.; Cambodia News English, 2019).

Chuon Nath (1883 – 1904), also known as *Samdech Sangha Rāja Jhotañāno Chuon Nath*, was a prominent Cambodian monk revered for his monumental work in compiling the first Khmer dictionary. His dedication to “Khmerizing” the language, by creating new words from *Pali* and *Sanskrit*, rather than adopting French terms, is emblematic of his profound influence. Additionally, he authored the Cambodian national anthem, *Nokoreach* (Becker, 2011; Narayan, 2022).

Krom Ngoy (1865 – 1936), also recognized as Phirum Ngoy or Ngoy the language master, was a revered Cambodian poet and master of the *khsae diev*, a traditional one-stringed instrument, during the 19th century. His poetry, centred on moral teachings and the dissemination of cultural and literary knowledge, remains a testament to his enduring legacy (Thon, 2008; Narayan, 2022).

Keng Vansak (1925–2008) was a distinguished Cambodian scholar, philosopher, and Khmer linguist credited with inventing the Khmer typewriter keyboard in 1952. He made significant contributions to Cambodian literature, encompassing two drama plays, numerous poems, and various literary works (Narayan, 2022).

Queen Indradevi (12th century), an ancient Cambodian queen who lived during the 12th century, was the earliest known female poet in Cambodia. She was also known for her *Sanskrit* composition that was inscribed on the large stele found at *Phimeanakas* in Siem Reap province, Cambodia (Indradevi, 2021; Narayan, 2022).

**ព្រះរាជាណាចក្រកម្ពុជា
ជាតិ សាសនា ព្រះមហាក្សត្រ**

ខ្ញុំបាទឈ្មោះ **ជា ឆារី** បច្ចុប្បន្នជាបេក្ខជនថ្នាក់បណ្ឌិត កំពុងសិក្សានៅសាកលវិទ្យាល័យ AUT (Auckland University of Technology) ក្នុងទីក្រុងអាកឡែន ប្រទេសណូវិលេហ្សឡង់។

សូមគោរពជូន

លោកបណ្ឌិតប្រធាន

ជាទីគោរពដ៏ខ្ពង់ខ្ពស់បំផុត។

កម្មវត្ថុ៖ សំណើសុំការអនុញ្ញាតចុះធ្វើការស្រាវជ្រាវដើម្បីប្រមូលទិន្នន័យនៅដេប៉ាតឺម៉ង់ភាសាអង់គ្លេសនៃសាកលវិទ្យាល័យ ភូមិន្ទភ្នំពេញ សំរាប់សរសេរបញ្ចប់និក្ខេបបទថ្នាក់បណ្ឌិត។

សេចក្តីដូចបានគោរពជូនក្នុងកម្មវត្ថុខាងលើ ខ្ញុំបាទសូមគោរពជម្រាបជូន **លោកបណ្ឌិតប្រធានដេប៉ាតឺម៉ង់** មេត្តាជ្រាបថា ដើម្បីបំពេញតាមលក្ខខណ្ឌកម្មវិធីសញ្ញាបត្របណ្ឌិតរបស់ខ្ញុំបាទ ខ្ញុំបាទបានស្នើសុំគម្រោងស្រាវជ្រាវមួយដែលមាន ចំណងជើងបណ្តោះអាសន្នជាភាសាអង់គ្លេសថា "Investigating English Language Teachers' Professional Learning in Cambodian Higher Education"។ គម្រោងស្រាវជ្រាវសម្រាប់និក្ខេបបទសញ្ញាបត្របណ្ឌិតរបស់ខ្ញុំបាទនេះ ត្រូវបានដឹកនាំ ដោយលោកសាស្ត្រាចារ្យបណ្ឌិត Graeme COUPER និងលោកស្រីបណ្ឌិត Megan LOURIE។ គោលបំណងចម្បងនៃ គម្រោងស្រាវជ្រាវរបស់ខ្ញុំបាទគឺដើម្បីសិក្សាស្វែងយល់លើការអភិវឌ្ឍជំនាញវិជ្ជាជីវៈផ្ទាល់ខ្លួនរបស់លោកគ្រូ អ្នកគ្រូ ភាសា អង់គ្លេស នៅក្នុងគ្រឹះស្ថានឧត្តមសិក្សានៃប្រទេសកម្ពុជា។

ដូច្នេះដើម្បីទទួលបានទិន្នន័យសម្រាប់សរសេរនិក្ខេបបទបញ្ចប់ការសិក្សាថ្នាក់បណ្ឌិតនេះ ខ្ញុំបាទមានបំណងជួប សម្ភាសន៍ជាមួយលោកគ្រូ អ្នកគ្រូ នៅក្នុង [REDACTED] នៃសាកលវិទ្យាល័យ [REDACTED] និង [REDACTED] ប្រតិចណ្ឌចាត់តាំង ចន្លោះពី ថ្ងៃទី១២ ខែមេសា ដល់ថ្ងៃទី៣១ ខែកក្កដា ឆ្នាំ២០២៣។ ក្នុងពេលជួបសម្ភាស ជាមួយលោកគ្រូ អ្នកគ្រូ ភាសាអង់គ្លេស ខ្ញុំបាទក៏នឹងស្នើសុំអនុញ្ញាតមើលការបង្រៀនរបស់លោកគ្រូ អ្នកគ្រូ ដើម្បីជំនួយ បន្ថែមដល់ការស្វែងយល់លើការអភិវឌ្ឍជំនាញវិជ្ជាជីវៈផ្ទាល់ខ្លួនរបស់លោកគ្រូ អ្នកគ្រូ។

សេចក្តីដូចបានគោរពជម្រាបជូនខាងលើ សូម**លោកបណ្ឌិតប្រធានដេប៉ាតឺម៉ង់**មេត្តាពិនិត្យ និងសម្រេច អនុញ្ញាតអោយខ្ញុំបាទចុះធ្វើការសិក្សាស្រាវជ្រាវនៅក្នុង [REDACTED] ដោយ សេចក្តីអនុគ្រោះបំផុត។

សូម **លោកបណ្ឌិតប្រធានដេប៉ាតឺម៉ង់** មេត្តាទទួលនូវការកិត្យដ៏ខ្ពង់ខ្ពស់បំផុតអំពីខ្ញុំបាទ។

សូមគោរពជូនដល់៖

- លិខិតអនុញ្ញាតប្រមូលទិន្នន័យចេញដោយ សាកលវិទ្យាល័យ AUT
- សេចក្តីអំពាវនាវឲ្យមានការចូលរួមក្នុងគម្រោង ស្រាវជ្រាវ
- លេខទូរស័ព្ទទំនាក់ទំនង៖ ០១២ ៥៤១ ៧៨៩

ថ្ងៃ ១៥ កើត ខែ ចេត្រ ឆ្នាំ ថោះ បញ្ចស័ក ព.ស. ២៥៦៦

ភ្នំពេញ ថ្ងៃ ពុធ ទី ០៥ ខែ មេសា ឆ្នាំ ២០២៣

ហត្ថលេខា



ជា ឆារី



ខិត្តប័ណ្ណព័ត៌មានសម្រាប់លោកគ្រូ អ្នកគ្រូ ដែលមានចំណងចូលរួមក្នុងគម្រោងស្រាវជ្រាវ

ក្រោមប្រធានបទ៖

ការសិក្សាលើការអភិវឌ្ឍជំនាញវិជ្ជាជីវៈផ្ទាល់ខ្លួនរបស់គ្រូភាសាអង់គ្លេសនៅគ្រឹះស្ថានឧត្តមសិក្សាក្នុងប្រទេសកម្ពុជា

អ្នកស្រាវជ្រាវ៖ **ជា ឆារី**

តួនាទី៖ បេតិកជនថ្នាក់បណ្ឌិត

School of Language and Culture,

សាកលវិទ្យាល័យ AUT (Auckland University of Technology)

អាសយដ្ឋាន៖ អគារ 55 Wellesley Street East, Auckland Central, Auckland, New Zealand

