A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY ON ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING OF VISUALLY IMPAIRED STUDENTS IN THAILAND

BY

MISS BUARATTANA ATTACHOO

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING
LANGUAGE INSTITUTE
THAMMASAT UNIVERSITY
ACADEMIC YEAR 2020
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ABSTRACT

Under the light of equality in education, visually impaired students (VIS) have the full right to improve their quality of life through educational achievement. Accordingly, policies and regulations in Thailand encourage the implementation of inclusive education and support all types of students, including students with visual impairment. This means that there is also the requirement for the VIS to complete the compulsory educational scheme, including studying English language in particular educational levels. However, a mismatch between the national goals of the support policies and the practical aspects of ELL of the VIS exists in Thailand. Moreover, a number of difficulties affecting the VIS as English language learners remain uninvestigated.

Hence, the overarching goal of the study was to provide the research-based document as evidence of authentic situations for the development in ELL of the VIS in the inclusive classroom. To achieve the main goal, the objectives of the study were to explore the essence and meaning of English language learning (ELL) in inclusive classrooms derived from the perceptions of the visually impaired students (VIS), the English instructors, and the support staff.

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THAMMASAT UNIVERSITY
LANGUAGE INSTITUTE

DISSERTATION

BY

MISS BUARATTANA ATTACHOO

ENTITLED

A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY ON ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING OF VISUALLY IMPAIRED STUDENTS IN THAILAND

was approved as partial fulfillment of the requirements for
the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (English Language Teaching)

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To elicit the experiences from the participants, the research was conducted under the phenomenological methodology. The findings were drawn from nine students with visual impairment studying in an inclusive classroom setting; nine English instructors and eight support staff volunteered from four schools and four universities located in four regions across Thailand. The data obtained from in-depth interviews and classroom observations were grouped into units of meaning or themes and elaborated in textual descriptions before being synthesized into structural descriptions.

The findings represented the essence of the phenomenological study that while the challenges and difficulties in ELL of the VIS emerged in the inclusive classroom, there were also many positive aspects of ELL in an inclusive setting. Particularly, the results showed that there were incompatibilities between ELL in the inclusive classroom and the specific characteristic of the VIS as English language learners. Therefore, the notions in ELL of the VIS ranging from the accommodations in the inclusive classroom to the English language curriculum wait to be appropriately reconsidered and readjusted.

Keywords: English Language Learning, Inclusive Classroom, Visually Impaired Students, Phenomenological Study

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Miss Buarattana Attachoo

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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

Among people with disabilities, people with visual impairment are considered one of the major types among this special group. Generally, people may think that the visually impaired people can live their lives regularly if they are adequately supported (Praat & Keil, 2003). However, the visually impaired students, who in this study are referred to as the VIS, have been neglected in terms of being the informants themselves to express their voices towards English language learning, which in this study is referred to as ELL. Although this study has found ELL related concerns by VIS, some of the barriers and obstacles were previously revealed by educators or research results (Yimsara, 2001; Chantornrat, 1996; and Chamnan, 2006). Apart from the educational aspects, most of the research areas related to various types of problems involving their living accommodation have been broadly investigated such as assistive technology, gadgets to facilitate their communication, and instruments to support their everyday lives. Nonetheless, because the VIS are prevalent in educational settings, it is best to listen to them as the living resources to convey information beneficial to the development of ELL. Hence, attention should be paid to the VIS by listening to perspectives they want to share and the meaning enclosed relating to their lived experience (Elloitt, 2005).

1.1 Background of the Study

In Thailand, more than 191,965 people are found as the blind and visually impaired people which is equal to almost 10 percent of the total amount of people with disabilities or ranked as the third place of the disabled population (Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities, 2020). This number was calculated from the estimation of people with visual impairment, which is approximately one percent of the whole population in each developing country (World Health Organization, 2018). This number is different from the number of people with visual impairment who officially hold the ‘disability identity card’ and have been lawfully protected

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from any discrimination and able to employ their rights and facilities provided by the government. This situation happened due to the fact that most of the visually impaired people failed to register themselves as people with disabilities under the national regulations of Thailand. Additionally, according to the report in 2016 revealed by the TAB, only around 20 percent of the visually impaired people were found to have access to education and approximately 30 percent are able to earn their living independently (TAB, 2016). Later, in 2020, approximately 30 percent of people with visual impairment could access the educational system with less than 5 percent who could reach the opportunity to work (Wongsuwan, 2020). Although the number of students with visual impairment who had access to education might increase, the percentages were not significantly different than in earlier decades.

The situation regarding the prevalence of people with visual impairment and barriers towards education opportunities has not appeared only in Thailand. Globally, the statistical information updated by the WHO showed that the number of people with blindness or low vision increased by not less than 2.2 billion people with more than one billion of the visually impaired people unidentified (WHO, 2021). While the number of people with disabilities has been expanding, the living quality improvement among this group of people has become a more concerning issue.

The barriers that impede the living quality of the blind and visually impaired population, including other disabled people, have been reported in the World Report on Disability since 2011. The obstacles mainly comprise the lack of supporting concrete policies and standards, negative attitudes and prejudices, inadequate funding, lack of funding, lack of accessibility, and sometimes being excluded from social interaction. These disabling obstacles contribute negative effects to the lives of people with disabilities, namely, poorer health conditions and higher rates of poverty. Importantly, students with visual impairment might possibly encounter lower levels of achievement in their education (WHO, 2021). To cope with the issues as such, educational equality has also been prioritized as one of the key factors to improve the living quality of individuals with disabilities.

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1.1.1 Equality and Challenges in Education of the Visually Impaired Students

As mentioned, educational equality is one of the elements which can help improve the living standard of people with disabilities. In Thailand, the educational supports were provided to the students with disabilities as regulated in the National Education Act. The Act concretely emphasizes the rights in education for the disabled students; they should equally have the right to receive all levels of education (National Education Act A.D. 1999). Additionally, the term 'student(s)' appearing in every Thai educational regulation refers to all type of learners, including the VIS. In other words, all children regardless of their physical and mental differences have full rights to gain educational and professional developments under the equality in educational policies. Therefore, the educational equality of people with visual impairment and other disabilities exists through the policies and regulations for all types of students.

Moreover, according to the National Education Act of 1999, all of Thai curriculum is regulated under the light of equipping needed factors in educational development. The regulations stated that all education levels 'shall aim at human development with desirable balance regarding knowledge, critical thinking, capability, virtue and social responsibility'. Especially in higher education, the curricula 'shall emphasize academic development, with priority given to higher professions and research for development of the bodies of knowledge and society'. These regulations also emphasize the supporting ideas of educational equality and the cultivation of professional development thorough the curriculum (National Education Act A.D. 1999). Furthermore, the Office of National Education Commission (ONEC) highlighted that 'in comparison to ordinary students, the government provides larger subsidies for disadvantaged students in welfare education schools; students from low-income families; and students with disabilities in schools for the disabled' (ONEC, 2003). Thus, all levels of education in Thailand are bound to support students with disabilities. For instance, the School for the Blind in Bangkok provides special education for the particular group of VIS (Foundation for the Blind in Thailand) and Ratchasuda College, Mahidol University, 'is a college of higher education for disabled adults in Thailand, providing education and academic services through

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research to develop knowledge concerning maximization in the potential for life for persons with disabilities based on equality cooperation' (Ratchasuda College). One of the most obvious evidences of a remarkable supportive aspect emerges through the establishment of Disabled Students Services (DSS) located in universities throughout Thailand. The DSS functions as the center providing services to facilitate students with disabilities, including the VIS, in terms of General Information, Admission Applications, Individual Planning, Academic Accommodations, Test Accommodations, Accessible Classrooms, Registration Priority, Accessible Libraries, and Scholarship (Kachondham, 2010). Hence, under these educational supports, the VIS are ensured by the policies that they are not be left behind and are considered as a vital part of the education system.

The regulations written to support education for students with disabilities in Thailand were influenced by international regulations, in particular, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD). The UNCRPD expresses the regulations concerning the rights of people with disabilities as the ultimate goal for member state parties across the world. The intentions of the Convention were initially expressed by addressing awareness on the rights and dignity of people with disabilities, as well as the equality of education, which emphasizes the right to access education at all levels: primary, secondary and post-secondary (United Nations, 2006) Thailand, as a member state of the Convention, was required to ratify the regulations in order to express the intention to be one of the state parties of the CRPD in 2010. The ratification to the UNCRPD stimulated the Thai government to strengthen supports in terms of regulations and policy, which pay more attention to building up the equality for people with disabilities in various aspects including removing unjust discrimination and advocating effective measures to provide opportunities for people with disabilities (Convention and Optional Protocol Signatures and Ratifications, 2010)

These regulations signal the concerns and caring that humanity has built up towards the awareness of the existence of the group of people with disabilities globally, including people with visual impairment who are included under the protection and non-discrimination principles in every aspect written in the regulations. Interestingly, the population of the VIS studying in education institutes has been

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found to be low compared to the whole population although the regulations were clear. One of the major reasons was explained by the Thailand Association for the Blind (TAB, 2015) that the education of the VIS is supposed to be developed in different way from mainstream education leading to difficulties in various aspects when they enter into the mainstream schools.

1.1.2 English Language Learning in Thailand

English is obviously embodied as a mandatory language in many countries' curricular due to its status as one of the official languages globally. Consequently, a number of countries shape their educational objectives to equip their citizen with ELL and have expertise in using English. Thailand is fully aware that English has been widely perceived as the main international language for communication to the outside world (Rappa & Wee 2006; Baker 2012). The educational policy included English as one of the indispensable languages for its own citizens to learn and utilize with the expectation of a high proficiency level. In accordance with the awareness of the importance of English, the Thai National Education Act of B.E. 2542 (1992) started requiring English as one of the compulsory subjects for students.

It is obvious that English appears as the vital part of the Thai national curricular. Nonetheless, despite the long establishment of English in Thailand, there have been a number of evidences showing poor levels in English proficiency compared with international and national competencies (Education First English Proficiency Index, 2014). That is, the level of English proficiency of Thai students does not appear as expected. As mentioned by Mr. Surin Pitsuwan, former ASEAN secretary-general, commenting on the major concern of Thai students' English proficiency: "Thai youths are lagging behind in this increasingly important tool of communication in ASEAN" (The Nation, 2013). Consequently, apart from the struggles to achieve equal opportunities in education, the VIS are unavoidably affected by one of the flaws appearing in the education system in Thailand recognized as the issue of English Language Learning (ELL).

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1.1.3 English Language Learning of the Visually Impaired Students in Thailand

As mentioned earlier, educational supports should be equally provided to the disabled, this means that the VIS are required to complete the compulsory educational system requirements including studying English. Consequently, similar to other sighted students, the VIS are urged to improve learning skills in ELL in order to obtain information either online or on paper leading to the achievement of their personal goals and to expand their occupational opportunities. Through the aspect of the VIS, the lack of assistive technology is not the only problem related to enhancing English language competency; the major obstacles and challenges in learning English by the VIS covers many aspects including obstacles from their impairment, external problems such as information accessibility and the shortage of English language learning strategies (Buntan, 1998). These elements obstruct the VIS to gain appropriate ELL and could limit the VIS to pursue higher education levels (Buntan, 1998).

Generally, the VIS unavoidably learn their English in schools and universities under the inclusive education. Although studying in the inclusive classroom seems to be beneficial to the VIS under the concept of equality of the Thai national education system, their visual limitation impacts on their educational pathway in various dimensions. The major effects of the visual impairment of the students convey challenges towards their English language learning due to the internal and external factors. For the internal factors, the personal characteristics of the learners also influence the process of foreign language learning (Dorneyei, 2009; Lightbrown & Spada, 2006). According to such explanation, the limited visual ability among these students also deviated their literacy in a negative direction (Conroy, 2005). Therefore, challenges in their ELL emerged during their education in school and university levels. That is, the challenges in ELL could be caused by the impairments of the students and can be considered as the internal factors.

However, there was another claim arguing that the blindness itself does not block the VIS's second language acquisition if the students were supported well enough (Praat & Keil, 2003). Instead, the traditional method of teaching and lack of material which prevents them from being successful in English learning revealed

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the external challenges. These challenges emerged through the external factors relating to the educational environment during the VIS's English learning, such as classrooms, teaching aids, learning materials, and academic-related facilities. For example, according to the information revealed by the VIS that were taught by the researcher, the students mentioned that when the VIS study inclusively with the sighted students, seats should be arranged at the front for the visual impaired students and be convenient for group work with their friends' assistance, and it would be better if the soft copy of textbooks would be handed to them in advance. (Visual Impaired Students, personal communication, May, 2017).

Moreover, the challenges also emerged through broad ranges of educational research aiming to discover the solutions and benefits of educational supports for all the VIS, instructors, and administrators. The studies involving the VIS's education mainly investigated the concept of inclusive classroom (Chumnan, 2006), classroom setting, assistive technology in teaching: braille text, audio book, electronic reader, and media usage (Lersilp et al., 2015). Therefore, although the evidences of educational support have obviously appeared across Thailand, these difficulties broadly exist in terms of the ELL of the VIS in most educational areas.

The earlier discussion on broad ranges of educational support and the challenges which emerged through the ELL of the students with visual impairment reflected the mismatch between the objectives and functions of the support policies and the concerning issues towards ELL among the VIS. However, it has been widely admitted that English proficiency is one of the key prerequisite factors to improve career opportunities, as the goal of educational development is to ensure that education conveys professional achievement for all levels of students. That is, the critical situation woke up related parties to put more practical policy on the development of English learning expanding to all educational levels in order to emphasize all students to use English effectively to broaden career opportunities (Baker, 2012). Consequently, in order to reduce the mismatch, information in terms of lived experiences shared by the VIS should be told directly from the VIS, as well as the instructors, support staff, and the VIS's parents, as the groups involved in the challenges towards ELL of the VIS. The in-depth information obtained by using phenomenological study, one of the qualitative research methodologies, is able to

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convey insightful and deep descriptions as comprehensible information of the situation that might be overlooked.

1.1.4 Background of the Researcher

To strengthen the evidence of the existence of challenges towards ELL of the VIS, the mismatch is reaffirmed through my own experiences. That is, I found my experience relevant to the context and problems of the study. Hence, it is pertinent to share my background as one of the reasons to conduct this research as the following. I began my English teacher life in Kasetsart University Laboratory School (KUS) in 2013. Teaching in KUS allowed me to be familiar with students with different types of disabilities such as physical disabilities and learning disabilities. I unknowingly started being surrounded with the atmosphere of inclusive school since then. After have been teaching for one year, I decided to further my education with the master degree in teaching English as a foreign Language (TEFL). During the second year of the TEFL course, my thesis was inspired by a group of students with learning disabilities (LD), who also learnt English with their non-disabled peers in the same classroom. This led me to draw my objective for the thesis as aiming to explore how the students with learning disabilities learnt English vocabulary utilizing a test, a vocabulary learning strategies questionnaire and interviews. The research finding surprised me that most of the LD students were fully aware of the importance of English and put efforts on encouraging themselves to employ vocabulary learning strategies to improve their vocabulary knowledge although they had to overcome the difficulties due to their conditions of learning disabilities. The opportunity to contact directly with the LD students has opened my view on disabled students because the challenges in learning English of these individuals did not prevent their learning; instead, these difficulties merely conveyed the differences and uniqueness on how they learn English.

The first encounter with visually impaired students (VIS) was when I started teaching English as a part-time lecturer in Thammasat University during the second year of my PhD in English Language Teaching (ELT). One semester, I was assigned to teach an English foundation course for the first-year undergraduate students provided by the Language Institute of the university. In class, there were two VIS: one was a totally blind student and the other was a low vision student. Both of

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the students always came to the class together and sat next to each other in the front of the classroom. The blind student sometimes brought his braille text to the lecture table, but he opened the text only a few times at the beginning of the course and stopped bringing the text with him for the rest of the course. Differently, the low vision student was fully alert and tried to participate through the learning sessions. Eventually, a short discussion was arranged after the class to ask them about their perceptions on learning English, how they learned, and difficulties that obstructed or demotivated their learning English.

Similar to the LD students, they both admitted that they knew English was necessary for their lives and being good at English could expand their education and occupation opportunities. However, they mentioned that the experiences of their English learning were complicated and there were different factors for each VIS due to different levels of impairment and education background. Their answers drew massive attention on such various factors that affected their English learning experiences. Consequently, I learned that the elements of English learning of the VIS may not be merely learning material or assistive devices, but their lived experience became a factor directly influencing their English learning. In addition to the VIS, I had a chance to have discussions with the staff and lecturers who had experiences related to teaching English to the VIS. This expanded my attention on experiences of the VIS to the stakeholders in order to reveal insightful information towards what and how they perceive their experience in English learning.

1.1.5 Problem Statement

As discussed earlier, the concept of equality has always been the prerequisite in education in Thailand. In general, to be equally treated provides positive effects for the VIS to receive the same educational standards; therefore, they are required to pass through the same requirements as the sighted students. However, for those who live their lives with visual deficiencies, they apparently need more support to help them reach par as equal to the non-disabled people. For the students who are walking through their lives with visual impairments, they are strictly bound to be supported, such as by the regulation written in ONEC that education for the disabled should be provided free of charge at birth or at first diagnosis. Additionally, not only financial benefits are given, the support also includes the right to access

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facilities, services and other forms of education aid in accordance with national regulations (ONEC, 2001). Thus, education of the VIS seems smooth and full of good support under the enforcement of the laws. Nonetheless, when it comes to English proficiency, which plays a role as the tool to expand their future opportunities, it has not been easy for those who are visually impaired to reach the same proficiency level as the sighted students, and even harder to be more mastered than the sighted ones. According to the situation discussed, a major concern of this study are the obstacles preventing achievement of the ELL under the educational equality policy. The barriers result from the mismatch between the expectation of the way ELL should be and the VIS's actual experiences towards the promotion of ELL. Hence, the great amount of difficulties will be deliberately explained to depict problems of the situation in this study.

Along their educational track, there is the fact that whether taking the test to further their education levels, or spending their educational lives in educational institutes; it is the requirement for the VIS to study English. To survive through the transitional periods, challenges in both academic issues and any other non-academic aspects can emerge. The challenges can appear from the internal factors due to the impairments of the students that bring about the difficulties in learning English. The VIS have challenges acquiring knowledge due to the effects of their limited visual system. For example, Warren (1994) and Conroy (2005) summarized that VIS literacy deviate negatively from the normal path. Therefore, their conceptual development will be differed and affect their learning. Internal difficulties are different in relation to the differences of VIS causes and conditions; consequently, the VIS's learning strategies are also applied differently by using cognitive, compensation, memory, social and affective learning strategies.

However, there was a claim stated that difficulties in acquiring second language among the VIS does not only occur from their blindness, pedagogy concerns and lack of appropriate learning materials prevent them from being successful in English learning. Hence, another challenge emerges through English learning of the VIS caused by the external factors relating to the educational environment such as classrooms, teaching aids, learning materials, and academic-related facilities. In addition to the educational environment, support staff or

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instructors may need to be more concerned about English teaching aids by using descriptive instruction expressions such as ‘left’, ‘right’, ‘this’, ‘that’ while they are teaching or communicating with the VIS (Aryanti, 2014). Moreover, studying inclusively with sighted students may reduce their concentration, as they are worried whether they should question lecturers during the class or feel frustrated to ask for assistance from their peers, as they are afraid of interrupting the whole class (Kocyigit & Artar, 2015; Abdullah Coskun, 2013). From the mentioned challenges, it seems obvious that both internal and external difficulties have been discovered throughout their English learning in school level to university level.

Additionally, while the number of VIS students and other physically impaired students are increasing recently, staff and related parties are possibly unable to develop their readiness in terms of ELL for the VIS. As a result of this, more problems were revealed through issues expressed from educators and the students; however, many researches mentioned that little attention is paid on asking what the students actually need, particularly in terms of English language teaching. While the difficulties for the VIS in learning English keep emerging, another question will be whether their experiences have been revealed adequately. Thus, to gain more useful information, the needs of this group of students cannot be neglected. When the difficulties that the VIS encounter along the path of learning English have been elaborated upon, the comprehensive details on how the VIS and other related people perceived their experience involving aspects of ELL will be created as the worthwhile information for the education of the individuals with visual impairment. Additionally, equality in educational development policy can also be achieved, as reaffirmed by the findings in the research entitled Access to and Success in Post-Secondary Education for Students with Visual Impairment and Blindness by Maureen Reed (2005), who writes that suitable facilities for the students help them succeed in their study academically so that the VIS are able to handle difficulties during their academic lives.

From the difficulties that the VIS have to encounter along the path of their ELL, better comprehension on how the VIS and other related people perceived their experience involving aspects of English language learning will be a major concern in this study. Therefore, a number of details are waiting to be

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discovered in order to comprehend deeply towards the challenges and to provide support as much as possible. To draw such in-depth information, the phenomenological research will be used as the research methodology in this study. The phenomenological research allows the researcher to seek for physical and mental experiences of the participants including the mixture of emotions, thoughts, and behavior (Carel, 2010; Creswell, 2007; Henning, et al., 2004). Moreover, the informants are free to give their voices as the powerful tools to play an active role that can make the difference in their own lives. Hence, the essences of the experience will be illustrated throughout the history of their English learning as well as the discovery of voices and reflections through the present situations and history in English learning to allow the audience to understand the difficulties of the VIS. The needed supports should also be discovered to provide information for further adjustment. Importantly, not only the students with visual impairment, but also the groups of people who are involved in the process of English language learning of the VIS are the key players to provide beneficial information to the study.

Therefore, to pursue the national and international goal regarding equality in education, the mismatch between the objective of educational support in policy and the existing challenges including the other concerns for the VIS shall be taken into consideration and explored deeply by gaining the whole picture of information. Additionally, it is important to investigate the problem of the study so as to create the readiness for the solutions to reduce the VIS's English barriers and enhance their proficiency when they spend their educational lives in educational institutes, as well as, to increase their opportunities in professional development.

1.2 Purposes of the Study

Although the VIS are considered as the vital participants in this study, the purpose of this phenomenological study is mainly to explore the perspectives expressed by the VIS, including the instructors, and support staff in terms of experiences of what and how they perceive the English Language Learning (ELL) in inclusive classroom (IC) and to provide the research-based document as the evidence regarding the authentic situations for the development in ELL of the VIS in the

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inclusive classroom. Hence, to obtain these predominant goals, the aims of the study were to further explore, firstly, the learning backgrounds of the ELL of the VIS in order to understand the VIS's history that shaped their ELL perceptions. Secondly, the voices of the VIS concerning learning English in different educational levels will be investigated, followed by the final purpose which is to obtain the reflections emerged through experiences of the instructors, and support staff to obtain various aspects in the VIS's ELL.

1.3 Research Questions

Considering the research problem and for the purposes of this study the research questions are created in order to shape the research procedure and will be applied as the guide to identify the nature of the data to be collected and analyzed (Creswell, 2003) from the ELL in the IC of the VIS as the area of interest, which leads to the needs to obtain insightful information and various dimensions in broad and deep aspects of lived experiences of the particular group of participants who are the VIS. Consequently, the question in this study consists of one major question to cover the greatest number of essences of the experiences. However, in order to gain data for the main research question, sub-questions are crafted to ensure that the different aspects of data will be gathered from all targeted participants.

For the main question, it was formed to pursue the major research objective; thus, the targeted participants will not cover only the VIS, who are categorized as a focal group of participants, but also the groups of people who are able to deliver meaningful information. Such lived experiences include wide ranges of perceptions concerning the VIS's past stories that affects their current experiences, attitudes and feelings such as hardship or happiness, as well as how all participants deal with different situations. Hence, to cover the information as such, three sub-questions were created under the following rationale.

Firstly, the learning background of the VIS showing the lived experiences in the past as the VIS educational lived history was addressed as the first sub-question in this study. Next, the second sub-question was formed to gain in-depth data from the VIS, which is the focal group of participants. In this sub-question, the term 'voices' is

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used to represent the rights to speak freely despite what that might detain the participants not to speak (Alecia Youngblood Jackson, & Mazzei, 2008) and allow each participant to present oneself to be heard (Bogdan & Bliklen, 1998). Moreover, that is, to hear the voices of the VIS, their lived experience and perspectives will be fully and freely constructed and revealed (Britzman, 1989). Lastly, the third sub-question aims to meet the final purposes; thus, the term 'reflections' will be used to elicit the instructors and support staff in order to narrate what was going on and their self-evaluation towards the areas of interests in this research (Koch & Harrington, 1998). Therefore, the second and the third sub-questions were formed under the different emphasis on the focal participants to reveal their voices freely and the other group of participants who deliver the data as the reflections towards the ELL of the VIS. All in all, the main question and the sub-questions are presented as the following:

The main question

What are the lived experiences of the VIS on English language learning in inclusive classroom across regions in Thailand?

The Sub-questions:

1. What is the learning background on English language learning of the VIS in inclusive classroom?
2. What are the voices of the VIS towards English language learning in inclusive classroom?
3. What are the reflections of the instructors and support staff towards English language learning of the VIS in inclusive classroom?

1.4 Scope of the Study

According to the aims of the study which were to present in-depth and meaningful information of the lived experience of each participant, the scope of the study would be shaped by the specific characteristics of the focal group of participants. Consequently, the selection of the VIS would be conducted under the existing number of the VIS studying in the schools and the universities in the 2019 academic year. The differences of each participant's levels of impairment ranging

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from low vision to totally blind and the different levels of English proficiency of the VIS were included.

Additionally, the differences in educational background, levels of English competency, and hometown regions of the VIS were included. Due to the small amount of population, the researcher selected participants regardless of the similarity of educational background of the VIS. Therefore, participants in this study had varied level of English proficiencies and express their view on the basis of their English abilities. However, the researcher will provide details of participants' background in order to ensure that the research finding can be transferable. Under the scope of the study, the findings which conveyed a broad range of the lived experiences emerged through each participant.

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study was conducted to explore the insightful information involving the lived experience towards the ELL of the VIS in the inclusive classroom by using phenomenological methodology. The researcher expects that this study provided major contributions in terms of the beneficial information for the fields of ELL of the special group of learners who are the VIS. Moreover, the contributions in terms of the voices of the VIS and the reflections from the instructors and the support staff were presented comprehensively and meaningfully under the characteristics of phenomenological research. Finally, the findings and implications were effectively delivered as the contributions for the administrative level who hold the authority and are able to create the shift in education equality.

Firstly, the advantages from this study directly contributed to the ELL of the VIS. The actual needs of the VIS were asked for and what had been the student's challenges and positive notions in their ELL. The emerged topics in their background could be taken into consideration to change the preparation for their ELL when the VIS encounter the transitional periods and continue their English study in either inclusive classroom or expanding their educational opportunities in university level. Moreover, this study creates the sense of being a proponent for the VIS as the information provider for their own sake of equality in education (Mokiwa & Phasha,

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2012). In other words, findings from this study mainly focus on the lived experiences describing the hardships and frustrations and sadness towards the particular area directly and this particular group of population (Healey, Bradley, Fuller, & Hall, 2006). Other individuals with visual impairments will be able to explore the experiences of other individuals who share the same physical limitation.

In addition to the VIS, who are the focal participants, benefits from this study also affect other groups of participants consisting of the instructors and the support staff. These groups of participants also expressed their experiences through this channel to those who share the same responsibilities in similar situations. Regarding the situations where English is the compulsory subject and taught in inclusive classrooms with the sighted students, findings in this study do not reveal only the VIS's lived experience, but also other practitioners around them. Hence, the data from this study will be the ready-to-serve information as the basement to build the effective resolutions for the difficulties in the different views from the instructors and the support staff, including effective modifications in ELL, which could be adopted and practiced in ELL.

Finally, this research allows the administrative level to see the structural information of the participants' lived world, which was revealed by the primary data sources to illustrate clearer and more comprehensive information. The authority can utilize these aspects as the thought-provoking concepts to decrease the mismatch as presented in the Problem Statement section. Moreover, the VIS's learning experiences are worth knowing and being implemented to develop their ELL (Mokiwa & Phasha, 2012) so that the administrative level would be able to pursue the fundamental rights, increase equality and improve English education for the VIS.

1.6 Definition of Terms

To establish the common understanding of the terms which appeared in the research questions and thorough this research, eight key terms were defined as follows:

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- **English Language Learning (ELL)**

English Language Learning refers to the processes of learning English of the students with visual impairment in either inclusive or separated classroom by applying any learning methods and strategies; through using learning materials; and with or without assistive tools.

- **Inclusive Classroom**

Inclusive classroom refers to the English classroom where the students with visual impairment study with the sighted students and provides the English lessons identified under the national curriculum.

- **Visually Impaired Student(s) (VIS)**

The VIS refers to the student or groups of students with different levels of visual impairments ranging from low vision condition to totally blind and studying in the schools and the universities with inclusive education.

- **Instructor(s)**

The instructor (s) refers to the school teachers and the lecturers in the universities who teach English in the inclusive classroom.

- **Support Staff**

Support staff refers to the teacher, the resource teacher in the schools, and the officer from the Disability Support Services in the universities. The support staff in this study provide educational and non-educational support to the VIS.

- **Disability Support Services (DSS)**

The Disability Support Services refer to the centers or the offices established in the university with the main functions to support the students with disabilities by providing both academic and non-academic services to all types of the students with disabilities.

- **Lived Experiences**

Lived experience refers to the voices and reflections of participants consciously revealed through both their perceptions and reactions towards the phenomena which were, in this study, the English language learning in the inclusive classroom setting.

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1.7 Organization of the Study

This study is composed of six chapters.

Chapter 1 presents the overview of the study. This chapter includes the background and rationale of the study, the statement of the problem, research objectives, and research questions, scope of the study, the significance of the study, the definition of terms, and the organization of the study.

Chapter 2 discusses works of literature on related topics namely education of the visually impaired students, inclusive education, English language learning of the visually impaired students, and the related studies on the visually impaired students.

Chapter 3 presents the research methodology, setting of the study, details of participants, research instruments, data collection procedures, data analysis methods, trustworthiness, and ethical issues.

Chapter 4 presents research findings from phenomenological interviews and observation in accordance with the research questions.

Chapter 5 displays the discussion and implications based on the findings of the study.

Chapter 6 presents the conclusion of the phenomenological study, reflections from the researcher, limitations which appeared in the study, and the proposed implementations and recommendations for the future practice and research.

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CHAPTER 2
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

According to the problem statement focusing on the mismatch between the broad range of support through educational policies and the challenges that keep emerging of the ELL of the VIS, the research objectives and research questions have been addressed in the previous chapter in order to find the comprehensive answers leading to the fulfillment of ELL of the VIS. In this chapter, related literature from various sources will be explained to create an understanding of participants' characteristics and topics underlying the research problems. Therefore, the researcher will deliberately present the pertinent topics consisting of characteristics of participants and their education background in terms of inclusive education for the disabled, as well as, factors affecting the VIS's learning. Moreover, the history of the education of the VIS in Thailand consisting of the schools for the VIS and their educational pathway will be illustrated for the clearer picture followed by the challenges in education of the VIS which is presented to provide more empirical evidence. Additionally, English language learning of the VIS in relation to their language acquisition and the ELL of the VIS in Thailand is also elaborated upon. Finally, related studies are examined which particularly investigated the students with visual impairment concerning the educational issues including the ELL in international level and in Thailand.

Therefore, the researcher will begin this chapter with explaining the definitions of the visually impaired students, followed by educational aspects focusing on the concept of the inclusive educational system and English language learning of the VIS. The next part will present how the VIS generally learn and pedagogical aspects used in teaching. Another part of the chapter will be language learning strategies having been employed among the VIS. Before the chapter ends, previous studies concerning challenges and difficulties which occurred during learning and teaching English will be presented to allow the audience to see the whole picture of English language learning of the VIS.

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2.1 Visually Impaired Students

Generally, it is understood that a person who loses vision would be considered as a blind person or a person who can partially see. However, more details have been added to the general definition, people with visual impairment have also been defined in two major different aspects including medical and educational definitions. Additionally, in 2017, under the International Classification of Diseases (2006), WHO categorized vision function into 4 broad types including normal vision, moderate vision impairment, severe vision impairment, and blindness. Among various types of visual impairment, the broadest term seems to be the term 'vision impairment', which covers the 'low vision' consisting of moderate and severe vision impairment, together with the term 'blindness'.

2.1.1 Major Causes of Visual Impairment

As has been discovered, the major causes of moderate to severe vision impairment are uncorrected refractive errors (53%), un-operated cataracts (25%), age-related macular degeneration (4%), glaucoma (2%), and diabetic retinopathy (1%). Differently, the major causes of blindness are un-operated cataracts (35%), uncorrected refractive error (21%), and glaucoma (8%). (WHO, 2010, Pascolini & Mariotti, 2010). In addition to the causes gathered by WHO, the causes of blindness have also been described as the consequence of a functional loss of vision resulting in varied degrees of impairment (*Visual Impairments NICHCY Disability Fact Sheet*, n.d.). Age of onset and the particular eye condition vary by individual. Thus, not only the types of impairment, but the starting points to be visually impaired are also different.

2.1.2 Definitions of Persons with Visual Impairment through Medical and Educational Views

According to WHO, the levels of visual impairment have also been classified by using a medical classification which identified that a person is "visually impaired" or with "low-vision" if the individual's vision acuity or vision field from the center is less than 30 degrees or more than the normal vision field of 180 degrees. For a person who is totally "blind" or with "blindness", his/her vision acuity or his/her

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vision field from the center is less than 10 degrees (WHO, 2010). Another broad definition was mentioned by Douglas and McLinden (2005) describing visual impairment as a term shaped from the variety of the loss of visual function. Visual function consists of (1) visual acuity which refers to the ability to resolve detail; (2) accommodation which means the ability to focus; (3) field of vision which refers to the area that can be seen; color vision; and being able to adapt to light (Douglas et al., 2009).

According to the regulations in Thailand, people with disabilities are classified into different types of impairment in terms of sight, hearing of communication, physical function and locomotion, mentality or behavior, and intellectual or learning ability. The definition in terms of physical limitation is that visual impairment is referred to 'an individual whose visual ability improvement is able to see less than 6/18 or lower than 20/70 after using regular eye glasses or an individual who has less than 30 degrees of a visual field (see Social Development and Human Security Office; Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons Act and Ministerial Regulations A.D.1991). Although the definition of visual impairment has been described by using distances, the definition of people who are totally blind might have to rely on the one promulgated by international organizations.

Regarding educational aspects, the definition of the terms 'visual impairment' and 'blindness' were once defined by Carol Castellano as "an impairment in vision which, even after correction, adversely affects educational performance" and leads to special educational needs (Castellano 2005, p. 15). Castellano further introduced other meanings to the visual impairment condition as the person with the requirement to use "alternative skills and tools in place of, or in addition to, eyesight in order to gain information or perform tasks" (2005, p. 16). In other words, visual impairment simply means the conditions of a person who cannot read ordinary printed text due to his/her vision loss without special aids or adaptations. Although the integration between the medical and educational definition has not obviously emerged in the Thai educational context, the broader term as 'person with disability' can be found in the Education Provisions of Persons with Disabilities Act A.D. 2008 by including the educational aspect into the definition. The term 'person with disability' means a person with restriction to perform activities in

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daily life due to the various types of impairment including sight impairment. Moreover, that person is "appurtenant to having special educational needs of assistance to be able to perform activities in daily life, …as per the types and rules prescribed by the Minister of Education" (Education Provisions of Persons with Disabilities Act A.D. 2008).

Regarding the different definitions introduced earlier, the definition should be defined as beneficial for the purpose of evaluation to receiving educational and related services. Hence, there is general agreement that educational services for students with visual impairments should not only be based upon medical or physical assessments but also the functional implications of visual impairment. In this study, the functional implication refers to the educational definition. The use of both clinical and functional definitions is particularly important because it provides a connection between health and educational services (Douglas et al., 2009).

2.1.3 Levels of the Visual Impairment

As mentioned earlier, although the vision of visually impaired students might be corrected, the persons with visual impairment require special needs in education. This situation implies that although the vision of the totally blind is corrected, it is impossible for the blind to see the same object at the same distance as the non-blind can see. This can be explained by using the visual standard represented as the level of acuity ability. Generally, the number consists of two numbers and each number conveys different measurements of acuity ability. For example, for a person with 20/200 vision, the first number shows the visual distance that the visually impaired person is able to see which equals twenty feet whereas the second number represents the distance that the non-blinded can see of the same object equaling two hundred feet.