ថ្ងៃទី ១៥ ខែមេសា ឆ្នាំ២០២៣

ចំណងជើងបណ្តោះអាសន្នរបស់ពិភ្ជេចបទជាភាសាអង់គ្លេស៖

Investigating ELT Teachers' Professional Learning in Cambodian Higher Education

ខ្ញុំបាទឈ្មោះ **ជា ឆារី** បច្ចុប្បន្នជាបេតិកជនថ្នាក់បណ្ឌិត ដែលកំពុងសិក្សានិងស្រាវជ្រាវនៅសាកលវិទ្យាល័យ AUT (Auckland University of Technology) នៅក្នុងទីក្រុងអក់លែន ប្រទេសនូវវ៉ែលហ្សឺឡង់។ ដើម្បីបំពេញតាមលក្ខខណ្ឌសម្រាប់កម្មវិធីសញ្ញាបត្របណ្ឌិតរបស់ខ្ញុំបាទ ខ្ញុំបាទបានស្នើគម្រោងស្រាវជ្រាវមួយដែលមានចំណងជើងបណ្តោះអាសន្នជាភាសាអង់គ្លេសថា “Investigating English Language Teachers' Professional Learning in Cambodian Higher Education”។ គម្រោងស្រាវជ្រាវសម្រាប់និរូបបទសញ្ញាបត្របណ្ឌិតរបស់ខ្ញុំបាទនេះ ស្ថិតក្រោមការណែនាំរបស់លោកសាស្ត្រាចារ្យបណ្ឌិត Graeme COUPER និងលោកស្រីបណ្ឌិត Megan LOURIE។ គោលបំណងចម្បងនៃគម្រោងស្រាវជ្រាវរបស់ខ្ញុំបាទគឺដើម្បីសិក្សាស្វែងយល់លើការអភិវឌ្ឍជំនាញវិជ្ជាជីវៈផ្ទាល់ខ្លួនរបស់លោកគ្រូ អ្នកគ្រូ ភាសាអង់គ្លេសដែលកំពុងបង្រៀននៅគ្រឹះស្ថានឧត្តមសិក្សាក្នុងប្រទេសកម្ពុជា។

នៅក្នុងខិត្តប័ណ្ណព័ត៌មាននេះ លោកគ្រូ អ្នកគ្រូ ដែលមានចំណាប់អារម្មណ៍និងបំណងចូលរួមក្នុងគម្រោងស្រាវជ្រាវ អាចស្វែងយល់បានយ៉ាងលម្អិតលើគោលបំណងទាំងនៃកិច្ចការស្រាវជ្រាវរបស់ខ្ញុំបាទ និង ដំណើរការនៃការប្រមូលទិន្នន័យដែលពាក់ព័ន្ធផ្ទាល់ដល់លោកគ្រូ អ្នកគ្រូ ដែលនឹងចូលរួម។

I - គោលបំណងនៃការសិក្សាស្រាវជ្រាវនេះ៖

ដូចបានជម្រាបជូននៅក្នុងសេចក្តីផ្តើមខាងលើ គោលបំណងនៃការស្រាវជ្រាវរបស់ខ្ញុំបាទ គឺដើម្បីសិក្សាស្វែងយល់លើការអភិវឌ្ឍជំនាញវិជ្ជាជីវៈផ្ទាល់ខ្លួនរបស់លោកគ្រូ អ្នកគ្រូ ភាសាអង់គ្លេសដែលកំពុងបង្រៀននៅក្នុងគ្រឹះស្ថានឧត្តមសិក្សានៃប្រទេសកម្ពុជា។ សម្រាប់គម្រោងស្រាវជ្រាវមួយនេះ ខ្ញុំបាទបានស្នើដាក់ចំណងជើងបណ្តោះអាសន្នជាភាសាអង់គ្លេសថា “Investigating English Language Teachers' Professional Learning in Cambodian Higher

1. ការសម្ភាសន៍លើទី១

នៅពេលចាប់ផ្តើមដំណើរការប្រមូលទិន្នន័យ ខ្ញុំបាននឹងធ្វើការសម្ភាសន៍លោកគ្រូ អ្នកគ្រូរយៈពេលប្រហែល 30 ទៅ 45 នាទី ហើយលោកគ្រូ អ្នកគ្រូ អាចជ្រើសរើសនិយាយជាភាសាខ្មែរ ឬភាសាអង់គ្លេស ឬលាយគ្នាក៏បាន។ ខ្ញុំបាននឹង បានថតសំឡេងនៃការសម្ភាសន៍នេះ និងបកប្រែជាភាសាអង់គ្លេស (ប្រសិនបើលោកគ្រូ អ្នកគ្រូ និយាយជាភាសាខ្មែរ) សម្រាប់ការវិភាគទិន្នន័យរបស់ខ្ញុំបាទ។

2. ការចុះសង្កេតថ្នាក់រៀន និងការសម្ភាសន៍បន្ទាប់

បន្ទាប់ពីការសម្ភាសន៍លើទី១ ខ្ញុំបាននឹងពិភាក្សាជាមួយលោកគ្រូ អ្នកគ្រូ ដើម្បីកំណត់ពេលវេលាសមរម្យសម្រាប់ ការសង្កេតក្នុងថ្នាក់ដែលលោកគ្រូ អ្នកគ្រូ បង្រៀន។ ខ្ញុំបាននឹងសុំឱ្យលោកគ្រូ អ្នកគ្រូ កំណត់យកថ្នាក់ណាមួយ ដែលលោក គ្រូ អ្នកគ្រូ នឹងរីករាយសម្រាប់ឱ្យខ្ញុំចូលរួមសង្កេតមើលប្រហែល 30 នាទីក្នុងមួយលើក ហើយខ្ញុំនឹងសង្កេតមើលថ្នាក់រៀន នោះចំនួនពីរលើក។

គោលបំណងសំខាន់នៃការចូលរួមសង្កេតមើលថ្នាក់ដែលលោកគ្រូ អ្នកគ្រូ បង្រៀន គឺដើម្បីឱ្យខ្ញុំអាចធ្វើការកត់ ត្រានូវចំណុចមួយចំនួនដែលអាចទាក់ទងទៅនឹង “វិធីរៀន” និង “ការរៀនសូត្រក្នុងគោលបំណងពង្រឹងវិជ្ជាជីវៈបន្ថែម ដោយខ្លួនឯង” របស់លោកគ្រូ អ្នកគ្រូ ហើយប្រើប្រាស់ជាចំណុចយោងសម្រាប់ការពិភាក្សានៅក្នុងបទសម្ភាសន៍បន្ទាប់។ ដូច្នេះ អំឡុងពេលសង្កេត ខ្ញុំនឹងប្រើប្រាស់ប៊ិចនិងសៀវភៅ ដើម្បីកត់ត្រាសកម្មភាពមួយចំនួនក្នុងថ្នាក់រៀន ដើម្បីជាជំនួយ សម្រាប់ការពិភាក្សានៅក្នុងបទសម្ភាសន៍បន្ទាប់។

ការសម្ភាសន៍បន្ទាប់ការសង្កេតក្នុងថ្នាក់រៀននេះប្រើពេលប្រហែល ៤៥ នាទី ហើយខ្ញុំបាននឹងព្យាយាមធ្វើការ សម្ភាសន៍ជាមួយលោកគ្រូ អ្នកគ្រូ ភ្លាមៗតាមដែលអាចធ្វើបាន បន្ទាប់ពីការសង្កេតមើលថ្នាក់ដែលលោកគ្រូ អ្នកគ្រូ បង្រៀន រួច ដោយអាស្រ័យលើពេលវេលាសមរម្យណាមួយសម្រាប់លោកគ្រូ អ្នកគ្រូ អាចធ្វើបាន។ ហើយលោកគ្រូ អ្នកគ្រូ អាចជ្រើស រើសនិយាយជាភាសាខ្មែរ ឬភាសាអង់គ្លេស ឬលាយគ្នាក៏បាន។ ខ្ញុំបាននឹងបានថតសំឡេងការសម្ភាសន៍នេះ និងបកប្រែជា ភាសាអង់គ្លេស (ប្រសិនបើលោកគ្រូ អ្នកគ្រូ និយាយជាភាសាខ្មែរ) សម្រាប់ការវិភាគទិន្នន័យរបស់ខ្ញុំបាទ។

ការចុះសង្កេតថ្នាក់រៀន និងការសម្ភាសន៍លើកទីពីរ នឹងធ្វើឡើងប្រហែល ២ ឬ ៣ សប្តាហ៍បន្ទាប់ពីការសង្កេតថ្នាក់ រៀនលើកដំបូង។ នីតិវិធីសម្រាប់ការសង្កេតលើកទីពីរ និង ការសម្ភាសន៍បន្ទាប់ នឹងមានលក្ខណៈដូចគ្នាទៅនឹងលើកទីមួយ ដែរ។

3. ការថតសារសំឡេងតាម Telegram Messenger

នៅក្នុងដំណើរការប្រមូលទិន្នន័យ ខ្ញុំបាននឹងស្នើសុំឱ្យលោកគ្រូ អ្នកគ្រូ ថតសារជាសំឡេងសម្រាប់រយៈពេលប្រហែល ពី ៣ ទៅ ៥ នាទី ហើយនឹងផ្ញើមកខ្ញុំតាមរយៈ កម្មវិធី Telegram Messenger នៅក្នុងទូរស័ព្ទដៃរបស់លោកគ្រូ អ្នកគ្រូ។ ការថតសារជាសំឡេង ហើយមកខ្ញុំតាមរយៈ កម្មវិធី Telegram Messenger នេះនឹងធ្វើឡើងនៅចន្លោះពេលដែលខ្ញុំបញ្ចប់ ការសង្កេតថ្នាក់រៀនលើកទីមួយចប់ និងមុនពេលការសង្កេតថ្នាក់រៀនលើកទីពីរ ។

ខ្ញុំរំពឹងថានឹងអាចទទួលបានសារជាសំឡេងពី លោកគ្រូ អ្នកគ្រូ យ៉ាងហោចចំនួន ១ ក្នុងមួយអាទិត្យ។ ប៉ុន្តែ លោក គ្រូ អ្នកគ្រូ អាចធ្វើការសម្រេចចិត្តលើរយៈពេលនៃសារជាសំឡេង ក៏ដូចជាចំនួននៃសារជាសំឡេង ដែលអ្នកចង់ថត ប្រសិនបើលោកគ្រូ អ្នកគ្រូ គិតថាវាចាំបាច់ត្រូវថតច្រើនជាងមួយ ឬយូរជាង ៣ ទៅ ៥ នាទី។ នៅពេលថតសារសំឡេង លោកគ្រូ អ្នកគ្រូ អាចថតជាភាសាអង់គ្លេស ឬ ភាសាខ្មែរ ឬ លាយគ្នាទាំងពីរភាសាក៏បាន។

ចំណែកឯខ្លឹមសារនៃសារសំឡេងនីមួយៗ គឺទាក់ទងទៅនឹង «វិធីរៀន» និង «ការរៀនសូត្រក្នុងគោលបំណងពង្រឹងវិជ្ជាជីវៈបន្ថែមដោយខ្លួនឯង» របស់លោកគ្រូ អ្នកគ្រូ ផ្ទាល់។

4. ឯកសារ

ដើម្បីជានួយឱ្យមានការយល់កាន់តែស៊ីជម្រៅអំពីរបៀបដែលលោកគ្រូ អ្នកគ្រូ អនុវត្ត TPL ខ្ញុំអាចនឹងស្នើសុំមើល និងចតចម្លងឯកសារដែលទាក់ទងនឹងការបង្រៀន ឬឯកសារដែលពាក់ព័ន្ធ។ លោកគ្រូ អ្នកគ្រូ នឹងមានសេរីភាពពេញលេញក្នុងការសម្រេចចិត្តចំពោះអ្វីដែលលោកគ្រូ អ្នកគ្រូ ចង់ចែករំលែក។

បន្ទាប់ពីខ្ញុំបានប្រមូលទិន្នន័យនិងបកប្រែអស់ហើយ ខ្ញុំនឹងប្រគល់វាជូនលោកគ្រូ អ្នកគ្រូ វិញដើម្បីពិនិត្យ។ ប្រសិនបើលោកគ្រូ អ្នកគ្រូ មិនពេញចិត្តនឹងផ្នែកណាមួយ ខ្ញុំអាចលុបផ្នែកនោះចោល ឬកែប្រែវាបាន។ នៅដំណាក់កាលណាមួយនៃដំណើរការនៃការប្រមូលទិន្នន័យ លោកគ្រូ អ្នកគ្រូអាចសម្រេចចិត្ត ឈប់ចូលរួមក្នុងការស្រាវជ្រាវ ហើយលោកគ្រូ អ្នកគ្រូអាចមានជម្រើសរវាងការឲ្យខ្ញុំលុបចោលផ្នែកណាមួយនៃទិន្នន័យ ឬទិន្នន័យទាំងស្រុងដែលជាមូលដ្ឋានរបស់លោកគ្រូ អ្នកគ្រូ ឬអនុញ្ញាតឲ្យខ្ញុំបន្តប្រើប្រាស់វា។ ប៉ុន្តែប្រសិនបើខ្ញុំបានចាប់ផ្តើមការវិភាគទិន្នន័យហើយ នោះការស្នើឲ្យលុបចោលផ្នែកណាមួយនៃទិន្នន័យ ឬទិន្នន័យទាំងស្រុងរបស់លោកគ្រូ អ្នកគ្រូ ប្រហែលជាមិនអាចទៅរួចទេ។

IV - ការវិវាទនិងហានិភ័យផ្សេងៗក្នុងការចូលរួមផ្តល់ទិន្នន័យសម្រាប់គម្រោងស្រាវជ្រាវនេះ

ខ្ញុំជឿជាក់ថា ការចូលរួមផ្តល់ទិន្នន័យសម្រាប់គម្រោងស្រាវជ្រាវនេះនឹងមិនមានភាពវិវាទធ្ងន់ធ្ងរ ឬហានិភ័យណាមួយដល់លោកគ្រូ អ្នកគ្រូ ទេ។ ភាពវិវាទដែលលោកគ្រូ អ្នកគ្រូ អាចនឹងជួបប្រទះគឺអាចមាននៅពេលលោកគ្រូ អ្នកគ្រូ ត្រូវនិយាយអំពី «ការរៀនសូត្រក្នុងគោលបំណងពង្រឹងវិជ្ជាជីវៈបន្ថែមដោយខ្លួនឯង» ឬ «ការបង្រៀនក្នុងថ្នាក់»។ ក្នុងករណីនេះ លោកគ្រូ អ្នកគ្រូ មានសិទ្ធិគ្រប់គ្រាន់ក្នុងការនិយាយតែអ្វីដែលលោកគ្រូ អ្នកគ្រូចង់និយាយ។

លោកគ្រូ អ្នកគ្រូ ក៏ប្រហែលជាមានអារម្មណ៍ថាមានការវិវាទនៅពេលដែលមានខ្ញុំសង្កេតមើលការបង្រៀនរបស់លោកគ្រូ អ្នកគ្រូ ជាពិសេសនៅក្នុងករណីដែលថ្នាក់ដែលការបង្រៀនរបស់លោកគ្រូ អ្នកគ្រូ ឬការរៀនរបស់សិស្សមិនបានដំណើរការដូចអ្វីដែលលោកគ្រូ អ្នកគ្រូ ចង់បាន។ ក្នុងករណីនោះ ខ្ញុំក៏សូមបញ្ជាក់ជូនលោកគ្រូ អ្នកគ្រូ ថាការបង្រៀនរបស់លោកគ្រូ អ្នកគ្រូនឹងមិនត្រូវបានវាយតម្លៃសោះឡើយ ហើយខ្ញុំនឹងមិនពិភាក្សាអំពីការងារបង្រៀនរបស់លោកគ្រូ អ្នកគ្រូជាមួយនរណាម្នាក់ឡើយ។

ដូចគ្នានេះដែរ ក្នុងអំឡុងពេលនៃការសង្កេតថ្នាក់រៀន សិស្សរបស់លោកគ្រូ អ្នកគ្រូ អាចមានអារម្មណ៍ថាមានការវិវាទដែលមានខ្ញុំនៅអង្គុយក្នុងថ្នាក់។ ខ្ញុំក៏នឹងប្រាប់ដល់សិស្សរបស់លោកគ្រូ អ្នកគ្រូ ផងដែរថាគម្រោងស្រាវជ្រាវនេះ មិនបានផ្តោតលើការសិក្សារបស់ពួកគេឡើយ ហើយសិស្សម្នាក់ៗនឹងមិនត្រូវបានកំណត់អត្តសញ្ញាណឡើយ។