In Thailand, the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security (MSDHS, 2012) provide levels of visual acuity in two different categories: the low vision and the blind. Firstly, the persons with low vision means the persons who have vision acuity at lower than 6/18 meters or 7/20 feet; however, they have reading ability at 3/60 meters or 20/400 feet. The second type of visual impairment is the blind, which refers to the persons who have vision acuity lower than 3/60 meters or 20/400 feet until they are unable to see any light (MSDHS & Rehabilitation of

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Disabled Persons Act, 1991). The levels of impairments are also defined by the World Health Organization (2018) consisting of mild level, which refers to (1) the persons whose visual acuity is worse than 6/12 meters; (2) moderate level, which refers to the persons whose visual acuity is worse than 6/18 meters, (3) severe level, which refers to the persons whose visual acuity is worse than 6/60 meters; and (4) blindness, which refers to the persons whose visual acuity is worse than 3/60 meters (WHO, 2018). According to both measurements, as they appeared in the Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons Act, 1991, of Thailand and that of WHO, the common visual acuity at 3/60 is the number that determines whether the person with visual impairment is considered as the person with blindness or the person with low vision.

According to the impaired characteristics specified in the mentioned definitions, their classification might affect how they spend their living in different dimensions such as a limited chance to obtain a driving license or play with with their classmates, as non-impaired students can. Regarding educational setting, some visually impaired students may be able to take notes in class and read the printed text with large font size. This leads to perceptions of other people who might think they are not really visual impaired students. Although their capabilities outside class are similar to others, the capacity to read printed materials are of concern and still require adaptation for taking tests including a large print test and use of magnifiers. In addition, they might need extra time for the tests when they have to read the test themselves (Başaran, 2012). These differences in details regarding the educational issues of the VIS have been continually discussed since the early nineteenth century and will be presented in the following section.

2.2 History of Education of the Visually Impaired Students in Thailand

2.2.1 Schools for the Visually Impaired Students

The first school for the blind in Thailand was founded by Miss Genevieve Claufield, a blind American woman who came to Thailand in 1938. This school was inaugurated by one blind student, called Mr. Puangmaspaga, who was a son of His Royal Highness Prince Damrong Rajanupab. The school was supported by the group of people who, later, established the Foundation for the Blind of Thailand.

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The foundation was the pioneer in promoting the welfare of the visually impaired in Thailand by aiming, firstly, to make education affordable for the visually impaired students regardless of gender, race, or religion; secondly, to instruct them to live independently and be functional in society. Various related parties provided supports for the school so as to improve the school's quality including teachers, education, curriculum reformation, and pedagogical aspects (Fangsaard, 2002) and eventually led to the school registration under the Ministry of Education as a special public school for education of the students with disabilities.

When the concept of inclusive classroom was introduced in 1956, the school for the blind decided to send students who finished the highest level, grade 9 or matthayom 3, to continue their high school level in Saint Gabriel School. This was deemed as the beginning of inclusive education. The expansion of the school covered other regions of Thailand such as a foundation to assist the blind in the northern provinces established in 1959 and a special school for the blind under the same concept in Chiangmai and Nonthaburi in 1960. Later, the American Foundation delivered its assistance and support for Thai blind students from an integrated or inclusive school to study at Phayathai School.

Due to the inclusive school expansion, a teacher training program was established in 1985 in order to let the inclusive scheme become more solid. The training program first attracted a number of teachers who later voluntarily taught at the School for the Blind as full-time teachers responsible for providing education and non-educational services. In terms of professional development, Dr. Benja Chonlatanon and Mrs. Wimon Ong-amphorn were the first two teachers who were sent to study the specific curriculum at the University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada. After their return, they provided teacher training to a group of teachers to be teachers who were responsible for sharing their knowledge with organizations located in other parts of Thailand known as the 'recourse teachers'. Until now, some of them are still working on dedicating their experience to assist moving the Foundation towards the goal of the National Act aiming to cultivate lifelong learning characteristics of the students' regardless of their disabilities (Fangfsaard, 2002).

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Recently, the schools providing special education for the VIS are prevalent across Thailand and divided into two categories comprising the schools established under the private organizations and the schools under the support from the Ministry of Education. The obvious example of schools founded by private sectors are the schools that have been established under the support of The Christian Foundation for the Blind in Thailand (CFBT), which offers education and rehabilitation through 8 branches in Bangkok, Northern, North Eastern, and Southern parts of Thailand, for example, the Educational Service Center for the Blind in Nakorn Ratchasima province and the School for the Blind and Multiple Handicapped Blind Children in Lopburi province (Terry et al., 2013). The other category consists of the schools established under the Special Education Bureau, for example, the Northern Region School for the Blind under the Royal Patronage of Her Majesty the Queen, Chiang Mai. To enhance the educational opportunity for the VIS, there have been schools with inclusive classrooms, which provide admission quotas for the students with disabilities including the VIS from the schools for the blind. The number of schools with inclusive classrooms was found to be approximately twenty thousand schools under the management of the Primary Educational Service Area Office or PEASO and the Secondary Educational Service Area Office or SESAO (Special Education Technology, 2017).

2.2.2 Educational Pathway

In general, education systems in Thailand are divided into three types including formal education, non-formal education and self-designed education (National Education Act A.D 1999). These different types seem to be various enough to serve individuals; however, they may not be suitable for those who are disabled, especially visually impaired students. Fortunately, the first school for the blind was eventually established in 1938 with the help of Miss Genevieve Caulfield, a blind American teacher who created a Thai version of the Braille alphabet (Foundation for the Blind in Thailand under the Royal Patronage of H.M. the Queen). Later, in 1999, the government decided to implement education reform resulting in several laws aimed at protecting educational rights for those with physical impairments including visual impairment. This led to the education pathway for the VIS in terms of broadening their different levels of education.

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Regarding the recent education route, the VIS start their kindergarten level in the school with a special education center separated from a mainstream school, providing basic education for every type of student with disabilities. Then they continue to primary schools, which are exclusively established as the schools for students with visual impairment, who have low vision or blindness. Most of the schools are boarding schools as it is convenient for their study lives. In this level, the visual impaired students are firstly introduced to braille in the forms of Thai and English versions. During secondary and high school levels, the VIS who are qualified will be sent to high schools and study in the inclusive classroom until they finish secondary school. These secondary schools are the schools that particularly conducted the MOU with the schools for the blind (School of Changmekers, 2015). These ordinary schools are recognized by the Thailand Association of the Blind (TAB, 2016) as 'mainstream schools' or 'inclusive schools', which allow the disabled students to attend and study in the same classroom with non-disabled students. In general, such schools will provide a special center, which is responsible for facilitating the students with disabilities. However, the center is mostly unable to provide teaching material during the school terms causing the struggles of studying without learning material. Thus, the VIS will need lots of assistance from their peers and teachers until the texts are ready in braille (School of Changmekers, 2015).

To attend the university level, two channels are available for the VIS. The first channel is to take the exam provided exclusively from each university. The exam is created for only the disabled students from all over Thailand. Another channel is to take the admission exam applied as a national educational test such as GAT/PAT or O-Net. The former is more beneficial to the VIS than the latter one as they do not have to compete with non-VIS; instead, they are required to take the exam arranged in accordance with different disabled conditions. During their university level, the VIS still encounter struggles including the delayed text production and mostly rely on electronic readers which require specific audio files resulting in requiring extra time for study, exam preparation and assessment.

After following the long journey of history and the current education route of the VIS, there are two transitional periods which are their turning points during their educational journey. The first transitional period happens when

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they finish primary school or the special needs schools, they are required to take a test in order to attend the inclusive schools. Theoretically, the inclusive schools will be responsible for the students with disabilities under the collaboration with the special need schools providing assistance as needed (OEC, 2006). The second period is when the VIS decide to further their education in the tertiary level. To enroll in the universities, it is the mandate for the VIS to take the exams specifically arranged for the entrance quotas, which are created for the students with disabilities. The exams contain different subjects depending on the requirement of each faculty in each university. In this level, the students have to be well prepared as they are going to encounter changes in both academic and social aspects as the new chapter of student lives in the new education settings. Although authorities in Thailand are bound to support inclusive education of students with disabilities in order to fulfill national and global mandates, challenges have been mentioned due to broad ranges of reasons, which will be explained in the following part.

2.3 Inclusive Education

2.3.1 Global VS Asia VS Thai Inclusive Education

Globally, inclusive society has been continuously promoted by the UN, including all related agencies and international organizations. One of the pathways leading to the ideal society is to build inclusive education, which involves eliminating educational barriers, gathering the meaningful participation among the learners who might encounter exclusions in education. Fortunately, the developments of conditions for inclusive education have been adopted by most countries over the world, especially, the developed nations (O'Connor, 2020).

Those developed countries have positioned themselves clearly that they are bound to fully support inclusive education in terms of financial support and experts to provide knowledge for the less developed countries. Consequently, they affirm their responsibilities for promoting inclusive education as their priority under the consideration of the similar and different contexts of people around the world.

Although inclusive education has been set as one of the international goals, the aforementioned differences appearing in each country seem to

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be the major concern for conceptualizing the inclusive concept (Beutel, et al, 2019). These challenges cause the educational development to be ambiguous and prevent such concepts from becoming concrete. However, the awareness of cultural differences and the various attitudes of people towards the concept of inclusive education could affect the changes in educational development in each country. Therefore, it is vital to include various perspectives concerning particular contexts into research to best fit the benefits for students in each country (Dykens & Hodapp, 2001).

Apparently, there is growth in inclusive education development among the less developed countries, especially in Asia Indo-Pacific region. The awareness of the fundamental rights of all learners and the obligation to ensure inclusive education was highlighted among these countries under the ratification of international treaties and by complying with inclusion and human rights support (United Nation, 2016). The remarkable international agreements were the Salamanca, and Dakar agreements, and the World Bank agreement in Jomtien which was an initiative to support inclusive education as an international priority (World Bank 2017) and the Sustainable Development Goals 2015–2030 (United Nations, n.d.). Although this shows the common goal for inclusive education support, to implement the development schemes depends on differences in local context and all related factors including economic, cultural, and social aspects (Kozleski, Artiles, and Waitoller, 2014, 232).

The variation in local context plays an important role in educational development, either through possibilities or difficulties towards the implementation. For example, in Bangladesh, the country consists of geographically isolated communities, languages, and resources, including domestic issues such as starvation, climate conditions, and political issues. In fact, these challenges still appear in many countries and could lead to difficulties in the implementation of inclusive practices. However, in the small country of Bhutan, the future of inclusive education policies seems to be promising, and awareness seems to be committed among the educators. Additionally, skills in classroom management, curriculum differentiation, and effective collaboration were mentioned as the major concerns among the education teachers in Macau, as well as the collaboration of the schools and strategic plan from

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the stakeholders to prepare for the development of inclusive education. In other words, the intertwining among the roles of culture, history, and context affect the particular practices and different approaches (Walton, 2016, 48) and is essential to be embedded in the context-dependent research concerning inclusive education development in order to promote inclusive societies in Asia-Pacific region.

In Thailand, the concept of inclusion is the key element in educational development as inclusive education provides non-discrimination opportunity for students with disabilities to earn education, social cohesion and acceptance (Bevan-Brown, Heung, Jelas and Phongaksorn, 2014). The Thai government has extensively taken actions for all stakeholders to feel more responsive and create awareness of this concept evidenced by empowerment and promotion of the disability laws. In 2007, the Empowerment for Persons with Disabilities Act (2007) regulated all related laws, including education for not only persons with disabilities, but also the disabled students at all levels. After the Act was promulgated, the number of students with disabilities has continuously increased in both basic education and university levels.

The following Act is the Education for People with Disabilities Act (2008) which was legislated by the Ministry of Education particularly focusing on promoting inclusive education with a disability-friendly environment, and a free tuition policy. To ensure that the implementation of the Act complies with the inclusive education notion, the National Education for People with Disabilities Committee was formed to supervise any practices and provide guidelines for schools and universities. However, limitations were found in terms of inadequate knowledge about inclusive concepts and practices (Carter, 2006). In addition, to develop the practical inclusive model, Thailand requires readiness in a number of areas such as infrastructure, teacher training, education services, and curriculum development (Vorapanya & Dunlap, 2014). Importantly, there have been concerns which emerged through the teachers' perceptions stating that to apply a teaching method to teach students with disabilities could increase their workload.

2.3.2 Supporting Policies

According to the educational pathway, and the situation in inclusive education in Thailand elaborated in the previous sections, it is agreed that the

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inclusion development has been advocated by the support policy including laws and regulations. For international regulations, Thailand as a member state of the UNCRPD, was required to ratify the regulations in order to express its intention to be one of the state parties of the CRPD in 2010. The Convention begins with creating awareness on the rights and dignity of people with disabilities, as well as the equality of education, which emphasizes the right to access education at all levels: primary, secondary and tertiary levels. This enhances the Thai government to strengthen supports in terms of regulations and policy, and pay more attention on building up the equality for people with disabilities in various aspects including removing unjust discrimination and advocating for effective measures to provide opportunities in education for people with disabilities (Convention and Optional Protocol Signatures and Ratifications, 2010)

> Article 24 Education
>
> 1. States Parties recognize the right of persons with disabilities to education. With a view to realizing this right without discrimination and on the basis of equal opportunity, States Parties shall ensure an inclusive education
>
> (b) Persons with disabilities can access an inclusive, quality and free primary education and secondary education on an equal basis with others in the communities in which they live;
>
> (c) Reasonable accommodation of the individual's requirements is provided;
>
> 5. States Parties shall ensure that persons with disabilities are able to access general tertiary education, vocational training, adult education and lifelong learning without discrimination and on an equal basis with others. To this end, States Parties shall ensure that reasonable accommodation is provided to persons with disabilities.

In Article 24, the convention clearly requires the state parties to comply with the vital notions consisting of ensuring that inclusive education is pursued under the equal rights of persons with disabilities; enabling free-tuition and

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equal accessibility to all levels of education; and the reasonable accommodation to provide appropriate adjustments and modifications for the learners with impairments. Consequently, in order to comply with the regulations, the government showed that they are responsible to encourage the inclusive society and enhance the obligation in inclusive education by promulgating the Acts which are Persons with Disabilities Empowerment Act, B.E. 2550 (2007) and Education Provision for Persons with Disabilities Act, B.E. 2551 (2008). These Acts were enacted in accordance with the notions mentioned in the UNCRPD to provide education for students with disabilities.

> **Section 20** Persons with disabilities shall be entitled to access and use public facilities including other welfare and assistance provided by the State as follows:…(2) Education as set forth in the legislation on national education or the national education plan, which suits their physical and mental condition in a specific education institute, a general educational institute, and alternative or non-formal education, where the agencies involved shall be responsible for providing suitable and necessary facilities, medias, services and any other educational assistance for disabled persons. (Persons with Disabilities Empowerment Act, B.E. 2550 (2007)

As mentioned in Section 20 in Persons with Disabilities Empowerment Act, B.E. 2550 (2007), education is considered as one of the major welfares for the disabled persons which leads to commitments in all policy, practices, and action plans to ensure the accessibilities in education. Additionally, regarding the inclusive concept and other educational practices, the government passed the Education Provision for Persons with Disabilities Act, B.E. 2551 (2008) to particularly provide the educational principles for related stakeholders to drive the inclusive environment in the agreed direction such as in Section 3, 5, and 18.

> **Section 3.** In this Act:
>
> "person with disability" means a person having restriction in performing activities in daily life, or in participating in the society due to the impairment in sight, hearing, moving, communicating, mental health, emotion, behaviour, intellect, learning, or other impairment, or having

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other obstructions, appurtenant to having special educational needs of assistance to be able to perform activities in daily life, or to participate in the society in the same manner with other normal persons, as per the types and rules prescribed by the Minister of Education; …

"Inclusive education" means providing persons with disabilities access to the general education system, at any level and in various settings, including enabling education provision to enable schooling for all groups of persons, including persons with disabilities; …

Section 5. A person with disability shall have the following educational rights:

(1) to receive education without cost at birth, or upon discovery of the disability until the end of life, as well as to receive technology, facilities, media, services, and other educational assistance;

(2) to choose educational service, establishment of education, system, and style of education, by taking into consideration, skills, interest, aptitude, and special requirements of such person;

(3) to receive up-to-standard and quality-assured education, including educational courses, educational examination which are appropriate and harmonious with special requirements of each individual person with each type of disability.

Section 18. Office of special education administration affiliated with Office of Basic Education Committee shall have a duty related to the work of secretary of the committee, including the following duties: …(2) to encourage educational service area offices to offer extensive and of-good-quality inclusive education to persons with disabilities in the area under its authority; …

All of the mentioned provisions obviously emphasize an inclusive education policy by providing clear definitions of both 'person with disabilities', which includes the persons with sight impairment, and 'inclusive education' in Section 3. Apart from this Section, in Section 18, the advocacy for inclusive education

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is also presented to ensure that the concept will be implemented under the responsibility of the Office of Basic Education Committee (OBEC). In Section 5, the educational rights of persons with disabilities were listed to assure that all educational aspects will be delivered to the students with disabilities without cost, yet with quality services.

2.3.3 Inclusive Education and the Students with Disabilities

The previous section mentioned a number of supporting policies for education of the students with disabilities. Nevertheless, it might not be too pessimistic to state that the students with disabilities have faced difficulties caused by various factors including physical characteristics and psychological traits. Hence, educational support is one of the solutions to fix such difficulties among students with disabilities and leading to the awareness of special education needs (Furguson, 2014; Başaran, 2012). Especially students with visual impairment, whose vision is limited, require different practices in various aspects. One of the most obvious points is that the learning materials they use to support their learning are different from those who are non-disabled and study in mainstream schools. In other words, learning materials in mainstream schools; for example, diagrams, visual clues, and illustrations, are generally designed to support authentic learning and motivate students during in-class study. Therefore, visually impaired students need adjustments of learning material and appropriate teaching methods in accordance with the so-called ‘special education’ concepts. This reminds us of the introduction of special education for the disabled students in the early 1970s, which has become proliferate these days.

While the special education is considered as the education system provided in accordance with the needs of the students with visual impairment, the term ‘inclusion’ was later introduced in the 1990's driven by the movement to enhance further education for the children with disabilities to study with their typical peers. Generally, inclusion education is the term that involves education emphasizing bringing students with disabilities to study in general classes with non-disabled students. However, it prioritizes the benefits of social skills learning from being in class, rather than academic achievement. Thus, the implication of the primary goal of inclusive classrooms is to ensure that the disabled students have equal opportunity to be in the classroom and build up their social skills paralleling with the appropriate

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physical adjustment. The concepts of studying inclusively sound beneficial to these special students; however, in reality, achievement in both academic and social relationship skills is also a complicated mission and unavoidably influenced by positive and negative factors.