V - អត្ថប្រយោជន៍ក្នុងការចូលរួមផ្តល់ទិន្នន័យសម្រាប់គម្រោងស្រាវជ្រាវនេះ

ការចូលរួមផ្តល់ទិន្នន័យសម្រាប់គម្រោងស្រាវជ្រាវនេះនឹងផ្តល់អត្ថប្រយោជន៍ចម្បងបី។ ទីមួយ លោកគ្រូ អ្នកគ្រូនឹងមានឱកាសដើម្បីឆ្លុះបញ្ចាំង និងពិភាក្សាអំពីទស្សនៈផ្សេងៗដែលទាក់ទងទៅនឹង «វិធីរៀន» និង «ការរៀនសូត្រក្នុងគោលបំណងពង្រឹងវិជ្ជាជីវៈបន្ថែមដោយខ្លួនឯង» របស់លោកគ្រូ អ្នកគ្រូផ្ទាល់។ លោកគ្រូ អ្នកគ្រូក៏នឹងមានឱកាសចែករំលែកភាពជោគជ័យផ្សេងៗរបស់ទាក់ទងទៅនឹង «វិធីរៀន» និង «ការរៀនសូត្រក្នុងគោលបំណងពង្រឹងវិជ្ជាជីវៈបន្ថែមដោយខ្លួនឯង» ព្រមទាំងពីរបៀបដែលវាបានធ្វើឱ្យមានផ្លាស់ប្តូរក្នុងការអនុវត្តការងារបង្រៀន របស់លោកគ្រូ អ្នកគ្រូ ផងដែរ។

ទីពីរ ការចូលរួមរបស់លោកគ្រូ អ្នកគ្រូ ក្នុងការសិក្សានេះនឹងអាចឱ្យខ្ញុំទទួលបានទិន្នន័យចាំបាច់សម្រាប់ការស្រាវជ្រាវ ដែលនឹងរួមចំណែកយ៉ាងសំខាន់ដល់ការសរសេរនិក្ខេបបទថ្នាក់បណ្ឌិតរបស់ខ្ញុំ។

ទីបី ការចូលរួមចំណែកក្នុងការផ្តល់ទិន្នន័យសម្រាប់គម្រោងស្រាវជ្រាវរបស់លោកគ្រូ អ្នកគ្រូ នឹងផ្តល់អត្ថប្រយោជន៍ដ៏ទូលំទូលាយដល់គ្រូបង្រៀនភាសាអង់គ្លេសទូទៅ និងការរៀនសូត្ររបស់សិស្សានុសិស្ស ដោយហេតុថាការពិភាក្សាលើ «វិធីរៀន» និង «ការរៀនសូត្រក្នុងគោលបំណងពង្រឹងវិជ្ជាជីវៈបន្ថែមដោយខ្លួនឯង» និងការយល់ដឹងកាន់តែច្រើនអំពីប្រធានបទនេះ អាចនឹងនាំទៅដល់ការរីកចម្រើនក្នុងការបង្រៀនភាសាអង់គ្លេស និងអាចនាំឱ្យមានលទ្ធផលកាន់តែប្រសើរឡើងក្នុងការសិក្សារបស់សិស្ស។ គោលដៅចម្បងនៃគម្រោងស្រាវជ្រាវនេះគឺដើម្បីប្រើប្រាស់ការយល់ដឹងអំពីការសិក្សាជំនាញវិជ្ជាជីវៈរបស់គ្រូបង្រៀន ដែលទទួលបានក្នុងអំឡុងពេលនៃការស្រាវជ្រាវនេះ ដើម្បីបង្កើតក្របខ័ណ្ឌសម្រាប់ការអនុវត្តជាក់ស្តែងលើ «វិធីរៀន» និង «ការរៀនសូត្រក្នុងគោលបំណងពង្រឹងវិជ្ជាជីវៈបន្ថែមដោយខ្លួនឯង» របស់លោកគ្រូ អ្នកគ្រូ និង ដើម្បីជួយជាការចង្អុលទិសដល់អ្នកគ្រប់គ្រង ព្រមទាំងថ្នាក់ដឹកនាំ ការអនុវត្តជាក់ស្តែងការគាំទ្រ និងលើកទឹកចិត្តចំពោះ «ការរៀនសូត្រក្នុងគោលបំណងពង្រឹងវិជ្ជាជីវៈបន្ថែមដោយខ្លួនឯង» របស់លោកគ្រូ អ្នកគ្រូ នៅក្នុងស្ថាប័នរបស់ពួកគេ។ ខ្ញុំក៏សង្ឃឹមផងដែរថា លទ្ធផលដែលចេញពីការស្រាវជ្រាវនេះនឹងមិនត្រឹមតែអាចអនុវត្តបាននៅក្នុងប្រទេសកម្ពុជាប៉ុណ្ណោះទេ ថែមទាំងជាតំរូវដែលអាចយកទៅប្រើប្រាស់នៅក្នុងប្រទេសផ្សេងទៀតផងដែរ។

VI - ព័ត៌មានទាក់ទងទៅនឹងឯកជនភាពរបស់អ្នកចូលរួមផ្តល់ទិន្នន័យ

ព័ត៌មានទាក់ទងទៅនឹងឯកជនភាពរបស់លោកគ្រូ អ្នកគ្រូ ដែលជាអ្នកចូលរួមផ្តល់ទិន្នន័យគឺជាអាទិភាពដ៏ចម្បងមួយនៅក្នុងគម្រោងស្រាវជ្រាវនេះ។ នៅក្នុងរាល់ការសរសេរ និងវិភាគទិន្នន័យសម្រាប់និក្ខេបបទថ្នាក់បណ្ឌិតរបស់ខ្ញុំ ខ្ញុំនឹងប្រើប្រាស់ឈ្មោះនិម្មិត ជំនួសឲ្យឈ្មោះពិតប្រាកដរបស់លោកគ្រូ អ្នកគ្រូ និងស្ថាប័នដែលលោកគ្រូ អ្នកគ្រូ កំពុងធ្វើការ។ ដូច្នេះ សាធារណជនទូទៅនឹងមិនអាចដឹងបានថាលោកគ្រូ អ្នកគ្រូ បានចូលរួមក្នុងការស្រាវជ្រាវនេះទេ។

ទោះជាយ៉ាងណាក៏ដោយ ខ្ញុំអាចរក្សាការសម្ងាត់នៃព័ត៌មានទាក់ទងទៅនឹងឯកជនភាពរបស់លោកគ្រូ អ្នកគ្រូបានតែមួយកម្រិតប៉ុណ្ណោះ។ អ្នករួមការងារ សហការី ឬអ្នកគ្រប់គ្រងនៃស្ថាប័នដែលលោកគ្រូ អ្នកគ្រូ កំពុងធ្វើការ អាចនឹងដឹងថាលោកគ្រូ អ្នកគ្រូ ជាអ្នកចូលរួមក្នុងការស្រាវជ្រាវរបស់ខ្ញុំ។ ប៉ុន្តែ ពួកគេមិនអាចដឹងច្បាស់ការថាទិន្នន័យណាមួយ ឬសម្រង់ពាក្យផ្ទាល់ខ្លួនណាមួយ ជាកម្មសិទ្ធិរបស់លោកគ្រូ អ្នកគ្រូ ទេ ដោយសារតែគម្រោងរបស់ខ្ញុំព្យាយាមអញ្ជើញលោកគ្រូ អ្នកគ្រូ ចូលរួមឲ្យបានពីរនាក់នៅក្នុងមួយសាកលវិទ្យាល័យ។

ទិន្នន័យទាំងអស់ដែលប្រមូលបានពីលោកគ្រូ អ្នកគ្រូ នឹងត្រូវរក្សាទុកនៅក្នុង cloud storage ដែលការពារដោយពាក្យសម្ងាត់ ហើយឯកសារផ្សេងៗ ដែលខ្ញុំនឹងប្រមូលបាន នឹងត្រូវរក្សាទុកក្នុងទូចាក់សោរនៅក្នុងអគារ WQ នៃបរិវេណសាកលវិទ្យាល័យ AUT ។

VII - ការចំណាយក្នុងចូលរួមគម្រោងស្រាវជ្រាវនេះ

ដើម្បីចូលរួមក្នុងដំណើរការនៃការប្រមូលទិន្នន័យសម្រាប់គម្រោងស្រាវជ្រាវនេះ លោកគ្រូ អ្នកគ្រូ ត្រូវចំណាយពេលវេលារបស់លោកគ្រូ អ្នកគ្រូ សរុបប្រហែលជា 3 ម៉ោង ដើម្បីចូលរួមក្នុងសកម្មភាពដែលមាន៖

- 1) ការសម្ភាសន៍លើកទី១ ប្រហែល 35 ទៅ 40 នាទី។
- 2) ការសម្ភាសន៍លើកទី២ ប្រហែល 30 នាទី ចំនួនពីរដង បន្ទាប់ពីការសង្កេតថ្នាក់រៀននីមួយៗរបស់ខ្ញុំបាទ។

- 3) ការថតនិងធ្វើសារជាសំឡេង 3 ទៅ 5 នាទី ចំនួនប្រហែល ៣ ទៅ ៤ ដង។
- 4) និងពេលមួយចំនួនខ្លីទៀតក្នុងការពិនិត្យ និងចុះហត្ថលេខាលើ ការបកប្រែលើការសម្ភាសន៍ និងកំណត់ហេតុ ស្តីពីការសង្កេតការបង្រៀន ប្រសិនបើចាំបាច់។

VIII - លទ្ធផលនៃគម្រោងស្រាវជ្រាវ

សេចក្តីសង្ខេបនៃលទ្ធផលស្រាវជ្រាវអាចនឹងត្រូវផ្តល់ជូនដល់លោកគ្រូ អ្នកគ្រូ ណាដែលបានបង្ហាញពីចំណាប់អារម្មណ៍ក្នុងការទទួលបានព័ត៌មាននេះតាមរយៈការចុះហត្ថលេខាលើ ទម្រង់ការយល់ព្រមចូលរួមគម្រោងស្រាវជ្រាវនេះ។ លើសពីនេះទៅទៀត ប្រសិនបើអត្ថបទដែលកើតចេញពីគម្រោងស្រាវជ្រាវនេះ ត្រូវបានទទួលបានបោះពុម្ពផ្សាយ ទស្សនាវដ្តីណាមួយនោះអត្ថបទនោះក៏នឹងត្រូវផ្តល់ជូនដល់លោកគ្រូ អ្នកគ្រូ ដែរ។

IX - ករណីដែលលោកគ្រូ អ្នកគ្រូ មានកង្វល់ណាមួយទាក់ទងទៅនឹងគម្រោងស្រាវជ្រាវនេះ

ប្រសិនបើលោកគ្រូ អ្នកគ្រូ មានកង្វល់ណាមួយទាក់ទងទៅនឹងគម្រោងស្រាវជ្រាវនេះ សូមទាក់ផ្ទាល់ទៅកាន់លោកសាស្ត្រាចារ្យបណ្ឌិត Graeme COUPER និងលោកស្រីបណ្ឌិត Megan LOURIE ដែលជាគ្រូណែនាំ តាមរយៈអាស័យដ្ឋានទំនាក់ទំនងដូចខាងក្រោម៖

- A/Prof. Graeme COUPER៖ graeme.couper@aut.ac.nz, +64 9 921 9999 ext. 6048
- Dr Megan LOURIE៖ megan.lourie@aut.ac.nz, +64 9 921 9999 ext. 8517.

ប្រសិនបើលោកគ្រូ អ្នកគ្រូ មានកង្វល់ណាមួយទាក់ទងទៅនឹងដំណើរការនៃការប្រមូលទិន្នន័យសម្រាប់គម្រោងស្រាវជ្រាវនេះ សូមទាក់ផ្ទាល់ទៅកាន់ Executive Secretary នៃគណៈកម្មាធិការ AUTC តាមរយៈ៖

- អ៊ីមែល៖ ethics@aut.ac.nz
- ទូរស័ព្ទ៖ +64 9 921 9999 ext 6038.

X - សេចក្តីអំពើញ

តាមរយៈការរៀបរាប់ពីគោលបំណង និង ដំណើរការនៃការប្រមូលទិន្នន័យ ព្រមទាំងគុណប្រយោជន៍នៃការចូលរួមគម្រោងស្រាវជ្រាវនេះ ខ្ញុំសូមអំពើញលោកគ្រូ អ្នកគ្រូ ចូលរួមផ្តល់ទិន្នន័យក្នុងកិច្ចការស្រាវជ្រាវរបស់ខ្ញុំ ដើម្បីចែករំលែកទស្សនៈរបស់លោកគ្រូ អ្នកគ្រូលើទិដ្ឋភាពផ្សេងៗ ទាក់ទងទៅនឹង -វិធីរៀន- និង -ការរៀនសូត្រក្នុងគោលបំណងពង្រឹងវិជ្ជាជីវៈបន្ថែមដោយខ្លួនឯង- របស់លោកគ្រូ អ្នកគ្រូ ផ្ទាល់ ។

ការចូលរួមរបស់លោកគ្រូ អ្នកគ្រូក្នុងការស្រាវជ្រាវនេះគឺជាការស្ម័គ្រចិត្តរបស់លោកគ្រូ អ្នកគ្រូ ផ្ទាល់ដោយឥតមានការបង្ខិតបង្ខំតាមប្រភាពណាមួយឡើយ ហើយអ្នកអាចដកខ្លួនបានគ្រប់ពេល រហូតដល់ការបញ្ចប់ការប្រមូលទិន្នន័យដោយគ្មានផលវិបាកអវិជ្ជមានណាមួយឡើយ។

ប្រសិនបើលោកគ្រូ អ្នកគ្រូ មានបំណងចូលរួមក្នុងគម្រោងស្រាវជ្រាវនេះ សូមទាក់ទងមកខ្ញុំឲ្យបានមុនថ្ងៃទី ៣១ ខែឧសភា ឆ្នាំ 2023។

XI - វិធីនៃការចូលរួម

ប្រសិនបើលោកគ្រូ អ្នកគ្រូ មានបំណងចូលរួមក្នុងគម្រោងស្រាវជ្រាវនេះ
ឬមានចម្ងល់ណាមួយ សូមទាក់ទងមកខ្ញុំតាមរយៈ៖

- ទូរស័ព្ទដៃ៖ 012 541 789
- អ៊ីមែល៖ theara.chea@aut.ac.nz
- Telegram Account៖ @THEARACHEA ឬ ស្វែង QR code:



@THEARACHEA

AUTEC approval details

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 10 March 2023.

AUTEC Reference number 23/8



THE INFORMATION SHEET FOR TEACHER PARTICIPANTS

Theara CHEA

PhD Candidate

*School of Language and Culture,
Auckland University of Technology
55 Wellesley Street East, Auckland Central
Auckland, New Zealand*

15 April 2023

PROJECT TITLE: Investigating ELT Teachers' Professional Learning Practice in Cambodian Higher Education

My name is Theara CHEA. I am a PhD candidate at Auckland University of Technology (AUT), in New Zealand. To fulfil the qualification requirement for my PhD degree program, I am conducting a research project under the supervision of A/Prof. Graeme COUPER and Dr Megan LOURIE, to investigate Cambodian English language teachers' professional learning (TPL) in higher education institutions. The working title of my thesis is "Investigating English Language Teachers' Professional Learning in Cambodian Higher Education." My project is expected to gain insights into the state of TPL amongst English language teachers in Cambodia. It is also envisaged that it will shed light on how TPL of English language teachers can be effectively fostered and supported in Cambodia.

The Information Sheet contains the aims of my research, a detailed description of the data collection procedures and the reasons why you might consider participating in the project.

AN INVITATION

I am inviting you to participate in my research program to share your perspectives on different aspects of TPL. This will involve interviews, classroom observations, sending me three weekly voice memos over Telegram Messenger, and showing me relevant teaching materials.

Your participation in this research is voluntary and you may withdraw at any time, up to the completion of data collection, without any adverse consequences of any kind.

If you are interested in the study or wish to ask for further information, please contact me by:

- Email: theara.chea@aut.ac.nz
 - Mobile number: 012 541 789
 - Telegram Account Name: @THEARACHEA
- or scan the QR code:



WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS RESEARCH?

The purpose of the research is to investigate the state of TPL amongst English language teachers in public and private Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in Cambodia. It will set out to explore how Cambodian ELT teachers conceptualise "teachers' professional learning" and what learning activities they adopt. The project will then investigate the motivational and contextual factors that propel the teachers' professional learning. Ultimately, the study will examine the teachers' perceptions of the efficacy of the learning activities they undertake, as well as the various factors that influence TPL, so that the practice can be supported effectively.

The results of this project will be written up in the form of a PhD thesis and may also be presented at conferences and published in journals which discuss English language teacher education and/or English language teaching in general. Your identity will always be kept confidential.