Not only developed countries, but also developing countries all over the world have shifted their education standard through educational reforms, including the concepts of inclusion by educating students with disabilities in the general classroom. Throughout this movement, research has revealed the positive effects of educating students with disabilities in general settings under the arrangement of special education (Baker, Wang, & Walberg, 1995). One of the advantages aligned with the primary goal of inclusive education resulting from the social interaction between students with disabilities and their peers without disabilities. The interaction expands opportunities for both disabled and non-disabled students to exchange their personal backgrounds through academic settings. Thus, it might be implied to another benefit of inclusive classrooms that teaching both groups of students in the same environment allows them to accept differences and pay respect to individuals' disabilities (Perles, 2010).

Moreover, it has been confirmed by a group of researchers in relation to the differences of learning pace which emerged from inclusive classrooms that such variety does not obstruct the non-disabled students to achieve their learning goals in classrooms (Peltier, 1997; Staub & Peck, 1995). Regarding the aforementioned benefits of the inclusive education, Katz and Mirenda (2002) revealed another positive effect which appeared as the benefits from in-class interactions between students with and without disabilities as including development of self-esteem, social skills, positive emotional and behavioral changes, and sense of friendship.

On the contrary, the concept of inclusion was argued against by Bateman & Bateman (2002) that "full inclusion is not the best placement for all students" because "the general education classroom is typically not individualized" (p. 3). Basically, the term 'full inclusion' means that all students should study together in the same classroom, regardless of handicapped condition or severity and all services must be taken to the child in that setting. Under full-time studying, educators

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are aware that the different learning paces could occur during the inclusive setting. This issue might turn out to be the major cause of the disadvantage of inclusive studying. It is unavoidable to admit that the learning rate of students with disabilities may sometimes be slower than the typical students and they could be disruptive to the teaching process. In other words, when a situation like this happens, the idea of combining students with disabilities with non-disabilities may not always work well. Another drawback of full inclusive classrooms is that teachers may not be able to pay attention as appropriate as the disabled students need due to the fact that they are responsible for classroom management. By the lack of special attention, the students with disabilities may be uncomfortable and feel that they are left behind (NICHCY, 2012).

2.4 Major Factors Affecting Language Learning of Visually Impaired Students

In addition to the positive and negative effects of inclusive classroom concepts, situations happening throughout the VIS's learning process is one of the essential topics to be considered in this study. The literature review in this section concerns how the visually impaired students or the VIS learn in the inclusive setting regarding the way they perceive the input, learning material, and situation towards their learning skills.

2.4.1 Learning Materials

It is widely recognized that, either being blind or low-vision, the students often struggle with problems in the learning process. Firstly, it is obvious that inaccessibility to visual information and utilizing the different input as the alternative learning materials are the main challenges for the blind. For the low-vision students, they may even encounter more problems due to both their visual condition and the external problems such as light in the classroom or seat position.

Moreover, the form of learning materials of the VIS, which mostly comes in tactile format, also affects the VIS's learning difficulties. The tactile reading and writing systems were invented by Louis Braille and have been used since 1829 when the first book in Braille was published. Although Braille has been produced by

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improved technical devices for many years, the position of dots remains the same. Reading text in braille is sequential input information, which means Braille can be read letter-by-letter. Thus, braille reading is considered as one of the linear inputs. Regarding linear input, a challenge can be seen in the limitation of how the texts are presented, as the information must be transformed into a layout compatible with Braille. The layout of foreign language textbooks is often complicated; therefore, it is probably impossible for the VIS to receive the text in a structural or non-linear way (Castellano, 2005).

The sequential character of reading Braille affects how the VIS perceive the information input in several ways. The unidirectional way of reading does not allow the VIS to go back to the previous part of the text easily. Consequently, their brains have to work very hard on short-term memory and it might take a shorter time to reach the overloaded condition than typical students. Moreover, the sequential flow also limits the VIS's reading ability due to them being able to read only a small chunk of words leading to reading being more time consuming and exhausting. The evidence found that a skilled braille reader was able to read at about half the speed of a good print reader (Savaiano et al., 2014). Another example would be the result from a study concerning the reading speed of braille readers compared with sighted students conducted among Estonian students. The results show that the VIS students significantly completed reading tasks in Braille about three times slower than sighted counterparts (Veispak, 2012).

Although the skill mentioned above is mainly related to reading skill, there has been another aspect in relation to how the VIS acquire knowledge. Apart from reading, the VIS seem to be keen on using their listening skill to learn language. The VIS also preferred utilizing their hearing ability to gain aural input in many ways including both to complete listening tasks and to compensate for the limitation of visual input. For example, the VIS might need personal assistants or use a screen-reader's software to help complete reading tasks. Therefore, when the VIS use the word "to read", it could mean they might actually "listen" to the texts. In other words, although reading and listening are different inputs, they are under the same category as receptive input resulting in being able to share the nature of sequential input during listening and reading tasks (Veispak, 2012).

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2.4.2 Classroom Accommodation

As can be seen in classrooms of general education, most of the classrooms were designed based on the sighted students as the major consideration. The educational materials are presented in varied forms of visual formats such as posters, charts, diagrams, videos, models, demonstrations, and print materials. Hence, it is not merely the characteristics of the VIS that shape their language learning, the modification of their educational environment is also important and influences how they learn (Cavanaugh, 2002). According to the whole international and national regulations, which address the equality of education of disabled and non-disabled students, the educational goals for the VIS are the same as for all sighted students. However, to attain non-discrimination education, interventions and adjustments are required.

There is the fact that students with visual impairments have learning abilities equal to typical students, but their visual impairment creates a deficiency of information accessibility. As such, the VIS generally unavoidably interact with input in class in various ways especially through touch and hearing (NICHCY, 2012). To facilitate this specific environment, adjustment of any visual information appearing in class and pedagogy is required (AFB, 2012). Although the institutes providing educational service for the VIS are aware of the needs of modified pedagogical and learning materials, a number of studies concerning problems of accessibility to information still appear as the gap for the researcher to fill in (Douglas and McLinden, 2005). It shows that the lack of access to visual information has been recognized as the major barrier that individuals with visual impairments are facing (Cavanaugh, 2002).

2.4.3 Assistive Technology

Several researches have proved that the VIS compensating for their visual loss by using assistive devices does not eliminate another fact that braille readers tend to read more slowly than print readers (Nolan & Kederis 1969; Trent & Truan, 1997; Wormsley, 1996). Moreover, barriers conveyed from visual loss can be indicated by different reading speeds among the visual impaired students, such as low vision students who use magnification devices (Cowen & Shepler, 2000) and large print (Corn et al., 2002; Gompel, van Bon, & Schreuder, 2004). Additionally, the VIS

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could miss the lesson while locating the correct page number of the braille text or turning on a computer, interacting with an application on a mobile phone, and getting ready to take notes. In other words, reading speed may not be the only cause of the loss of their learning time; using the improper assistive technology devices while reading might extend difficulties of the VIS.

2.4.4 Pedagogical Aspects in the learning of the Students with Visual Impairment

It is apparent that the lack of any degree of vision will affect learning leading to specialized instruction for students with vision loss. Students with visual impairment require specific needs and appropriate education through a holistic team approach. Students with visual impairments are often unaware of activities going on around them and are often limited from acquiring information through incidental learning. These students often learn through alternative mediums or using other functional senses (AFB, 2012). Therefore, instructions should be designed to promote learning which is suitable for the student's unique abilities and learning needs. Effective teachers of students with visual impairments are recommended to employ strategies that support the child's multisensory capabilities (visual, auditory, and tactile) in the classroom environment (AFB, 2012). In order to meet students' educational needs, specialized services, appropriate instructional books, and learning materials, as well specialized equipment and technology should be holistically integrated.

In addition to specialized materials that students with disabilities rely on, teachers are also required to identify ways to alter their teaching in order to meet the same goal. Teachers may need to enhance visual information and arrange alternative forms of presenting visual information such as using auditory or tactile information, which are widely used as effective strategies to convey lessons in class. Researchers are now focusing on developing and evaluating broader approaches including adapted books, specialized equipment, and other technologies which have equalized students with impairments to access lessons provided in the inclusive classroom (Sapp & Hatlen, 2010).

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2.5 Challenges in Education of the Visually Impaired Students

In the previous part, the awareness of equality in educational systems for the VIS has been broadly evidenced. However, under the various characteristics of the VIS ranging from partial impairment to totally blind, different forms of support should be provided under the consideration of the individual differences, as well as the obstacles in the VIS's learning that possibly occurred from various internal and external factors.

2.5.1 Internal Factors

2.5.1.1 The Visual Impairment

Due to the infrequent presence of the visually impaired students (VIS) in most schools (Adams et al., 1999; Jones & Collins, 1966; Wenger, Kaye, & LaPlante, 1996), not all of the VIS have been identified as the priority group to receive educational services in accordance with their special needs. (USDOE, 2012). However, the VIS are assumed to acquire knowledge differently from the sighted ones. The major cause would be their physically impaired conditions that shape how they gain information through their learning process. In general, the VIS improperly perceive vision through seeing; hence, this also leads to the limitations on employing the other skills and they might have unavoidably faced obstacles during their educational lives.

However, not all the impairment on vision loss will result as drawbacks for the VIS, in many cases, visual impairment may not be able to prevent the VIS from learning foreign language due to their efforts in terms of strength of superior memory functions and listening skill to reach the same level as sighted students (Pring, 2008). The key issue to compensate for the limitations on their visual impairment is an understanding of how the impairment affects their learning and what specific needs are required. This can also provide a comprehensive foundation to minimize the barriers during the language learning process. For this reason, turning challenges emerged during educational settings into solutions and finding advantages of educational settings adjustment concerning the special needs of VIS is possible.

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2.5.1.2 Learners Motivation

Another factor which initially encourages learners to acquire knowledge successfully is the learner's motivation. Motivation has been described in various forms such as instrumental and integrative motivations (Gardner & Lambert, 1959); the former was explained as motivation for desiring to improve career or academic progress, and the latter was for fitting-in with native speaking people. Differently, Crookes and Schmidt (1991) pointed out that motivation towards language learning has been influenced by seven aspects including interest; perception; expectancy of success or failure; perception of rewards; overt decision to learn; persistent behavior; and high involvement. In terms of pedagogical aspect, motivation is also partly shaped by the instructional methods: a mastery-learning mode in which the students are encouraged to acquire intrinsically important goal achievement (Brookfield & Preskill, 2012).

2.5.2 External Factors

2.5.2.1 Inclusive Concept

The concept of inclusive classrooms has been increasing due to the trend of equalizing educational opportunities for students with disabilities in general education settings (Turnbull et al., 1995). This situation conveys both benefits and challenges to students whose vision has been lost while they are striving to learn the same content as the sighted student. It might be admitted that encouraging the VIS to study in the general classroom provides advantages in terms of emphasizing the enhancement of social interactions between the VIS and their peers. However, the enforcement of this concept has created barriers in various aspects starting with difficulties to individually identify the uniqueness of impaired students, inadequate teacher experience, lack of assistive technology and support services.

Additionally, to create appropriate inclusive education requires a supplemental curriculum focusing on the needs of students with visual impairments, an adaptation of general education environments, which mostly contain visual information, and tuning teacher perceptions of these students (Hatlen, 2004). All in all, to achieve the goal of an inclusive classroom, the VIS may stumble upon the lack of accommodation or adjustment of the educational environment for the inclusive classroom.

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2.5.2.2 Instructors

(1) Inadequacy of Teacher Training

One of the challenges in building up an appropriate educational environment is the inadequacy of experience and knowledge of key people. These key people are teachers who unavoidably spend their working hours close to the VIS. Although their personalities may be energetic, responsible and willing to employ pedagogical knowledge to teach students with visual impairment, their intention may be obstructed by insufficiency of teacher training and preparation. Unfortunately, teachers with improper training might delay the learning rate of the VIS (Silberman, Bruce, & Nelson, 2004). In addition to adequate preparation, teachers of the visually impaired students are required to make adjustments to instructions in order to meet the special education needs for the VIS. For example, teachers may need to be aware of using more signals, descriptive, and directional words in the classroom.

In Thailand, despite the strong commitment to the implementation of inclusive classroom, it has been found that preschool teachers have limited knowledge relating to inclusive education (Agbenyega and Klibthong, 2013). This was evidenced by the feeling among the teachers that they have been trained with knowledge on inclusive education inadequately resulting in limited and impractical knowledge. Consequently, the lack of knowledge training could lead to the lack of appropriate instructional methodologies and techniques and could cause a negative impact on blind students' literacy development. For example, unlike literacy learning of sighted students, in which writing is taught before reading, the traditional way of teaching Braille starts with writing before reading (Meesri, 1997). Hence, the particular approach should be delivered to the teachers to create comprehensiveness in teaching the VIS. Moreover, for the past three decades, the overuse of lecturing and rote memorization were found in inclusive classroom, so the instruction appeared to be repetitive and the classroom atmosphere tended to be boring for the learners (Wanawananon, 1985; Meesri, 1997).

(2) Teachers' Perception and Expectation

Another major concern which emerged under the light of challenges in teaching the VIS is the perceptions of teachers, either teaching

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individually or inclusively in general education settings (Avramidis & Norwich 2010; Rae et al., 2010; Wungu & Han, 2008). Teachers who are responsible to teach students with visual impairment are required to have both appropriate pedagogical skills and attitudes in order to provide content and assistance in accordance with specific needs of the VIS (Nyoni et al., 2011). Thus, it is prioritized that 'teachers should be trained to implement various strategies to facilitate students' assimilation into the classroom, school, community and work setting' (National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, 2001).

Indeed, there is the relationship between education and instructions in the way that education provides information, knowledge and understanding to the learners (Karsli, 2007, p. 9) while the instruction is the process to allow the learners to develop their ability and capacity (Karsli, 2007, p. 9). This relationship is linked by the teacher who plays the role as a facilitator for students to reach their goal through the educational system including being a person who manages the class, and provides evaluation of the student's abilities. In other words, the teacher also influences the students' attitudes towards the atmosphere of the classroom. Positive attitudes of the teachers can be expressed by showing understanding and showing interest in the students resulting in interactions in class which increases the students' motivation, self-confidence and leads to success. By providing support, approval, and giving constructive feedback or compliments, the students could feel that they are paid attention to, being thought of, and assisted. In contrast, negative attitudes could demotivate the students and might eventually lead to failure. Therefore, with the teachers' attitudes and characters, the students could shape their future from their either memorable or tragic experiences.

Apparently, the concept of teachers' attitude towards students with disabilities also applied to Thai context. It is clear that tuning teachers' attitudes towards inclusive classroom requires a great deal of teacher training and experiences (Ulug, et al., 2011). Apart from that, in reality, teachers in school levels have been overwhelmed with their school tasks and might avoid teaching preparation. With the lack of preparation, some teachers might not modify theirs lesson plans for students with disabilities and might use the same approaches written for the sighted students to teach the whole class irrespective of the VIS's unique needs (Agbenyega &

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Klibthong, 2015). Additionally, their attitudes could be influenced by the insufficient support funds for professional development on inclusive classroom management or limited motivating incentive to conduct the extra preparation for the individuals' needs. Therefore, the attitudes of many school teachers towards inclusive education tend to lean in the negative direction.

2.5.2.3 Accessibility

(1) Accessibility to Instructional Materials

One of the most influential aspects of the learning process of students with visual impairments is to ensure that these students have access to instructional materials. Although the concept of equality in education encourages equal opportunity for the VIS to master the same educational curriculum as their sighted peers, the visual impairment itself imposes restrictions on their accessibility to the classroom instructions due to the typical methods presented by the classroom teacher. Hence, in addition to being taught the content itself, the VIS must be trained to obtain the skills for instructional accessibility (Riley, 2000). In other words, the limitation on being able to access classroom instruction also restricts the benefits of acquiring content in general education settings.

Regarding the educational definition, the VIS are unable to go through their educational life without supplementary instruction and support in order to help learn skills to cope with the challenges due to their vision loss. This leads to the adjustment of national curriculum in many countries. For example, in developing countries such as Ethiopia, the dual curriculum was developed on the basis of the need to ensure that the students must receive instruction to pursue education for living (Hatlen, 2010). Thus, they employ both a newly created curriculum, called the Expanded Core Curriculum (ECC), along with the general education curriculum (AFB, 2012).

(2) Accessibility to Resources

Another barrier of the VIS to improve their learning process might be involved with the restricted educational environment when it is not designed for their specific needs (Hatlen, 2004). However, another unforgettable aspect is the lack of opportunities in which the VIS are able to acquire information in various modalities: touch, hear, taste, and feel. In order to compensate for their lack of vision,

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the VIS may also need, not only specialized instruction, but also the accommodation to match the student's most appropriate learning style (AFB, 2012).

As one of the developing countries, issues regarding accessibility have been more than the learning materials and the resources. The limitations in accessibility mean the cost of forming well-trained teachers, disability-friendly buildings and infrastructures and the sufficient information to shape policy and budget arrangements. Not only a barrier in provincial education, in the capital of Bangkok travelling to schools or universities could be extremely challenging for the VIS (Vibulpatanavong, 2018). Hence, to ensure accessibility in education for the VIS in Thailand, fixing the physical barriers must not be neglected.

2.5.2.4 Accommodation for Assessment

In general education, assessments have to be completed within a limited period of time. However, this should be undertaken differently when it comes to the assessment applied to the students with visual impairment due to a number of reasons as follows. Firstly, considering that reading time of the VIS, it depends on how long they spend on reading braille or the magnified text, which is generally slower than the sighted student reading print text. Consequently, in the case of blindness and low-vision, the question about the amount of extra time required for fulfilling the tasks must be considered. Fortunately, accommodation in expansion of time limit is quite ordinary for examinations and tests organized in many universities in Thailand. Nonetheless, as the VIS spend more time taking a test, they need high concentration and unavoidably encounter the stressful examination situation for longer time than sighted learners. Consequently, the inadequate amount of time may lead to the poorer performance.

In testing sub-skills of reading, skimming and scanning techniques are expected to be assessed. However, in the case of the EFL learners with visual impairment, those test types may not be applicable due to it being impossible to grasp the reading text in a holistic way. In addition to Braille reading, the VIS use screen-reading software for performing reading-based tasks. In this situation, the similarity between sequential input of Braille and aural information results in cases of being confused when turning reading into listening tasks and this requires reconsideration on the effectiveness of employing this type of assessment on the VIS.

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Hence, the practicality towards the test types of the students with visual impairment should be taken into account due to the lack of envisaged or practicable overarching theories or models in the field of visual impairment (Hatton, 2014).

For Thai schools and universities, the VIS also have to take the exam in exactly the same version as the sighted students. The only difference will be the accommodation in terms of extra time and assistance. Although accommodation is provided for the exam session, it should be ensured that the adjustment is applied reasonably. However, it has been found that the time expansion might be inadequate for the VIS and they still experience the difficulties during the exam due to the process of transferring the answer by the VIS to the answer sheet also take time. Additionally, there is another issue involving whether providing the extra time and the assistance are considered as favorable treatment. Therefore, the understanding of inclusive education could lead to misinterpretation of the reasonable accommodation applied for the VIS (Bualar, 2017).

2.6 English Language Learning of the Visually Impaired Students

Similar to other academic skills, English language learning is essential for disabled students as the tool to improve their academic and living standard. Regarding the aspect of research conducted to investigate the VIS, a number of studies proved that challenges have emerged along the path of learning English regardless of native or non-native English-speaking countries. Thus, it is necessary to understand how the VIS acquired their second language as the starting point before exploring the current situation in Thai context.

2.6.1 Language Acquisition in Visually Impaired Individuals

Different levels of visual acuity provide quite a number of impacts on lives of students with visual impairment, especially when they acquire language; both first and second languages. In first language acquisition, lack of vision can affect social use of language and different ways of obtaining background knowledge leading to difficulties to acquire productive and receptive skills in second language

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acquisition. For example, in second language acquisition, students with visual impairment might struggle with tracing reference pronouns in reading tasks.

Most research found differences in terms of second language development between the blind and sighted individuals (Araluce, 2002). The linguistic variations come from both experiences and brain functions of the individuals. However, it is important to understand neurological development of the visual impairment before exploring the differences in linguistic aspects.

2.6.1.1 Neurological Development among the Visually Impaired Individuals

Generally, neurological development is generated by the integration of various sensory modalities such as visual, auditory, and olfactory information. Each modality influences the others turning into an individuals' world experiences (Pascual-Leone & Hamilton, 2001). However, due to the lack of vision, visually impaired people cannot integrate all sensory experience; therefore, they mostly interact with their surroundings by using audition and tactility to compensate for their visual restriction. This process is referred to as 'perceptual compensation' (Röder & Neville, 2003).

The neurological development includes the process called 'neuroplasticity', which means the ability of the nervous system to change its organization (Bavelier & Neville, 2002). The evidence has been summarized by a number of researchers that sensitivity in blind individuals was greater in both consciousness and automaticity of information processing in relation to perception of speech sounds and this probably resulted from the 'reorganization of the auditory modality'.

For blind individuals, when the perceptual compensation occurs and the visual sensory is taken over by the auditory and tactile sensory, it shows a process of visual loss, which can be called 'visual deprivation' (Bavelier & Neville, 2002). This also leads to neurological reorganization, where the remaining modalities, used to designate visual function, are taken over by the non-visual sensory. For example, the visual cortex of one blind individual can probably be colonized by auditory and tactile modalities resulting in greater cognitive functions,

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whereas the cortex of an individual with partially visual impairment will still be able to employ visual sensory in accordance with the level of impairment.

2.6.1.2 Linguistic Aspects in Language Acquisition

Language development in blind and visually impaired children occurs differently from that of the sighted children. The delays in language acquisition have been predicted due to the condition of vision loss (Urwin, 1983); therefore, it might not be suitable to study the language learning process of the students with visual impairment under the identical theories of the sighted students. Hence, this section presents linguistic components regarding how the language acquisition of the visually impaired individuals is different from the sighted ones. The areas of language development include phonology, lexical, morphology and syntax, followed by other related features in acquiring language such as words imitation and repetition; referential language and the concept of space.

At the stage of infancy, there is no difference between blind and sighted children in discriminating sounds (Pérez-Pereira & Conti-Ramsden, 2001). In terms of initial phoneme processing, a number of researchers found that children with visual impairment seemed to process faster than the sighted speakers. However, being unable to learn phonological sounds with visible articulation might cause delay in acquiring some phonemes. Fortunately, there has been evidence showing that such delays will be removed when they become adults due to the great development of auditory sensory (Pérez-Pereira & Conti-Ramsden, 2001).

Children with visual impairment have been found to have some delay in acquiring unknown words compared to the sighted children (Vervloed et al., 2014). The delay was confirmed by the similar reason mentioned in the phonology acquisition, which are the constraints on visual ability. Moreover, the words utilized by the blind children seem to be the expressive and action words (Mulford, 1988). This might be the result of the limitation on their experience that scoped them to learn words in limited situations such as making requests, demands, and comments (Mulford, 1988). Therefore, to learn words which are not parts of their actions or activities, the visually impaired children need more time to understand how to use the new words. On the contrary, despite that the limited context might cause

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delays in lexical development, it might be unfair to conclude that they are incapable of decontextualizing the words (Pérez-Pereira & Conti-Ramsden, 2001).

A number of researches revealed that there has been neither delay nor impairment which emerged through the development in morphology and syntax (Dunlea & Andersen, 1992). However, only one negative aspect was found regarding the delay in sentences containing auxiliary verbs. This occurrence might be explained that the children with visual impairment have been addressed mainly with advice or commands from people around them instead of normal conversations (Landau and Gleitman, 1985).

In terms of word imitation and repetition, the use of speech imitation and formulaic expressions has been found among blind children more widely than among the sighted ones (Peters, 1994). This can be explained that they employ auditory sensory to imitate and repeat expressions they experienced in order to create social interaction (Peters, 1994). In addition to speech imitation, blind children unavoidably use compensatory mechanisms to acquire language regardless of visual ability. For example, perceptual compensation occurred during the process of learning through auditory and tactile skills instead of using visual aids. Consequently, children with visual loss were mostly found to be paying far more attention during learning language compared to those sighted learners.

2.6.2 English Skills of the Visually Impaired Students

Obviously, difficulties or success in the ELL for the students wih visual impairement involved the internal and external factors during their ELL process in school and university level depending on how these factors influence their English skills: reading, writing, listening, and speaking. For reading skill, the learning material mostly used in their English class is Braille text which can only be read in linear sequence and influences their input in terms of limitations on applying reading skills: skimming and scanning. In fact, sequential reading restricts the VIS from going backwards to the previous parts of the passage. Therefore, the VIS need to employ their overloaded memory when they work on reading activities or exams, leading to reading being more time-consuming in comparison with the sighted students. Especially, in testing sub-skills of reading, skimming and scanning techniques are expected to be assessed. However, in the case of the EFL learners with visual

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impairment, those test types may not be applicable due to it being impossible to grasp the reading text in a holistic way (Hatton, 2014).

In terms of listening skill, although listening and reading skills are both receptive skills, they have been considered as different input information for the sighted learners. However, for the VIS, they learn information from auditory input through reading audio books. In other words, the nature of reading and listening skills could be found during reading as listening activities (Veispak 2012). The characteristic of reading by hearing can also be explained by the integration between the comprehension in reading, listening and the oral knowledge (Al-Said, 2010), in the way that reading audio Braille text is not replaced by hearing; instead, hearing as reading plays an important role as the support to bring about reading and listening comprehension.

Regarding English speaking skill, although it seems the VIS are expected to be good at speaking due to the presumption on the relationship between hearing and speaking abilities, the difficulties appear when it comes to the ELL circumstances. The challenges in speaking skills might not only come from internal factors such as their physical conditions, lack of visual knowledge, self-confidence and perceptions towards English language, but they could be related to the external factors such as the classroom environment when they need to perform this productive skill in front of other sighted students (Veispak 2012). For writing skills, students with visual impairment strongly rely on grammatical and vocabulary knowledge and mentioned this skill as the hardest skill among other English skills.

2.6.3 English Language Learning of the Visually Impaired Students in Thailand

In order to gain more comprehensive knowledge concerning the VIS and fix difficulties to meet the needs in English language learning, the understanding on what and how the VIS have been through towards their ELL is crucial in terms of being able to see the essence of the lived experience of the VIS. Thus, in addition to how the VIS acquire a second language, the issues involving the history of English language education of the VIS will allow the reader to understand deeply how the VIS have experienced their learning in English.

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To begin with school level, taking the main objectives of Bangkok School for Blind as the example, the school emphasizes improvement of the students' language proficiency by including language learning in the curriculum, apart from music, sports, technology and vocational careers (Foundation for the Blind in Thailand under the Royal Patronage of H.M. the Queen). Therefore, the VIS must study languages, in particular English as a compulsory subject in school level from kindergarten until the end of school. In general, the curriculum is shaped in accordance with the Elementary Level Special School Curriculum on the basis of the Basic Education Curriculum 2001, covering the following areas: Thai, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Foreign Languages, Arts, Vocation and Technology. However, since 2540 B.E., the VIS have been required to attend the integrated program or inclusive classroom in ordinary schools during secondary and high school years. Thus, apart from regular subjects, requiring the students to learn languages, the school highly affirms its policy on promoting, not just ordinary level, but excellency in the education in various languages including Thai, English and other major broadly used languages such Japanese and Chinese. By experiencing learning English in high school, the VIS could picture the ideas of ELL at a higher level, and be able to decide whether they will continue their education in tertiary level. If they decide to enroll in university, their English learning is unavoidably continued.

For educational life in university level, the VIS have to study full-time in an inclusive class and make adjustments on academic and non-academic aspects to survive throughout at least a four year curricular. However, in the universities which welcome physically impaired students, the disabled students are normally provided support to help develop life skills to ensure that they are able to succeed in their academic skills. The support center is set up as Disabled Student Service Center (DSS) in each university. Regarding ELL support, they are responsible for learning materials such as braille textbooks, braille reader software and other related facilities to encourage autonomy in learning for physically impaired students. Learning materials and other supports in learning English for the VIS are also one of the responsibilities provided by the center. For example, all undergraduate students are required to achieve foundation English courses, so the preparation sessions will be arranged for all disabled students to attend before starting the course. The preparation

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mostly includes guidance for academic and social practice in the university; however, only one session has been arranged for preparation on learning English (Student Affairs Division, Thammasat University).

2.7 Related Studies on the Visually Impaired Students

In addition to the unique characteristics, history and current situation in terms of education of the VIS internationally and in Thailand, and the related theories, the related studies investigated on the VIS have in broad areas. However, the study areas concerning VIS are not adequate to create comprehensiveness towards their lived experiences. Therefore, it is pertinent to explore wider areas concerning other aspects in the light of education and the ELL in order to view various dimensions of the previous research.

2.7.1 Related Studies on English Language Learning of the Visually Impaired Students

The majority of studies aim to explore experiences revealed from teachers who taught English directly to the visually impaired students. The first study was conducted by Kashdan et al. (2002) utilizing a survey and interviews as the data collection instrument. Differently, the setting for the study was not educational institutes, it was investigated during the Mainstream Community-Based ESL programs that were taught by fully sighted, fluent, English-speaking volunteers and professionals and the participants were immigrants. The finding showed that although the instructors were mostly ESL volunteers and professionals in pedagogy, they are not interested in or prepared to oblige time and energy to be trained for the skills and information to teach people with disabilities in society. Regarding the challenges arising from the students, most of them did not want to practice braille literacy, or even large print literacy, because of social issues relating to being different or the feeling of not being able to "fit in.".

There is a research investigated by Başaran (2012) to discover how blind and visually impaired students were taught English as a foreign language, as well as analyzing the techniques and materials that EFL teachers utilized for their

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English teaching at schools for such students. The participants were four teachers and only one of them was trained to teach students who were visual impaired. It was a pure qualitative study collecting data by observation and interviews and the data collection took place in a school exclusively for visually impaired students. The finding of the study was related to techniques that teachers used in the classroom. Teaching techniques were applied differently depending on the teachers' selection; grammar translation technique was taught to the student under one teacher's belief that although her students were visually impaired, they were not different from the sighted peers. Moreover, the other teachers mentioned teaching through question-answer technique, contextualized, and communicative approach.

Another research emphasized experience revealed by teachers' perceptions conducted by Topor & Rosenblum (2013). Teachers of students with visual impairments were asked to inform data involving their background for working as English teachers, their knowledge of strategies used in teaching, and how they addressed instructions to children who are English learners with visual impairment. A survey was employed to collect numeric data from 66 English teachers with the majority of participants having been teaching for more than 9 years. There were six major strategies used for teaching including natural approach, building vocabulary, language experience approach, speak simply, physical approach, and the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP). Additionally, other factors were mentioned as concerning issues, which influenced English teaching to the visually impaired students, for example, teachers' perceptions towards themselves in relation to whether they were qualified to teach students with special needs or not; and the students' qualifications such as the various levels of English Braille literacy.

Due to the fact that many studies seem to be teacher-oriented, the following research represents the pedagogical perspective focusing on challenges in teaching English to visually impaired students. Kocyigit & Artar (2015) carried out the study to introduce the learner-oriented perspectives under the conditions of the students' impaired vision. The setting in this study was similar to the education system for Thai visually impaired students regarding the education pathway. Participants in the study started studying at a primary school exclusively provided for visual impairment and continued their education in regular high schools with sighted

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students. After analyzing data from unstructured interviews, the various personality traits and different learning strategies of the individuals conveyed particular determination on the learning/teaching process. Moreover, other related practitioners were somewhat crucial for the holistic policy. The difficulties were divided into emotional and pedagogical concerns. Obviously, participants in this study had similar educational context to visual impaired students in Thailand in terms of educational track. Additionally, the complexity emerged through English teaching/learning to pinpoint that both internal and external concerns should considered in teaching students with visual impairment.

One of the outstanding studies focused on characteristics of the students, who, although visually impaired; decided to major in English as a foreign language for their undergraduate study. The open-ended interview was addressed by El-Nabih (2014) to all participants in order to find out reasons why they chose this major, challenges they faced, and how they handle obstacles during the program. In-depth information was presented to the audience as fruitful answers such as “I wanted to rebel against the concept that blind people should join a religious field” and “it gives me more acceptance in the society.” These responses represent major concerns consisting of the attitudes that sighted students have towards them and concepts involving motivation when they decided to overcome such negative attitudes with the belief that mastery of English is a valued asset in their society. Again, challenges were the issues drawn from both their impairment such as their handwriting and educational environment such as university announcements, which were recommended to be created based on visual impaired readers. According to the outcomes of this study, all related parties are encouraged to bear in their minds that the idea of looking at visually impaired students as inferior to sighted people should be deleted and any adjustment to accommodate students with visual limitation should prevail.

Another research concerning difficulties in learning English faced by visually impaired students was conducted in order to describe some learning strategies and difficulties encountered by VIS in learning English. Aryanti (2014), the researcher, collected data through interviews and observation of the blind and a low vision undergraduate student. The findings revealed difficulties clearly categorized

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into internal and external difficulties towards four English skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. For individual difficulties, the students informed mainly on the factors from their impairment; for instance, they needed longer time and easily felt fatigued when reading. Moreover, the findings show that issues developed from lecturers, friends, materials, and facilities implied external difficulties. In addition to the barriers in learning English, Aryanti1 (2014) also addressed questions to elicit language learning strategies employed by three participants resulting in different learning strategies: cognitive, compensation, memory, social, and affective strategies.

Similar to the previous study, this study aims to discover challenges which emerged through learning four English language skills. The findings reaffirmed that blindness alone was not able to block second language acquisition when appropriate teaching strategies were applied to students (Topor & Rosenblum, 2013). By applying a questionnaire to 18 participants, the researcher was able to show research results in the form of levels of challenging skills from the most to the least challenging skill. The outcome revealed that the most challenging was writing skill followed by reading, speaking, listening skill as the least challenging skill. Moreover, other variables that affect acquiring the four fundamental English language skills were also mentioned such as improper classroom environment, the accessibility of the materials, and teachers' awareness of the appropriate strategies.

2.7.2 Related Studies on Education and English Language Learning of the Visually Impaired Students in Thailand

Regarding the educational issues of the students with visual impairment in Thailand, Wipana (2012) conducted a research so as to look into the transition program for visually challenged students in Thailand. This study also emphasized the idea that visually impaired students may succeed in their study if their institutions are able to provide facilities that suit their needs. Findings of the study showed that most of the centers offer four types of support service: self-adjustment assistance, academic support, technical support and miscellaneous study-related service. The study also revealed that more than half of the informants with visual loss were offered pre-college preparatory programs while the rest were not. Interestingly, although the pre-college preparatory programs were delivered to the students, problems of having difficulty adjusting to a new environment and new society broadly

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appeared at the university level. This study construes the existing concerns that were depicted among a well-formed education system.

To intensify the concepts of inclusive education resulting from Thai national education policy aimed at providing equality to all students including students with disabilities, Soontornwipast (2012) revealed the finding on experiences gained from the students including the instructors and staff who work in language institute in a public university. By gathering data from the interviews, the researcher pointed out various aspects, both positive and negative experiences from inclusive classrooms. Although participants in the study were different types of students with disabilities, there were blind students as informants. Regarding problems emerged through English teaching in inclusive classrooms; difficulties in producing learning material were mentioned remarkably such as the time-consuming process of converting materials into Braille text. Additionally, intrinsic challenges were expressed by the students with disabilities that they required far more efforts than their sighted peers to survive learning English in the same class with their peers. However, there were some good signs that appeared through the support by the language institute and the service center to facilitate learning.

Another study was a case study conducted in Thailand that aimed to investigate language learning strategies utilized among three first year legally-blind students in a public university. Kongklang (2013), the researcher, collected data by using the questionnaire called Strategy Inventory for Language Learning or SILL version 7.0 Kongklang (2013) as the research instrument. In this research, the researcher carefully ensured the validity and reliability of the instrument before translating it into a Thai version and turning the questionnaire into Braille. Apart from SILL, naturalistic observation and face-to-face interviews were completed to triangulate the data collection. The findings showed that metacognitive strategies were mostly used, followed by the compensation and social strategies. The finding was also reaffirmed by the information received from different sources: interviews and observation. However, the most frequently used strategy in this study was metacognitive, which hasn’t been mentioned in the study conducted by Aryanti (2014). Thus, further study should be carried out to explore the complexity due to the varied characteristics of students with visual impairment.