HOW WAS I IDENTIFIED AND WHY AM I BEING INVITED TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS RESEARCH?

I am proposing to undertake my research at the institution you are currently working at. Therefore, you have been identified as a potential participant who meets all the requirements of this project as you are:

- a Cambodian English language teacher teaching in a Bachelor's degree program in English Language Teaching and/or a Bachelor in English Literature, and
- currently working at this institution.

The [REDACTED] has granted permission for me to conduct this research, and I have requested that he disseminates information about my project to you.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IN THIS RESEARCH?

This research will include the following stages:

1. An initial semi-structured interview

I will conduct a semi-structured interview of 30-45 minutes at the beginning of the data collection process. The interview will be audio-recorded, translated and transcribed for analysis, and you can choose to speak in Khmer and/or English.

After the initial semi-structured interview, I will then negotiate suitable times for the two classroom observations, which will be followed by recall interviews.

2. Two classroom observations with recall interviews

I will conduct the first 30-minute observation of your classroom followed by a recall interview which will subsequently be conducted as soon after the observation as possible. During the observation, I will take field notes to record classroom activities so that I can use them as points of reference for discussion in the recall interview.

I will ask you to nominate one of your classes that you would be happy for me to come and observe. I will then observe that class on two occasions.

Information from the initial interview and documents (e.g. policies, teaching documents) will also be used as references. I anticipate that each recall interview will last for about 45 minutes. The recall interview will also be audio-recorded, translated and transcribed for analysis, and you can choose to speak in Khmer and/or English.

The second 30-minute observation of your classroom and the recall interview that follows will occur approximately three weeks after the first observation. The protocol for this second observation, as well as that for the recall interview, will be the same as the first one.

3. Three voice memos to be sent via Telegram Messenger

I will ask you to record one voice memo for each week between the first and second classroom observations and send the memos to me via Telegram Messenger. The suggested length for each voice memo is approximately three to five minutes. However, you can decide on the duration of the voice memo you wish to record, as well as the number of memos if you feel that you need to record more than one. When recording your voice memos, you can do so in Khmer and/or English.

4. Documentations

To help me understand how you are applying TPL in practice, I may request to see and make photocopies of relevant teaching related materials. Of course, you will be free to decide what you want to share.

After I have translated and transcribed all data collected, I will return it to you for checking. If you are not happy with anything in the written transcriptions, it can be removed or amended. At any stage, you can decide that you do not want to participate in the research and you will be offered the choice between having any data that is identifiable as belonging to you removed or allowing it to continue to be used. However, following commencement of data analysis, removal of your data may not be possible.

WHAT ARE THE DISCOMFORTS AND RISKS and HOW WILL THESE DISCOMFORTS AND RISKS BE ALLEVIATED?

I do not anticipate any risks in participating in the interviews. The only possible discomfort you might experience is when you talk about your classroom practice. During the classroom observations, there is the possibility that your students may feel uncomfortable having me in the class. There is also a possibility that you may feel uncomfortable about having your teaching observed, especially if the class does not go as you would like. In that case, I would also like to reassure you that your teaching practices are in no way being evaluated. Your performance is not being reviewed and I will not discuss this with anyone. I will also mention to your students that there will be no focus on their learning, or on any individual student's identity.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS?

First, you will have opportunities to reflect on and discuss your perspectives on teachers' professional learning. You will also have a chance to share your success story in engaging with TPL and how it has shaped your classroom practice.

Second, your participation in this study will enable me to access the necessary data for the research, which will contribute to my PhD thesis, to fulfil the qualification requirement for my degree program.

Last but not least, your contribution will benefit the wider professional community of general Cambodian English language teachers and students, as a greater understanding of TPL will hopefully lead to better language English teaching practice and result in better student learning outcomes. The ultimate goal of this project is to use the insights into teachers' professional learning gained during the research to develop a practical framework for classroom practitioners, administrators and policymakers to best facilitate the practice in their own institutions. This research is projected to be not only applicable in Cambodia but also as a possible template to be used in other countries.

HOW WILL MY PRIVACY BE PROTECTED?

Your privacy is one of the top priorities in this research project. You and your institution will be identified in the research by pseudonyms. Therefore, the general public will not be able to know that you have participated in this research.

However, I can only maintain limited confidentiality of your participation within your own institution, as you could possibly be identified by your colleagues or supervisor(s) as one of the participants in my research. That being said, the fact that my project aims to involve two teacher participants in your university, it will be difficult for your colleagues or supervisor(s) to know which data or even direct quote belongs to you.

All the data collected from you will be stored on password-protected cloud storage, and the transcriptions in hard copy will be in a locked cabinet in WQ Building of AUT city campus.

WHAT ARE THE COSTS OF PARTICIPATING IN THIS RESEARCH?

The research will involve approximately 3 hours of your time for the whole data collection period; that includes:

- 1) approximately 35 to 40 minutes for a semi-structured interview,
- 2) two approximately 30-minute recall interviews following the classroom observations,
- 3) three 3-to-5-minute voice memos, and
- 4) some time to go through and sign off the transcripts of the interviews and the notes on teaching observations.

WILL I RECEIVE FEEDBACK ON THE RESULTS OF THIS RESEARCH?

Yes. A summary of the research findings will be given to all participants who indicate their interest in the Consent Form. Moreover, any journal articles published will also be forwarded to you.

WHAT DO I DO IF I HAVE CONCERNS ABOUT THIS RESEARCH?

Any concerns regarding the nature of this project should be notified in the first instance to the Project Supervisors, A/Prof. Graeme COUPER, graeme.couper@aut.ac.nz, +64 9 921 9999 ext 6048, and Dr Megan LOURIE, megan.lourie@aut.ac.nz, +64 9 921 9999 ext. 8517.

Concerns regarding the conduct of the research should be notified to the Executive Secretary of AUTC, ethics@aut.ac.nz, +64 9 921 9999 ext 6038.

WHAT OPPORTUNITY DO I HAVE TO CONSIDER THIS INVITATION?

Please let me know if you are willing to participate in the research project by 31 May 2023.

HOW DO I JOIN THE STUDY?

If you wish to join the study, please sign the attached consent form and return it to me by:

- Email: theara.chen@aut.ac.nz
- Telegram Account Name: @THEARACHEA
or scan the QR code:



@THEARACHEA

AUTC approval details

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 10 March 2023.
AUTC Reference number 23/8

APPENDIX G: PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM FOR TEACHERS



PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM FOR TEACHERS

Project title: **Investigating ELT Teachers' Professional Learning in Cambodian Higher Education**
Project Supervisors: **A/Prof. Graeme COUPER and Dr Megan LOURIE**
Researcher: **Theara CHEA**

- ☐ I have read and understood the information provided about this research project in the Information Sheet dated 15 April 2023.
- ☐ I have had an opportunity to ask questions and to have them answered.
- ☐ I understand that by taking part in this research, I will attend a semi-structured interview, have two of my classes observed by the researcher, participate in the recall interviews that follow classroom observations, send three weekly voice memos and share with the researcher relevant teaching related materials as appropriate.
- ☐ I understand that notes will be taken during the interviews and that they will also be audio-taped and transcribed.
- ☐ I understand that notes will be taken during both classroom observations and will be used for discussion during the recall interviews, which will also be audio-taped and transcribed.
- ☐ I understand that all the weekly voice memos that I will send to the researcher on Telegram will be treated as one of the data sources for the research.
- ☐ I understand that taking part in this study is voluntary (my choice) and that I may withdraw from the study at any time without being disadvantaged in any way.
- ☐ I understand that if I withdraw from the study then I will be offered the choice between having any data that is identifiable as belonging to me removed or allowing it to continue to be used. However, following commencement of data analysis, removal of my data may not be possible.
- ☐ I agree to take part in this research.
- ☐ I wish to receive a summary of the research findings (please tick one): ☐ Yes ☐ No

Participant's signature: 

Participant's name: 

Participant's Contact Details (if appropriate):

Date:

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 10 March 2023.

AUTEC Reference number 23/8

Note: The Participant should retain a copy of this form.



PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM FOR TEACHERS

Project title: **Investigating ELT Teachers' Professional Learning in Cambodian Higher Education**
Project Supervisors: **A/Prof. Graeme COUPER and Dr Megan LOURIE**
Researcher: **Theara CHEA**

- ☐ I have read and understood the information provided about this research project in the Information Sheet dated 15 April 2023.
- ☐ I have had an opportunity to ask questions and to have them answered.
- ☐ I understand that by taking part in this research, I will attend a semi-structured interview, have two of my classes observed by the researcher, participate in the recall interviews that follow classroom observations, send three weekly voice memos and share with the researcher relevant teaching related materials as appropriate.
- ☐ I understand that notes will be taken during the interviews and that they will also be audio-taped and transcribed.
- ☐ I understand that notes will be taken during both classroom observations and will be used for discussion during the recall interviews, which will also be audio-taped and transcribed.
- ☐ I understand that all the weekly voice memos that I will send to the researcher on Telegram will be treated as one of the data sources for the research.
- ☐ I understand that taking part in this study is voluntary (my choice) and that I may withdraw from the study at any time without being disadvantaged in any way.
- ☐ I understand that if I withdraw from the study then I will be offered the choice between having any data that is identifiable as belonging to me removed or allowing it to continue to be used. However, following commencement of data analysis, removal of my data may not be possible.
- ☐ I agree to take part in this research.
- ☐ I wish to receive a summary of the research findings (please tick one): ☐ Yes ☐ No

Participant's signature: _____

Participant's name: _____

Participant's Contact Details (if appropriate): _____

Date: _____

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 10 March 2023.
AUTEC Reference number 23/8

Note: The Participant should retain a copy of this form.



AUT

TE WĀNANGA AROMU
O TĀMARI MĀKAU RAU

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM FOR TEACHERS

Project title: **Investigating ELT Teachers' Professional Learning in Cambodian Higher Education**
Project Supervisors: **A/Prof. Graeme COUPER and Dr Megan LOURIE**
Researcher: **Theara CHEA**

- ☐ I have read and understood the information provided about this research project in the Information Sheet dated 15 April 2023.
- ☐ I have had an opportunity to ask questions and to have them answered.
- ☐ I understand that by taking part in this research, I will attend a semi-structured interview, have two of my classes observed by the researcher, participate in the recall interviews that follow classroom observations, send three weekly voice memos and share with the researcher relevant teaching related materials as appropriate.
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Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 10 March 2023.

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APPENDIX H: INDICATIVE QUESTIONS FOR THE SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS WITH TEACHER PARTICIPANTS



APPENDIX H: INDICATIVE QUESTIONS FOR THE SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS WITH TEACHER PARTICIPANTS

Project title: **Investigating ELT Teachers' Professional Learning Practice in Cambodian Higher Education**

Project Supervisors: **A/Prof. Graeme COUPER and Dr Megan LOURIE**

Researcher: **Theara CHEA**

Time of interview: Date:/...../..... Place:

Interviewee:

Indicative questions:

1. The state of TPL amongst English language teachers in public and private Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in Cambodia.
 - a. What does "teacher professional learning" mean to you?
 - b. Can you tell me about TPL you have done? What was good or not so good about it?
 - c. What drives professional learning? Why do you engage with professional learning?
 - d. Are you aware of any policies regarding teachers' professional learning that are being implemented in your institution?
2. How can TPL be fostered in the Cambodian ELT context?
 - a. Do you think TPL helps you in your professional growth?
 - b. In what way does your work place influence your professional learning and classroom practice?
 - c. What do you think you need to make your professional learning more beneficial for your professional growth?
 - d. What would hamper your intention to engage with professional learning?
3. Can you identify a skill or technique that you have recently learned specifically to deal with a challenge in your classroom or improve your teaching practice? Please describe that learning process in detail.
4. What strategies have you adopted when engaging in TPL?
5. What comments and feedback you would like to make about better facilitating your professional learning?

When exploring effective strategies and approaches to teachers' professional learning, here are some questions that you can ask your participants:

1. What types of professional development have been most effective for you in the past?
2. How do you prefer to learn and what types of learning experiences have been most impactful for you?
3. What challenges have you faced in your professional development and how have you overcome them?
4. What do you think are the most important skills and knowledge that teachers should develop through professional learning?
5. What types of support do you need in order to apply what you learn in professional development to your classroom practice?
6. How do you measure the impact of professional development on your teaching practice?
7. How can schools and districts best support teachers in their professional learning?
8. What resources and tools do you find most useful for your professional learning?
9. How can professional learning be designed to better meet the needs of teachers with different levels of experience and expertise?
10. How can professional learning be integrated into the daily work of teachers in order to maximize its impact?

When exploring participants' perceptions of effective strategies and approaches to teachers' professional learning, here are some interview questions that you can ask:

1. What do you believe are the most effective strategies and approaches for teachers' professional learning?
2. How do you think professional learning can support teachers in improving their teaching practices and student outcomes?
3. What barriers do you think exist for teachers' professional learning and how can they be addressed?
4. How do you think technology can be used to support teachers' professional learning?
5. What role do you think collaboration and professional learning communities play in effective professional learning?
6. How do you think professional learning can be differentiated to meet the needs of different teachers?
7. What types of professional learning experiences do you think are most impactful for teachers?
8. How do you think professional learning can be aligned with school or district goals?
9. How do you think professional learning can be sustained over time to have a lasting impact on teachers' practices?
10. What examples have you seen of effective professional learning in action, and what made them successful?



OBSERVATION PROTOCOL

Project title: **Investigating ELT Teachers' Professional Learning Practice in Cambodian Higher Education**

Project Supervisors: **A/Prof. Graeme COUPER and Dr Megan LOURIE**

Researcher: **Theara CHEA**

After the initial semi-structured interview, the researcher and the participant will discuss the possibility of classroom observations. If the participant agrees to go ahead details of the observation will be negotiated.

At the beginning of the first lesson, the teacher participant will introduce me as the researcher to the class. I will then explain the purpose of my study which is to identify themes on the relationship between teachers' professional learning and classroom practice. I will also mention that there will be no focus on students' learning, and that the participants' teaching practices will not be evaluated.

As my research does not focus on students' learning and the classroom observation will not be audio- or video-recorded, I will not ask for consent from the students. It is a common practice for a classroom in Cambodia to be observed by a member of the management team or one of the teacher's colleagues, and the students at the schools tend not to be asked for their permission. However, I will request the teacher to inform his/her students that his/her class will be observed on a specific time and date.

During the observation, I will be watching and taking notes to be used as prompts for recall interviews. I will be writing about what the teacher does and I will not mention any names which might be used during the lesson.

After the observed lesson, a time for a stimulated-recall interview about the lesson will be confirmed.

Classroom observation field note

Date: ☐ 1st Observation ☐ 2nd Observation

Name: School:

Classroom activity	Descriptive notes	Reflective notes

Comments:





VOICE MEMO PROTOCOL

Project title: **Investigating ELT Teachers' Professional Learning Practice in Cambodian Higher Education**

Project Supervisors: **A/Prof. Graeme COUPER and Dr Megan LOURIE**

Researcher: **Theara CHEA**

The primary researcher will send the following prompts on Telegram:

Week	Prompts
1 st week	As far as you can remember, please identify and describe a professional learning activity (or activities) that you have engaged with <i>throughout your professional life</i>. Also think about your teaching in the last week and tell me if and how it was influenced by your professional learning. Please consider the following points: - Can you identify a skill or technique that you have recently learned specifically to deal with a challenge in your classroom or improve your teaching practice? Please describe that learning process in detail. - What you do that you believe will enhance your classroom practice in the short and long term. - What materials (e.g., pen and paper, marker and white board, and online materials) you used when learning. - How you learned (e.g., thinking it in your head, talking to your peers, google your questions, or watch YouTube videos) - What makes you want/need to learn. - Any support from your school/department that you need for that specific learning activity. What was it? did you get it? - What you would need to make that professional learning experience more enjoyable and useful for your professional growth. - Please feel free to say that you have not learned or don't remember learning anything related your teaching. - If you consciously decided that you did not need to learn, please let me know the reasons behind that decision.
2 nd and 3 rd weeks	Please identify and describe a professional learning activity (or activities) that you have engaged with <i>over the week</i>. Please consider the following points: - Can you identify a skill or technique that you have recently learned specifically to deal with a challenge in your classroom or improve your teaching practice? Please describe that learning process in detail. - What you did that you believe will enhance your classroom practice in the short and long term. - What materials (e.g., pen and paper, marker and white board, and online materials) you used when learning. - How you learned (e.g., thinking it in your head, talking to your peers, google your questions, or watch YouTube videos) - What makes you want/need to learn. - Any support from your school/department that you need for that specific learning activity. What was it? did you get it? - What you would need to make that professional learning experience more enjoyable and useful for your professional growth.

	h. Please feel free to say that you have not learned or don't remember learning anything related your teaching. If you consciously decided that you did not need to learn, please let me know the reasons behind that decision.
--	--

05/12/2023, 10:57

Mail - Theara Chea - Outlook

Re: Request for Review: Interview Data Interpretation for my Research Project

[REDACTED]

Thu 19/10/2023 2:05 AM

To: Theara Chea <theara.chea@aut.ac.nz>

Dear Mr Chea Theara;

It is a great interpretation. Sure, it reflects most of my ideas in the interview.