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2.7.3 Studies in Learning in Inclusive Classroom

As mentioned, concepts of inclusive education have been broadly accepted globally and all over Asia. Among ASEAN, apart from the ratification in the UNCRPD, all the countries also joined the Salamanca Statement which is the document containing the most concrete inclusive education concepts. However, to include the students with disabilities in the general education system requires a number of modifications including educational reforms. Consequently, the literature review of the inclusive education in ASEAN countries was collected and discussed by a group of Japanese researchers aiming to investigate the issues that have been studied and the challenged that should be considered by the stakeholders before continuing the modifications (Horita, et al, 2017). The findings of the studies showed that most of the attitudes towards inclusive education were found as positive and the collaboration between special education teachers and the teachers in mainstream schools was the urgent issue. Additionally, although a majority of the researches revealed that the implementation of the inclusive classroom was found ineffective due to the limitations of learning facilities and challenges in social construction, the teachers were willing to adjust the curriculum and include the students with special needs in the classroom. Finally, the evaluation of the inclusive education was one of the major topics which was investigated among countries in ASEAN. The study reported that the evaluation in inclusive education was a new area to be investigated as more study in this area could uncover more of the advantages and disadvantages and further recommendations for the policies and educational reforms. Therefore, this study presented the positive directions in the increasing awareness of the concept of inclusive education, as well, as the alarm for the stakeholders to keep holding on to the importance of deeper exploration in this area.

Another research that points out an important area in inclusive education was conducted under the objectives to show the relationship between the differences in cultural, historical, geographical, and the political context; and the developments in inclusive education (Beutel, et al, 2019). The study illustrated that not only the educational factors could affect the implementation of the inclusive education, other aspects should be integrated to expand the visions of the relating parties also, in order to fulfill the rights of the learners with special needs.

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The final research was conducted due to the lack of teacher training in English learning programs for the students with special needs which occurred in Japan (Loew, 2016). This study mentioned the major factors that caused the challenges in inclusive classroom education to students with disabilities including the VIS which were classroom management, materials, and learning production. The researcher pointed out that the activities and instructions that caused movement create problems for the VIS and needed to be adjusted to build comprehensiveness for all the students in the classroom. Regarding learning materials, braille translated materials were recommended to be integrated with the learning technologies in order to have written materials to guide the VIS. Moreover, in terms of producing tasks in second language, the blind students generally had issues with producing writing tasks as they required more time than the sighted students to complete the task especially when they had to ask for assistance form their peers. Hence, the research concluded that the teacher training sessions were urgently encouraged and should be provided to the instructors who teach English to the students with disabilities including the VIS inclusive classroom.

In conclusion, although a broad range of topics related to the VIS and other related parties have conveyed the awareness and understanding towards the English language learning of the VIS, challenges in terms of their ELL are waiting to be explored. The further investigation that will be presented in this research is able to fulfill the missing layer of information as insightful data and the expansion of information revealed by the instructors, support staff, and the VIS' parents.

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CHAPTER 3
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research study was conducted to investigate various aspects concerning the backgrounds and positive and negative lived experiences in English language learning of the visually impaired students (VISs), including other key personnel who are the instructors and support staff. In this chapter, the researcher elucidated the relevant details on research design, setting, participants, research instruments, data collection procedures, data analysis, trustworthiness, and ethical issues.

3.1 Research Design

Under the atypical characteristics of the focal participants in this study, together with the research questions and objectiveswhich aim to explore the lived experiences expressed by the voices of the VIS and the reflections of the instructors and support staff in terms of English language learning in an inclusive setting, the researcher decided to employ phenomenological research, which is one of the qualitative researches with the feasible methodology to fit the uniqueness of the phenomenon and the objectives of the study.

Generally, qualitative research methodology enables the researcher to collect data where the issues of the study appear directly from a natural setting (Creswell, 2014). In the light of qualitative research methodology, the qualitative researchers have the opportunity to experience ‘the up-close information’ from the perspective of those subjects who live through the problems without bringing participants into the non-natural situation (Hatch, 2002). In fact, qualitative research basically allows the researcher to reach participants by collecting the data directly through research instruments such as interviews and observation (Saldaña, 2016; Patton, 2012.) These research instruments allow the researcher to position him/herself as the key instrument of the study (Creswell, 2014). Additionally, the researcher is able to make adjustments to reduce anxiety from participants during the data

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collection process under the flexibility of the qualitative research methodology (Maxwell, 2009 & Yin, 2011). Qualitative research also provides space for researchers to reflect data involving personal background, culture, and experience to shape his/her own interpretation (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). Moreover, Dörnyei (2009) concluded that qualitative research is appropriately applied to the dynamic setting and a large variety of individuals. Thus, in this study, qualitative research methodology allows the researcher to explore experiences and reflections through the unique characteristics of participants and the various backgrounds of the participants (Nunan & Bailey, 2009). That is, having determined the research questions of this study, which require deliberate details to describe perspectives emerged through English language learning including challenges and supports needed by the VIS and stakeholders, a qualitative method might be the most suitable research paradigm to take the researcher along the path towards research results. However, to be more specific, one of the qualitative research methods recognized as phenomenological research methodology was selected as the framework in this study.

3.1.1 Phenomenological Research

The term ‘phenomenology’ was originally introduced by Edmund Husserl and followed by Immanuel Kant in the 18th century (Padilla-Diaz, 2015). Having been recognized as the founder of phenomenology, Edmund Husserl explained that to understand the conscious phenomena, the intention to understand reality from merely a single point of view is not enough (Padilla-Diaz, 2015). Research through the setting where the pure essences of the contents of consciousness lies within human perception and intentional consciousness must also be taken into account (Padilla-Diaz, 2015). Moreover, another great philosopher in phenomenological research, Immanuel Kant used the term in his work called, ‘Critique of Pure Reason’, showing the differences between the mental representations of the objects in terms of both the objects understanding independently from experience and on the basis of experience (Parodi, 2008). Another remarkable statement representing the concept of phenomenology has been addressed by Max van Manen (2016) that

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> The essence of a phenomenon is universal, which can be described through a study of the structure that governs the instances or particular manifestation of the essence of that phenomenon... A universal or essence may only be intuited or grasped through a study of the particulars or instances as they are encountered in lived experiences (p. 12).

Phenomenology has also been widely accepted as a research tool to describe human experiences in a certain situation as stated by Marshall and Rossman (2011) that 'Phenomenological approaches seek to explore, describe, and analyze the meaning of individual lived experiences' (p.19). Moreover, to obtain the explanation of each phenomenon, it is essential to bear in mind that elements including the perceptions, perspectives, understandings, and feelings must be best earned from the lived experiences of such situations expressed by a group of people who have actually been in the setting (Patton, 2002).

In terms of the outstanding characteristics of phenomenological research, the differences from other qualitative methodology were remarked upon by Max van Manen (1990) such that

> Phenomenology…does not aim to explicate meanings to specific particular cultures (ethnography), to certain social groups (sociology), ... or to individual's personal life history (biography). Rather, phenomenology attempts to explicate the meanings as we live them in our everyday existences, our lifeworld. (p.11)

Therefore, in this study, to understand how the VIS live their lives through the development of the educational system, particularly English language learning, their lived experiences should be investigated deeply by exploring their elements of thoughts and the way they navigated the path as the certain phenomenon.

3.1.2 Major Characteristics of Phenomenological Research

Firstly, phenomenology analyzes the same matter, which is the lived experience and reality. The lived experiences have been considered as either the essences perceived by consciousness regarding individual experiences and emphasizes the setting aside of such experience like viewing the world from outside, or 'the study of personal experience and requiring a description or interpretation of

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the meanings of phenomena experienced by participants' (Padilla-Diaz, 2015, p. 3). To reach the outcome of each research, the phenomena will be extracted through the participants' lived experience, which may be conveyed differently in the same events (Van Manen, 1990). For example, perceptions on classroom management of an English teacher who has been teaching for ten years might be different from a teacher who has taught for one year. The differences are presented through the lived experiences of these two teachers towards the same topic: classroom management. Therefore, in this study, the voices and reflections of participants are the matter of their lived experiences, which were consciously and differently revealed through their perceptions towards English language learning.

Secondly, the instruments utilized in data collection procedures are mainly in-depth interviews, as well as observation in order to gain richness of the information (Patton, 2002). The process will run through the environment of safety and trust until the life world experience is obtained adequately and reaches the point of saturation (Lauwers, 2013). This characteristic allows the researcher to directly obtain the information from the participants under the setting where they feel comfortable and less pressure to have conversations on the interested area in the study.

Thirdly, another major characteristic regarding the participant selection is the technique used to select participants called 'purposive sampling'. Purposive sampling is one of the main techniques used in qualitative research with many sampling strategies such as criterion, snowball, or extreme case (Creswell, 2014). Generally, to conduct purposive sampling, the researcher will set criteria for participants to correspond with the subject matter of the research (Padilla-Diaz, 2015). Hence, purposive sampling seems to be broadly used to select participants in the phenomenological study to choose the participants who are able to share the same or most similar characteristics and background to reveal lived experiences in phenomenological research (Patton, 2002).

Finally, the characteristic shared among different schools of phenomenological research is the goal of credibility, which functions to ensure that the accuracy of the research will be conducted through the data collection procedures (Lauwers, 2013). Therefore, it is the obligation for the researcher to carefully

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undertake the data collection procedures, especially in the phenomenological study, by creating adequate engagement with participants and gaining the deep description to show the insightful information (Guba & Lincoln, 2005).

By prioritizing these major characteristics, how data were analyzed, thus setting the meaning of lived experiences, also played as the crucial matter in the study. However, the issue of contaminating the researcher's view with the experience of participants is unavoidable as the researcher was directly connected to the experience of the informants. Therefore, another concept to underpin this study was that the researcher had to set aside the bias or pre-assumptions relating to participants' experiences, feelings, and how they responded to a particular situation, as well as attempt to bracket her own experience in order not to mix up the shared experience so as to gain genuine information from all selected participants (Aspers, 2009).

3.2 Settings of the Study

By selecting the VIS as the focal participants, including the other groups of participants, which have responsibilities involving the ELL of the VIS, the setting in this study consists of the education institutes that provide academic and non-academic knowledge either specifically for the VIS or as an inclusive classroom. Thus, the schools and universities will be chosen under these major criteria consisting of firstly, the schools and universities having the VIS as their students; secondly, providing English classes in the inclusive classrooms; and thirdly, have support departments such as the service center or resource room for the VIS including other students with disabilities.

For the schools with inclusive classrooms, the number of schools with inclusive class was found to be approximately 20,000 schools under the management of Primary Educational Service Area Office (PEASO) and Secondary Educational Service Area Office 1 (SESAO) (Special Education Technology, 2017). Unlike The school setting, the university setting in this study includes the universities that have the DSS for providing educational and non-educational services, which have been found throughout Thailand. However, in terms of ELL of the VIS, some of the universities are supported by the staff from language institutes in the universities.

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Consequently, in order not to limit the sources of data collection to merely the central part of Thailand, the researcher conducted the data collection from the VIS studying in schools and universities located in four different regions of Thailand consisting of the Central, Northern, North Eastern, and Southern parts. However, not all schools and universities in these four regions were selected due to the time constraint. Therefore, the researcher decided to select four provinces, which are Bangkok in the Central region, Chiangmai in the Northern region, Khon Kaen in the North Eastern region, and Songkhla in the Southern region. In each region, one school with inclusive classrooms, and one university were chosen, resulting in four schools and four universities as the setting in this study.

3.2.1 School Level

Generally, the VIS attend two types of schools, which are schools for the blind and schools with inclusive education. The first type refers to the schools specifically providing education programs and assistive technology for the students who are blind and visually impaired. The curriculum starts from kindergarten to high school depending on the schools' objectives. Apart from the educational services, the schools for the blind also encourage students to employ knowledge to be able to live normal lives in their communities as well as prepare them to continue their education in the second type, which are the regular schools with inclusive classrooms (Thailand Association of the Blind). Therefore, all students are taught English as one of the compulsory subjects in accordance with the national curriculum.

For the second type of school, four schools under the characteristics of the schools with inclusive classrooms were selected as the setting for school level in this study. The schools with inclusive education were established due to the policies of equality in education in correspondence with the National Education Act of B.E.2542 (1991). As a result of this, there has been the cooperation between the schools for students with disabilities and the regular schools by providing quotas for the disabled students to attend and study in inclusive classrooms with the non-disabled students (Janwattanadachakhul, 2012). Additionally, this type of school has been recognized as the regular school providing educational services for students with disabilities who are transferred from the special schools in order to allow the disabled

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students to study inclusively with other non-disabled students. In terms of English teaching, the national curricular is applied to all the students in the school; therefore, the VIS are required to attend the English classes and study with their sighted peers in every aspect.

3.2.2 University Level

In university level, four universities were selected under the criteria that they provide general education as regulated in the National Education Act, as well as, educational support services or additional assistance provided by the Disability Support Services (DSS) for the students. with disabilities All of the selected universities require students to complete foundation courses including English courses. Therefore, visually impaired students are required to study fundamental English courses during their post-secondary education inclusively in a regular classroom with their peers. However, throughout the program, the students will be supported by the DSS in terms of extra classes arranged in accordance with the coordination with each faculty. The DSS of each university provides educational support under the objectives aiming to assist the students with disabilities, who have difficulties in classroom, to be able to catch up on the lessons and not to lag behind their peers (Kachondham, 2010).

3.3 Participants

In this study, purposive sampling was employed to select participants in accordance with the notions of the qualitative research design (Cohen et al, 2007). In the light of utilizing purposive sampling, one of the sampling strategies known as criterion-selecting strategy helps the researcher select participants under the specific criteria from limited sources (Cohen et al., 2007). In order to pursue the research objectives, which aim to explore lived experience of the VIS and reflections of the stakeholders in relation to English language learning of the VIS, the major criteria will be set up depending on the characteristics of each group of participants.

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3.3.1 Visually Impaired Students

To explore the voices of the students with visual impairment, the first group of participants, which is the focal participants in the study, was selected among visually impaired students, who are particularly considered as the rare population in educational settings. All of the VIS in this study were studying in either university or school levels. All the participants in this group will be the VIS who study in an inclusive classroom with other sighted students. For school level, 5 participants volunteered from four regular schools with inclusive education. For the university level, 4 participants were selected from the list ranging from first-year to fourth-year students provided by the DSS of the targeted universities (Kachondham, 2010). However, numbers of participants were limited due to the actual number of the VIS in the academic year. Totally, 9 VIS were the informants representing data to be collected in four regions as showed in table 3.1. To increase comprehensiveness to the focal participants of the study, details of each student with visual impairment were elaborated as the following:

Context of Participants

VIS in School Level

ST1: The student was born as the sighted baby and turned to be blind when he was seven due to retinopathy. Earlier, he started kindergarten and primary level in the regular school, and moved to the school for the blind since he lost his eyesight. Although he was seven years old, he had to move back and started at the kindergarten level to start learning braille and other living skills. He studied at the school for the blind until he finished grade 6 and was accepted by the inclusive school to continued his secondary and high school.

ST2: This student was also born as a sighted girl, so she started her education in the regular school. When she was studying in grade 2, she had an accident in her left eye. However, she did not lose her eyesight immediately, but gradually turned blind in the following 4 months. After she lost her eyesight, she was sent to the school for the blind which was a boarding school. At the special school, she was taught braille and mobility skills until she was ready to independently move with safety. She studied there until grade 6 and moved to the inclusive school at grade 7.

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ST3: This student was born with normal eyesight and started his kindergarten in the regular school. Later, he got an infection form bacteria in one eye and had glaucoma in the other eye, so the doctor suggested that he attend the school for the blind and he started his elementary level again as a blind student. He mentioned that most of the VIS would be sent to the regular school after graduating grade 6 to comply with the school policy. Hence, after grade 6, he moved to the regular school and continued his high school in the inclusive setting.

ST4 and ST5: These two students were born with normal eyesight; however, they lost their eyesight due to the retinopathy of prematurity when they were babies. This had their first three years of education at the school for the blind. Later, they continued their secondary and high school in regular schools.

VIS in University Level

ST 6: The student was born in the premature state and had retinopathy of prematurity. His eyesight was gradually lost and he turned to be totally blind when he was in high school. Hence, for this student, he spent all of his school life in the regular school. However, he also attended special school to study orientation and mobility skills at the same time. He described that to admit that I was blind was a very important step as this made me realize and start living a new life as a blind student with positive perceptions towards both physicality and mentality.

ST8: This student was born with visual impairment. She had short eyesight at the level of low vision. As a student with low vision, she could survive her education at school and in the university by wearing eyeglasses. However, assistance from her friends and teachers were necessary and very beneficial for her education.

ST7 and **ST9:** Both of students were born totally blind, so they started learning at special school for the blind to finish their elementary and primary level, and moved to the regular school when in high school. They revealed in similar ways that their families was worried about their daily living and preferred them staying at their hometown to moving to study in the city center. They also admitted that this perception made them lack experience in real life.

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Table 3.1

The Personal Information of the Visually Impaired Students

Students	Age	Year		Level of Visual Impairment
		High School	University	
ST1	18	Grade 11		Blind
ST2	18	Grade 11		Blind
ST3	19	Grade 12		Low vision
ST4	19	Grade 12		Low vision
ST5	21	Grade 12		Blind
ST6	23	-	3rd year	Blind
ST7	24	-	1st year	Blind
ST8	21	-	2nd year	Low vision
ST9	25	-	2nd year	Blind

3.3.2 Instructors of the Visually Impaired Students

The second group of participants consists of the instructors from the chosen schools and universities to deliver another layer of information, apart from the major target as the VIS. The instructors were selected under the criteria that they are the English teachers or lecturers who teach English for the VIS. The 5 schoolteachers, who teach English in both schools for the blind and schools with inclusive classrooms, were chosen to present the reflections in terms of challenges which emerged through the VIS's ELL in school level. Additionally, 4 university lecturers who were assigned to teach English for the undergraduate VIS in each university were also be targeted to deliver their perceptions towards the ELL of VIS.

3.3.3 Support Staff

The third category of participants consists of the support staff, who also play important roles to carry on the process of delivering English language teaching to the VIS. The first subgroup of this category consists of 4 support staff, who work in the DSS, which is a service of the universities. These officers work as

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the coordinator of many projects in relation to the educational and non-educational activities for disabled students. The second subgroup are 4 resource teachers who work as the teachers in the schools and are also responsible for the activities and facilitating VIS inside and outside schools. Altogether, there were 8 participants in this group to give their reflections as the role of supporting sectors.

Table 3.2

Number of Participants in the Study

Groups of Participants	**Participants N = (26)**	**Number of Participants in Each Group**
Visually Impaired Students	9	5 students in the schools 4 undergraduate students in the universities
Instructors	9	5 school teachers 4 university lecturers
Support Staff	8	4 resource teachers in the schools 4 staff from the DSS in the universities

3.4 Research Instruments

Regarding the characteristics of phenomenological research, the researcher decided to employ the in-depth interview as the major research instrument and the classroom observation to collect comprehensive data in accordance to each research question as illustrated in Table 3.2.