If you need any more help, you are welcome.

Warm regards

[REDACTED]

On Wed, Oct 18, 2023, 12:37 PM Theara Chea <theara.chea@aut.ac.nz> wrote:

Dear [REDACTED]

Please see the forwarded email below.

Please let me know if you have issues opening any attachments.

Regards,
Theara

From: Theara Chea <theara.chea@aut.ac.nz>

Sent: Monday, October 2, 2023 5:07 PM

To: [REDACTED]

Cc: Graeme Couper <graeme.couper@aut.ac.nz>; Megan Lourie <megan.lourie@aut.ac.nz>

Subject: Request for Review: Interview Data Interpretation for my Research Project

Dear [REDACTED]

First and foremost, I would like to express my sincere gratitude once again for your valuable time and enthusiasm in participating in my research project. I want to emphasise that your involvement will not only contribute to my PhD qualification but also advance knowledge within the field of teacher professional learning research.

As you may recall, I am currently in the process of analysing the interview data. Before commencing this analysis, it is crucial to have the interview data interpreted in English, and I have done so diligently. However, in order to uphold the utmost accuracy in preserving your message and insights, I am reaching out to kindly request your assistance in reviewing the interpretation. I would greatly appreciate it if you could notify me of any sections where you believe my interpretation may not accurately reflect your original intention.

In this email, I have attached both the recording of our interview and my interpretation in a Word document. Please note that I did not provide a literal word-for-word translation and transcription from Khmer into English. Instead, I interpreted what I understood you to mean in English.

Thank you once again for your valuable contribution to my research. Your feedback is highly appreciated.

05/12/2023, 10:57

Mail - Theara Ches - Outlook

Best regards,
Theara

Re: Fw: Request for Review: Interview Data Interpretation for my Research Project

[REDACTED]
Wed 4/10/2023 2:48 PM

To: Theara Chea <theara.chea@aut.ac.nz>

Hello Sir,

I would like to inform you that I have no problem with the data interpretation. It is accurate to my intention.

Best regards,
[REDACTED]

On Mon, Oct 2, 2023 at 9:54 AM Theara Chea <theara.chea@aut.ac.nz> wrote:

Dear [REDACTED]

First and foremost, I would like to express my sincere gratitude once again for your valuable time and enthusiasm in participating in my research project. I want to emphasise that your involvement will not only contribute to my PhD qualification but also advance knowledge within the field of teacher professional learning research.

As you may recall, I am currently in the process of analysing the interview data. Before commencing this analysis, it is crucial to have the interview data interpreted in English, and I have done it so diligently. However, in order to uphold the utmost accuracy in preserving your message and insights, I am reaching out to kindly request your assistance in reviewing the interpretation. I would greatly appreciate it if you could notify me of any sections where you believe my interpretation may not accurately reflect your original intention.

In this email, I have attached both the recording of our interview and my interpretation in a Word document. Please note that I did not provide a literal word-for-word translation and transcription from Khmer into English. Instead, I interpreted what I understood you to mean in English.

Thank you once again for your valuable contribution to my research. Your feedback is highly appreciated.

Best regards,
Theara

RE: Request for Review: Interview Data Interpretation for my Research Project

[REDACTED]
Tue 10/10/2023 4:36 PM

To: Theara Chea <theara.chea@aut.ac.nz>

Dear Theara,

Thank you very much for involving me in part of your study, through which I could voice my concerns over what should be and what really is in the very nature of my working environment.

I have attentively read your translation and would confirm that your translation does reflect what has been discussed during the interview.

Regards,

[REDACTED]

From: Theara Chea <theara.chea@aut.ac.nz>

Sent: Tuesday, October 10, 2023 9:52 AM

To: [REDACTED]

Subject: Fw: Request for Review: Interview Data Interpretation for my Research Project

Dear [REDACTED]

Now that it has been a challenge to send you the attachment of the audio file, I have uploaded onto cloud and share the link with you as follow:

[REDACTED]

For the rest of the email content, please see below.

Regards,

Theara

From: Theara Chea

Sent: Wednesday, 4 October 2023 7:38 pm

To: [REDACTED]

Cc: Graeme Couper <graeme.couper@aut.ac.nz>; Megan Lourie <megan.lourie@aut.ac.nz>

Subject: Request for Review: Interview Data Interpretation for my Research Project

Dear [REDACTED]

First and foremost, I would like to express my sincere gratitude once again for your valuable time and enthusiasm in participating in my research project. I want to emphasise that your involvement will not only contribute to my PhD qualification but also advance knowledge within the field of teacher professional learning research.

As you may recall, I am currently in the process of analysing the interview data. Before commencing this analysis, it is crucial to have the interview data interpreted in English, and I have done so diligently. However, in order to uphold the utmost accuracy in preserving your message and insights, I am reaching out to kindly request your assistance in reviewing the interpretation. I would greatly appreciate it if you could notify me of any sections where you believe my interpretation may not accurately reflect your original intention.

05/12/2023, 10:57

Mail - Theara Chea - Outlook

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Thank you once again for your valuable contribution to my research. Your feedback is highly appreciated.

Best regards,
Theara

Re: Fw: Request for Review: Interview Data Interpretation for my Research Project

Wed 18/10/2023 2:01 PM

To: Theara Chea <theara.chea@aut.ac.nz>

Dear Mr. Theara,

I have already reviewed the interpretation and the interpretation did accurately reflect what I meant. So, please go ahead and use it.

Warm regards,

[Redacted Signature]

On Wed, Oct 18, 2023 at 7:53 AM Theara Chea <theara.chea@aut.ac.nz> wrote:

Dear [Redacted],

Please see the email below.

Regards,
Theara

From: Theara Chea

Sent: Monday, 2 October 2023 3:51 pm

To: [Redacted]

Cc: Megan Lourie <megan.lourie@aut.ac.nz>; Graeme Couper <graeme.couper@aut.ac.nz>

Subject: Request for Review: Interview Data Interpretation for my Research Project

Dear [Redacted],

First and foremost, I would like to express my sincere gratitude once again for your valuable time and enthusiasm in participating in my research project. I want to emphasise that your involvement will not only contribute to my PhD qualification but also advance knowledge within the field of teacher professional learning research.

As you may recall, I am currently in the process of analysing the interview data. Before commencing this analysis, it is crucial to have the interview data interpreted in English, and I have done so diligently. However, in order to uphold the utmost accuracy in preserving your message and insights, I am reaching out to kindly request your assistance in reviewing the interpretation. I would greatly appreciate it if you could notify me of any sections where you believe my interpretation may not accurately reflect your original intention.

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Thank you once again for your valuable contribution to my research. Your feedback is highly appreciated.

Best regards,
Theara

Re: Request for Review: Interview Data Interpretation for my Research Project
Thu 5/10/2023 1:05 PMTo: Theara Chea <theara.chea@aut.ac.nz>

Dear Mr. Theara,

I have read through the interview transcripts and I agree that they were the ideas I mentioned in the interview.

It was a great opportunity to be involved in your research to contribute my knowledge in this field.

Regards,
On Mon, Oct 2, 2023 at 11:10 AM Theara Chea <theara.chea@aut.ac.nz> wrote:Dear 

First and foremost, I would like to express my sincere gratitude once again for your valuable time and enthusiasm in participating in my research project. I want to emphasise that your involvement will not only contribute to my PhD qualification but also advance knowledge within the field of teacher professional learning research.

As you may recall, I am currently in the process of analysing the interview data. Before commencing this analysis, it is crucial to have the interview data interpreted in English, and I have done so diligently. However, in order to uphold the utmost accuracy in preserving your message and insights, I am reaching out to kindly request your assistance in reviewing the interpretation. I would greatly appreciate it if you could notify me of any sections where you believe my interpretation may not accurately reflect your original intention.

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