To begin with the main research instrument, the semi-structured interviews were used as the instrument to elicit participants' lived experience and the process of the interview should be conducted under the relaxing and trusting atmosphere (Moustakas, 1994). Additionally, the in-depth interview was also recommended by Creswell (2009) as the useful tool to gain rich information and allow the researcher to explore the depths of participants' minds in phenomenological research that aims to analyze their lived experience. Consequently, it was the most suitable to use the in-depth interview to obtain information for every research question and from all participants.

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However, to cover as many aspects as expected for the research's objectives, the other instrument was created to collect the data reflecting interactions involving ELL in the classroom. Consequently, observation was selected as another instrument utilized alongside the interview to bring out details (Fraenkel, et al, 2014) which appear through interaction between the VIS, instructors and the sighted students, including other non-verbal actions in relation to various perceptions on ELL of the VIS.

In the following sections, the characteristics of the in-depth interview utilized in this study is firstly explained as the main research instrument and is followed by the observation as the additional tool to collect data emerged through the English classes in schools and universities.

Table 3.3

Summary of Research Instruments according to Research Questions

Research questions	Participants	Instruments
Main question: What are the lived experiences of the VIS on English language learning in inclusive classroom across regions in Thailand?	The VIS, The instructors, support staff, and	Interview and observation
Sub-questions:		
1. What is the learning background on English language learning of the VIS in inclusive classroom?	The VIS	Interview
2. What are the voices of the VIS towards English language learning in inclusive classroom?	The VIS	Interview and observation
3. What are the reflections of the instructors and support staff towards English language learning of the VIS in inclusive classroom?	The instructors, support staff	Interview and observation

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3.4.1 In-depth Interview

To gain the insightful information in relation to the lived experience background in ELL of the VIS, the voices of the VIS towards ELL, and the reflections of the instructors, and the support staff, the researcher decided to employ in-depth interview as the major instrument in this study. For phenomenological research, in-depth interviews were employed to obtain meaningful lived experiences. This statement was supported by Seidman (2013) that the heart of conducting interviews in research is an interest in other individuals' stories because the stories as such are of worth. This concept also links to the root of in-depth interview revealed by Van Manen (1990) as the interest in understanding lived experiences of other people and the meaning they make of the experiences. To understand an individual, it is impossible for the researcher to step into that person's stream of consciousness or experience (Schutz, 1967) and allow the researcher to understand each individual perfectly. However, accessing subjective understanding allows the researcher to dig for deeper information and be able to explore the context of people's behavior leading to the meaning of that behavior or action (Blumer, 1969).

To particularly shape the characteristics of the interview used in phenomenological study, the phenomenological interview was introduced by Seidman (2013) as the form of interview employing the in-depth and phenomenological based questions, which have been composed from life history interviewing (Bertaux, 1981) and focused, in-depth interviewing drawn from assumptions towards phenomenology and particularly from Schutz (1967).

Generally, in terms of how the researcher addresses the interview questions, structured, semi-structured, and unstructured interviews have been accepted among qualitative researchers. Structured and semi-structured interviews are addressed to the informants with one or several series of questions designed to elicit specific or less specific answers from respondents' resulting in information to be compared and contrasted between individuals. (Fraenkel et al, 2014). However, semi-structured interviews appear to allow more flexibility for the researcher to make adjustments in accordance with the real setting and the divergence of participants. Consequently, the semi-structured interview was finalized to be the research

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instrument. The interview questions were shaped under the light of concepts of phenomenological interview as elaborated in the following section.

Phenomenological Interview Model

Seidman's interview model marked its characteristic by providing the series of interviews consisting of three separate sets of interviews aiming to elicit different aspects of informants' lived experience. The concepts of each interview could be explained respectively as interview one, two, and three (Seidman, 2013):

Interview one: The researcher addressed questions in this group to stimulate participants' background focusing on historical and biographical details. By activating such background, the interviewees would be able to restructure their previous experience involving their family, school, friends, and teachers. Thus, the 'how' questions are the major type to be asked, so the participants could narrate their situations in the past experiences. For example, as appeared in the Interview Guide for the VIS, the students were asked how they had lived their educational lives in the past to activate the background picture of their lives as the students in either school or university levels.

Interview two: This group of interview questions aims to elicit information revealing behaviors and actions towards people or challenges they had been through regarding the focal points of the study which were the ELL of the VIS, and studying English in an inclusive setting. In other words, questions were generated in order to encourage participants to tell more concrete details upon the areas of the study. For instance, the VIS were asked to explain their experiences more specifically towards how they perceived their English skills.

Interview three: The final group of interview questions was addressed to acquire meaning and senses as the conclusion of the situations. In this section, participants were required to think deeper than in the previous interview because they had to think of the factors which brought them to the present point in their lives. However, Seidman (2013) noted that the third interview would be productive when the first and the second interviews are held properly so that participants could be fully activated to provide information as a foundation for the final interview. Hence, after the background and experiences involving interesting areas were asked, the questions starting with the phrase such as 'given what you have

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constructed in these interviews' or 'based on your experiences' were asked, followed by the body of questions asking about the expectations or the importance of the VIS regarding ELL or instructional styles. By using the term 'expectations' and 'importance' the informant will be encouraged to interact with their experiences revealed from the previous two interviews and find meaning of their present situations (Seidman, 2013). The series of phenomenological interviews were firstly created in both Thai and English language before conducting the item-objective congruence (IOC) process. However, Thai language was used through all the interview sessions due to the familiarity in mother tongue language resulting in less pressure to elicit information from the interviewees.

Validity of the research instruments was restrictedly confirmed before the data collection proceeded. In this research, the index of item-objective congruence (IOC) was applied to examine the validity of the questions used in the interview guide. The index of item-objective congruence (IOC) was originally developed by Rovinelli and Hambleton in 1977 aiming for use in test development for evaluating content validity at each item during the development stage. To conduct the IOC, experts are required to rate the individual items as to whether each item can or cannot measure the objectives set by the researcher. The items firstly listed in the research instrument were the tentative questions for the phenomenological interview guide. By being congruent, it meant that the interview questions were able to elicit data that contribute the lived experience of the participants, including the appropriateness of the words used in the items, which were not harmful to the students with visual impairment.

In this study, to obtain the effective evaluation, three experts were requested to be the evaluators on the items provided in the interview guides (Appendix G). To rate each question, the experts rated each item with three different degrees of congruence from -1, 0, to 1. Generally, by rating -1, it shows that the questions or the observation elements are incongruent to the research objectives. In contrast, if the researcher rates 0 to the items, it means the items are either questionable, or unclear for the research objectives. Finally, the rating of 1 indicates that the items are congruent to the research objectives. After the experts rated all items, the IOC values were summed up as the total scores and divided by the numbers

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of the experts resulting in the IOC value (Appendix H). Later, the IOC values were compared to the cutoff score at 0.5. The cutoff score was explained by Rovinelli and Hambleton (1977) as the value ‘to separate "good" from "bad" items and can be based on some absolute standard relating to specific proportions of perfect ratings for the items’. Thus, the items with the value of above 0.5 to 1.0 remained as the question items used for the research instruments.

After the researcher obtained all the congruent questions, the researcher conducted the pilot study by addressing the interview guide to three students with visual impairment studying in a public university. After the pilot study, there were slight adjustments to the questions in order to create the most comprehensive versions. Finally, four sets of questions were addressed to all participants according to the different categories of the informants. The first interview set was addressed to the main group of participants who are the VIS. The Interview Guide for the VIS appears in Appendix A. The following sets of the interviews consist of the Interview Guide for the Instructors appearing in Appendix B and the Interview Guide for the Support Staff as appears in Appendix C.

3.4.2 Observation

In addition to the descriptive information derived from the interview, another qualitative data collection utilized in this study would be the classroom observation in order to allow the researcher to explore the reflections emerged in the real setting (Appendix D). Regarding this instrument, Marshall and Rossmann (2011) claimed that observation has been considered as an essential data collection method to reveal different layers of information in terms of complexity through the interactions among participants in natural settings. By employing observation, the researcher was able to collect both conscious and unconscious behaviors of the VIS and the instructors in the classroom in order to use as either supporting data or for cross checking with the descriptions from the in-depth interview.

3.4.2.1 Role of the Researcher

Under the light of qualitative research notions, there are four different roles for the researcher ranging from complete participant or participant observation to complete observer or non-participant observer (Fraenkel, et al, 2014).

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For participant observation, researcher actually participates in the situation or setting he/she is observing. When the researcher takes the role as complete participant, none of the members in the group knows that they are being observed. In contrast, the non-participant observation, the researcher does not participate in the activities being observed, but rather sits and watches the situations in the settings. The role of researcher under the second type of observation includes the role of 'observer-as-participant', in which the identity of researcher will be known to the group being observed, but not performing as the member of the group (Fraenkel, et al, 2014). For example, if the researcher is interested in the situations in the school, he/she might conduct a series of interviews with teachers, visit the classes, and talk to students without any attempt to participate in the activities.

In this study, the researcher is going to address herself as the 'observer-as-participant' where the VIS engaged in typical activities or processes in the English classroom in the real setting. However, by being directly observed, participants may not react the same way they usually do, resulting in the Hawthorne effect (Creswell, 2014). Therefore, to avoid this threat during the observation, the researcher ensured that participants were familiar with being observed or collected the data after the familiarity between the observer and participants had been created. The researcher would carefully take note of what was happening in the situation in order to understand how the participants performed their actions, either individually or interactions among each other in the same situation (Hatch 2002).

3.4.2.2 Observation Guide

The observations proceeded by following along the areas specified in the observation guide as in Appendix D. The areas to be observed consist of classroom arrangement, mode of instructions, assistive technology used in the setting, participations, and interactions of the VIS, the instructors, and their sighted peers. The items which appeared in the observation guide are shaped by using the elements regarding external factors influencing the VIS's English language learning elaborated in chapter two. Settings of the class to be observed in the research were the English classrooms teaching inclusively in the selected universities, and schools. The observed English classes were taught by the instructors who were the informants for this research.

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3.5 Data Collection

Generally, the method of collecting non-numerical data, the meaningful and in-depth information derived from participants' experiences, is vital a feature in qualitative research. In other words, the data collected from the research instruments should include deep descriptions of the data to generate narrative answers for the research questions (Hatch, 2002). Although the characteristics of qualitative approach are more appropriate for a mall number of participants, it serves as a well-grounded foundation for further studies (Neuman, 2013). As a result of this, the data collection procedures in this study were designed to ensure that the data from specific groups of participants were rich enough to describe the fullest information ranging from education background in ELL, challenges concerning learning English faced by the VIS, the instructors, and support staff. Thus, in order to gain a large number of details by taking into account what the participants had been through, the majority of data were collected from the interviews together with the classroom observations. Hence, to reflect participants' voices, these main instruments were implemented independently corresponding to the available time of participants and the schedules of their English classes. All in all, the whole process of data collection starting from the first stage to the final stage of the study was presented in Figure 3.1 to provide the comprehensible picture for this study.

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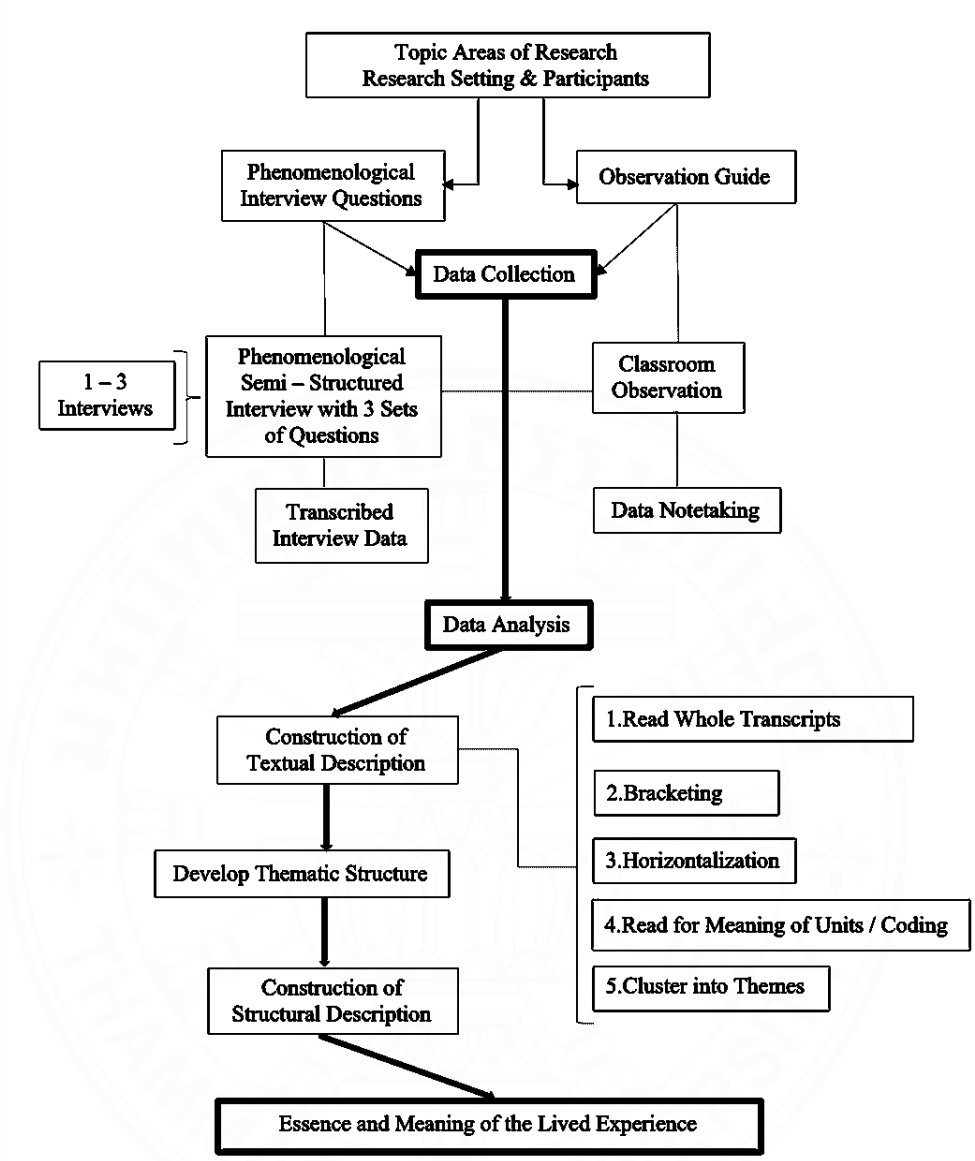


Figure 3.1 Research Design Model

3.5.1 Data Collection Procedures

Before the data collection was set off, the researcher was fully aware of the process of obtaining permission from participants and authorities in order to ensure transparency on ethical issues. The permission letter (Appendix E) and consent form (Appendix F) were granted before the researcher started the data collection process. Under the reason that the settings in this research are located in different regions across Thailand, the data collection procedures were planned depending on the academic timetables of the schools and universities. During the data

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collection period, the information was gathered from the interviews with the participants alongside the observation as agreed between the researcher and participants and according to the English class schedules provided by the schools and universities. Therefore, the details of the interview processes and the classroom observations could be elaborated separately.

3.5.1.1 Interview Process

For the interview process, the frequency of the interview varied according to the possible arrangements. The researcher was able to conduct the data collection in each region for around one to two months until the data was saturated. Such frequency was estimated under the guide for phenomenological interview provided by Seidman (2013). Additionally, the length of the interview was different depending on the amount and comprehensiveness of the collected data. Regarding the length of each set of interviews, Seidman (2016) has also guided that a 90-minute interview format is the appropriate length for each of the three interviews. Importantly, the structure of the interview (interview one, two, and three) should be strictly performed so as to maintain the function of each interview and allow the information to be rich enough to the point of saturation.

In this study, after the participants showed their clear understanding on the research objectives and procedures, the interview process was conducted on each participant one by one in order to allow the participants to express their thoughts with the lowest pressure. The researcher began the process by creating the arrangement for interview sessions to collect data from these participants. The one to three interviews were addressed to each participant individually according to the informant's convenience. The different sets of guided interview questions were addressed to each participant depending on participants' roles as appeared in Appendices A, B, and C. However, before the conversation started, each participant was informed that the audio record would be applied from the beginning to the end of the interview. The transcription process of the interview data was immediately proceeded after each interview was conducted. Later, the interview transcriptions were sent back to the research participants for verification. All participants were free to provide feedback in relation to the correctness of their ideas or in case they would like to make adjustments to the information that came to their minds after they read

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through the transcripts. However, in case of the circumstance where it was not possible to create the braille version, the researcher ensured the verification of information by sending the soft files to the VIS after the interviews were transcribed.

Along with the interview process, another consideration that the researcher had to bear in mind during the study was the concept of ‘bracketing’, in which the researcher had to set aside her bias due to the unavoidable engagement and relationships between the researcher and the participants which developed during the data collection process (Moustakas, 1994). This concept aims to get rid of the researcher’s subjectivity, attain objective information, and stay away from preconceptions. In this study, bracketing was conducted by clarification of the researcher's own experience, knowledge, and difficulties involving the phenomena (Moustakas, 1994). In addition to applying the bracketing concept to create bias-free data collection process, such concept was also important to the research in terms of its role to intensify validity of the study.

3.5.1.2 Observation Process

The other research instrument in this study is the observation. To conduct observation, the researcher attended the English classes as the observer-as-participant. The number of classroom observations depended on the schedules provided by the schools and the universities. When the timetable of the English classes had been identified, all the school teachers and lecturers, who were responsible for teaching in each class, would be informed and asked for the consent before the observation. During the observation, the observation guide. as appeared in Appendix D. was employed as the list of areas to be observed. In each classroom, the researcher conducted the note taking to record the data emerged through the class as much as possible. While English was being taught, the actions and interactions of the VIS and the instructors including the sighted peer were carefully spotted. Such actions and interactions included all ranges of difficulties and positive reactions towards their ELL. All the data observed in the classrooms were transcribed in order to use as the supporting information for data analysis.

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3.6 Data Analysis

Data analysis in qualitative approach has been accepted as an ongoing process so that the researcher is able to analyze the various ideas or information that emerges during the data collection process anytime since the starting point of data collection (Hatch, 2002; Patton, 2002; Stake, 2010). Data obtained in this study came in a large amount of information in the form of either written or typed documents derived from both phenomenological interviews and classroom observations. Consequently, not only the coding techniques, but particular data analysis techniques were also applied to analyze the data collected from the phenomenological interviews and for the data collected from observation (Seidman, 2013).

3.6.1 The Process of Phenomenological Data Analysis

The process of phenomenological data analysis in this study is influenced by the combination of processes introduced by Moustakas (1994) and Creswell (2014). Although these two scholars presented the analysis process differently, most of the processes follow along a similar sequence and share common concepts within each step. The analysis process consists of the steps as the following:

(1) Bracketing

The process of analysis begins with identifying and removing personal expression, prejudgment or researcher's experience that might cause bias towards the obtained data. In this step, the researcher could declare herself by explaining background information that the researcher had already known before conducting the study. After personal prejudgment was set aside, the information was analyzed mainly based on the experience of participants.

(2) Horizontalization

When the researcher bracketed personal prejudgment from the data, irrelevant information was deleted. In this stage, the researcher perceived data by giving equal value to all expressions revealed from the participants.

(3) Grouping relevant topics

In this step, almost all remaining narratives were the data associated with the areas of the study. All relevant quotes and expressions were

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grouped as clusters. Each cluster was called a unit of meaning or meaning unit, which could be understood as its core theme. In this stage, data from observation will be brought to compare and validate the information from the first source.

(4) Construction of textual description

The explanations for the units of meaning were built from participants' perceptions in narrative format. These explanations were called textual description, which functioned as the useful information to assist the researcher to understand participants' experience and will be used as the foundation to create structures of the phenomenon.

(5) Construction of structural descriptions

When the textual descriptions were written, the researcher used the textual description as the base to generate structural descriptions. The structural descriptions were formed in order to mark the patterns or repeated experiences of participants and facilitate the researcher to identify the phenomenon.

(6) Identifying the essence of the phenomenon

In this step, the researcher obtained essential elements of the data including the narrative of what has taken place as the textual description, the narrative of how the experience occurred as the structural description, and the meaning units as the different themes emerged from the experiences. The textual and structural description will be synthesized to reaffirm the common composites expressed repeatedly by participants. The synthesized descriptions were considered as the universal description, that was considered as the essences of the phenomenon.

3.6.2 Coding Techniques

Apart from attaining the meaning units or themes mentioned in the phenomenological data analysis, the researcher decided to utilize one of the widely used tools in qualitative data analysis called 'coding' to analyze information derived from the observation (Fraenkel et al, 2014). As explained by Saldana (2016), coding is a transitional process turning the collected data into more extensive data analysis. The same scholar states that coding is a cyclical act that requires more than two cycles of coding with a rarely perfect attempt for the first cycle of coding. Until the second cycle, recoding will be conducted in order to filter, highlight and focus the salient

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features of the qualitative data to develop ‘categories, theme, concepts, grasping meaning, and/or building theory. (Saldana, 2016, p. 9)

Also, in this study, the researcher implemented coding as the analytical technique to analyze data collected from the observation. After the data were transcribed, the researcher started the coding process consisting of the first cycle coding, the second cycle coding, and synthesizing the data. The first cycle is the process that happens during the initial coding. In this cycle the researcher developed the initial codes from the data collected by using different methods such as Process coding, Vivo coding, and Concept coding (Salnada, 2016). As described by Saldana (2016), most of the coding methods are not discrete and few of them are overlapped slightly in function. Consequently, the researcher applied different coding methods depending on what sort of data emerged during the data collection.

After lists of codes were created, both intra- and intercoder reliability were used to ensure the analytic rigor of the content analysis. Theoretically, intracoder reliability means ‘the consistent manner by which the researcher codes’ (Given Sage, 2008, p. 445) and the intercoder reliability relies on the independent coding from at least two researchers (Given Sage, 2008). In this study, the intracoder maintains the consistency of the coding; hence, the second cycle starts. The primary goal of this cycle enabled the researcher to shape categories, subthemes, and themes. Methods applied in this cycle was remarked on by Saldana (2016) that they are more challenging due to the analytical skills required such as classifying, integrating, and synthesizing. Next, the researcher refined the themes or categories grouped from the code. However, before writing up the research findings, the intercoder was also employed to confirm the reliability. At this point another coder was asked to help by coding the same sets of transcribed interviews. The codes were kept and removed after discussion between the two coders. Finally, the researcher synthesized the data and constructed the textual and structural descriptions as the research findings.

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3.7 Trustworthiness

Holliday (cited in Paltridge & Phakiti, 2015) mentioned that the nature of the qualitative approach unavoidably includes subjectivity; hence, how well the subjectivity is managed could be presented by the trustworthiness of the research. To be the trustworthy research, there are elements consisting of credibility, confirmability, dependability, and transferability (Guba & Lincoln, 2005).

To begin with credibility, the study is able to achieve this element through triangulation of data. Basically, triangulation is described as the utilization of different data collection methods so as to acquire various data sources leading to the verification of inferences from the data (Schwandt et al, 2007). In this study, the researcher equipped the triangulation through using two data collection instruments: interviews to collect deep descriptions from three groups of participants: the VIS, the instructors, and the support staff. Additionally, the last room observation was carried out to gain non-verbal information and interactions that happened in English classes between the VIS, the instructors, and the sighted classmates.

Another element is the confirmability, which 'authenticates the data and interpretations were actually collected during the course of the study' (Schwandt et al, 2007). The information accuracy can be accomplished by using member checking by sending back the final version of transcription or themes to participants and letting them determine whether the information is accurate or not. The researcher also included this technique in the data collection process by sending both the audio transcript from the interview and note taking from observation to the participants to verify whether they agree with the content (Creswell, 2014).

The next component to enhance trustworthiness for the research is dependability. The dependability occurred when the researcher requested an expert to review and evaluate the transcripts. This process is called external edit, in which the researcher included this aspect by ensuring that the interview question guides were reviewed and adjusted in order to reach the most suitable version for the participants.

The final element is transferability, the very important component that could delimit the restriction of qualitative approach regarding the issue of

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generalization. Since transferability means being able to apply research findings to similar situations, the researcher was fully aware of using rich and deep description to convey the findings (Creswell, 2014 & Fraenkel et al, 2012). In this research, the researcher provided details to describe settings, characteristics of participants and interaction which emerged during the data collection process in order to allow the finding to be transferable to the other situations with similar settings or participants sharing the same conditions. Hence, the researcher hopes that the lived experience of the VIS and other participants will be applied to other similar contexts or as foundation information for educational development.

3.8 Ethical Issues

Since the major data collection used in this research was under the light of qualitative methodology, there were great concerns on ethical issues that the researcher was bound to clarify (Paltridge & Phakiti, 2015). By providing information for the research instruments: observation and interview, participants unavoidably expressed their own thoughts and actions that reflected real situations. Hence, the first responsibility of the researcher was to preserve participants' integrity by getting permission from participants and present clear information involving the study such as research objectives or research procedures before starting the process (Paltridge & Phakiti, 2015).

In order to retain ethical concern through the study, the next obligation was to protect participants' privacy. Pseudonyms were used to protect participants' identities as well as to ensure that none of the data collected will be utilized in the harmful direction. Importantly, all participants were allowed to drop out of the study if the confidentiality was found to have been disclosed (Fraenkel et al, 2012).

The final point that should be kept in the researcher's mind was that all participants were treated with respect (Fraenkel et al, 2012), especially the key participants in this study who were students with visual impairment. Due to their visual limitation, the researcher paid a lot more consideration to verbal language used when addressing interview questions leading to no physical or psychological harm.

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CHAPTER 4
RESEARCH FINDINGS

To pursue the purposes of this qualitative phenomenological study to reach the overarching goal providing the evidence as the research-based document, the essences and meaning of English language learning (ELL) in inclusive classroom (IC) were collected from the perceptions of the visually impaired students (VIS), the instructors, and the support staff to elicit the experiences from the participants resulting in the essences of the phenomenon. These essences were derived from the phenomenological analysis which started from horizontalization, followed by creating composite textual descriptions and mapping them into structural descriptions as elaborated in chapter 3 (Moustakas, 1994; Creswell, 2014; Van Manen, 2016).

Along with the phenomenological analysis procedures, the researcher preceded the textual descriptions by horizontalizing the data collected from all research instruments. The relevant statements, responses and the observed information, were grouped into units or themes including the ad verbatim quotations as the in-depth information revealed by the participants. With the horizontalization of the data, the researcher marked each of the statements relevant to the purpose of the study, and valued each quote equally. Thus, the repeated expressions from the participants were clustered under the light of the topics which appeared in the research questions.

The research questions were addressed to draw perceptions and voices of the participants derived from their ELL and inclusive classroom experiences. There were three sub-questions used in this study to connect each part of the lived experiences of the participants and accumulate the data to answer the main research questions and reach the essences of the phenomenon.

Research questions:

Main question:

1. What are the lived experiences of the VIS on English language learning in the inclusive classroom across Thailand?

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Sub-Questions:

1. What is the learning background on English language learning of the VIS in inclusive classroom?

2. What are the voices of the VIS towards their English language learning in inclusive classroom?

3. What are the reflections of the instructors and support staff towards English language learning of the VIS in inclusive classroom?

Regarding the functions of each research question, the first question was addressed to draw the picture of the ELL in the past and how the IC appeared in the VIS' education background; the second question functioned as the guide to collect the experiences towards their ELL and IC that they have encountered recently, including the ideas or the plan of the VIS on how they improve their ELL and the factors which might affect their ELL development. Finally, the third question was the supporting information from the English teachers and the support staff as the key persons playing vital roles in the ELL in the IC of the VIS.

To obtain the meaningful data for these three questions, the semi-structured interview questions were created as the guiding questions starting with their background stories and followed by the questions aiming to collect the deeper descriptions involving how they feel, their emotions, challenges, and in-depth experiences on their ELL and their perceptions on inclusive classroom concepts. Apart from the semi-structured interview, classroom observation was also applied to collect the non-verbal information from the VIS, the instructors, and the sighted students. Together with the findings from the research instruments, the descriptions on context and details of the participants were elaborated as prior information to understand the diversities and meaning of the data in Table 3.1.

Horizontalization and Textual Descriptions

After the list of relevant statements was created, the overlapping statements were removed and the remaining statements were grouped into meaningful units and named as the themes. At first, the themes were discussed according to each research question and presented along with the quotes originally mentioned by the participants. This was where the coding process began. The researcher applied the In Vivo Coding by highlighting the actual phrases relayed by the participants and the

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Affective coding methods through which the emotions, values, conflicts, and evaluations expressed by the participants were investigated (Saldana, 2016).

Although each of the three research questions in this study provide different functions, the narrations seemed to be interrelated and overlapped across each question. Hence, each research question's objective provided the answers that could be very useful for details in the particular timeline leading to the descriptive lived experiences of the VIS as the answer for the main research question. Therefore, according to the integrating of the overlapping themes from each research question, the followings are the textual descriptions reported as themes:

4.1 Perceptions towards ELL

4.2 Pedagogical Aspects

4.3 English Skills of the VIS

4.4 Importance of ELL for the VIS

4.5 Perceptions towards Inclusive Classroom

Each theme will be discussed as the findings presenting the excerpts from the interview and information during classroom observation from all groups of participants and reported by integrating the answers from the three research question while aiming to answer only one research question: the main question. The following table displays the themes, subthemes, and opinions of the participants.

4.1 Theme 1: Perceptions towards ELL

The first theme for the research question might be relatively broad as the findings portrayed a wide range of the experiences in the past when the VIS were asked to elaborate their experience on ELL. However, it was the relevant information that could introduce the VIS's ELL background and promptly spelt out their feelings through self-evaluation towards the ELL as a whole concept. Through the interview and classroom observation, the VIS recalled their views and their feelings towards ELL, including how they saw ELL as a subject matter. Various aspects were grouped as subthemes according to the most addressed perceptions from the VIS: perceptions derived from personal issues; perceptions derived from aspects involving ELL; the perceptions towards transitional periods; and limitations in ELL.

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Table 4.1

Summary of Theme and Subthemes for Theme 1: Perceptions towards ELL

Themes	Subthemes	Areas / Opinions
4.1 Perceptions towards ELL	4.1.1 Perceptions Derived from Personal Issues	a. Negative aspects - Feeling self-doubt as being the VIS - Feeling dislike towards English - Being treated as special student in class resulting in feeling isolated - Feeling indifferent in terms of auditory skills b. Positive aspects - Impressive background experience during school events such as attended the activities with international schools - Self-encouragement - Preference in ELL
	4.1.2 Perceptions Derived from Sspects Involving ELL	- The ineffectiveness of English education in Thailand in terms of failure of turning theories into practice and repetitiveness in teaching - Curriculum were unable to be used in reality and keep repeating teaching grammar - Understanding from teachers and instructional methods/styles in class by arranging mixed activities and providing comprehensive explanation. - Interaction between teachers and the VIS - Accessibility to learning sources
	4.1.3 Perceptions towards Transitional Periods	- Transitional periods: Self adjustment due to the paramount difference in level of difficulty - Increasing self-confidence in ELL - Higher motivation
	4.1.4 Limitations in ELL	- Unable to find learning source outside class - Impracticality in online learning - Lack of learning strategies - Workloads from other subjects

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4.1.1 Perceptions Derived from Personal Issues

When the VIS were asked to express their thoughts about English, they primarily began their description on the negative feelings under different reasons involving their perceptions according to personal issues such as doubt towards themselves and feeling discouraged, having no knowledge and understanding in English, and comparing themselves to the sighted students. In this subtheme, the VIS revealed their personal attitudes of how they linked their intrinsic condition to the ELL resulting in the wall they built as the presumption towards the level of difficulty of the English subject. Therefore, the students with the condition of being blind or having low visions primarily considered themselves as having very low potential in ELL. Some of the VIS even posed themselves as the factors that blocked their ELL ability in the way that not much improvement occurred despite their high effort.

ST7: *"It is quite strange and I do not understand that most of us, my seniors and I, are not good at English. I have put in a lot of effort, but keep failing."*

ST5: *"Well, let me think which part of English I am good at. Huh! If you ask me whether I want to be better in English, I would say I wanted to, but I am telling you that I, myself, could not be better than I am, really."*

ST7: *"Among the senior blind students, some of them are inefficient in English which is strange why we are not good at English."*

"*I do not feel skilled at English. I think it is me, myself. I have not found an English teacher who I feel impressed with."*

The interview statement showed that the VIS presumed that they are not good at English even though they put a lot of effort into English class and seemed to be discouraged in their ELL. Hence, the VIS created barriers for themselves they could not to overcome as they think English is an unfriendly subject. Additionally, the feeling of dislike towards English subjects was mentioned along with the experiences of failing to pay attention from their early chance in ELL resulting in the difficulties and inadequate foundation when they realized that they would like to take the ELL seriously.

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ST8: *"The feeling of dislike was imprinted in my thoughts, so I could remember only for the exams, and forget everything."*

ST3: *"I tried a lot back then, but my English was not good. No, I think my English foundation was zero. I had to start the foundation again, but still could not catch up with (sighted) friends."*

ST9: *"When I was in primary school, I did not have English knowledge at all. Then I moved to high school, it was even more difficult. Although the teacher agreed to let me pass if I could memorize and answer the questions orally, I still failed."*

Interestingly, being unintentionally treated as a special student in class by the teachers also conveyed the negative experience towards their ELL as the VIS started to feel isolated when they were more focused on than the other sighted peers.

ST9: *"'Teacher looked at us as if we were different and needed special care. This made me have no friends. I feel that my primary school treated me like that so often that I had a thought that I could hangout only with the blind students and we felt like giving up to be with the sighted friends. I had this feeling until high school."*

There are statements asserting their status of not being different from the others and not requiring to be treated more specially than the others. Also, there were the statements of the VIS which insisted that the presumption of having superior listening and speaking in English skills than the sighted students might not be always true.

ST1: *"People might think that when we cannot see things, our ears will perform better. I think that's not true. It is because we cannot see, so we rely more on our ears. We need to practice more of our auditory nerve and practice listening frequently."*

ST6: *"Yes, we do not want anything special...do not want extra things or more than other people, but we just want things to be in accordance with our lives."*

On the opposite side of negative perceptions, the VIS exhibited their view in the positive direction by mentioning pleasant experiences in terms of their personal views, resulting as inspirations on preferences in English and their

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motivation from learning by mistakes, including the ELL aspects relating to appropriateness in teaching style.

According to their personal experience, the VIS relayed their positive opinions that they had impressive experience in international events with the students from international schools. However, the VIS mentioned that they were impressed by studying in English class without being afraid of making mistakes as the teachers never complained about this and the experience turned into their self-encouragement to more enjoy learning English.

ST1: *"There was a donor I met in the school for the blind, and he asked me to play guitar at an international school to practice my speaking. I had a chance to play guitar at an international school. Actually, I started to like English, but after I was in the atmosphere of that international school…like they talk in English all day. I was crazy about farang. There were so many foreigners and I talked to them a lot. I did not care whether my English was correct or not. I just kept speaking and that was when I started to like English."*

ST6: *"When I started my first year in the university, the English teacher started the first lesson by telling the learning objectives and she never complained when students made mistakes in class. I think if all the school teachers do the same thing, the students would not have been bored of studying English. Since then, I started enjoying learning English."*

Another factor affecting the development in ELL was discovered through the statements speculating on the preference in ELL of the VIS upon which, apart from the cause linked to their past situation, their improvement could be led by their personal judgment towards English regarding whether they like or dislike the subject. Most of the VIS admitted that they seemed to practice more in the skills they like.

ST7: *"I like writing, sometimes. I like practicing vocabulary and spelling. Well, I might practice listening and speaking to improve these skills, but for reading and writing, I admitted that I did not pay attention much. Well, I will put reading and writing afterwards. I do not care much about these skills if they were not compulsory from the university."*

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4.1.2 Perceptions Derived from Aspects Involving ELL

In terms of perceptions derived from aspects involving their background in ELL, the VIS exhibited their view in both negative and positive aspects by elucidating how they perceived ELL regardless of their physical conditions. Their negative perceptions firstly addressed the ineffectiveness of English education in Thailand, failure of turning theory into practice and repetitiveness in teaching, as they could not perform their skills when they needed to use English communication.

ST1: *"English education in Thailand doesn't work. I feel that I already learnt in class normally, but when I had to speak to a native teacher, I couldn't speak at all. Once, the native teacher asked me to introduce myself, I was shocked and didn't reply."*

ST6: *"As being blind, we could not learn any English outside the classroom, and the curriculum seemed to be very repetitive. I kept learning only how to change verbs."*

Although the VIS started by mentioning their negative perceptions, the well-developed ELL contributed positive perceptions to the VIS in terms of increasing their preference in English and motivation due to the appropriateness in teaching style. The VIS elaborated that the understanding from English teachers conveyed through instructional styles in class by arranging mixed activities and providing comprehensive explanation also met their demands in ELL.

ST3: *"In Matthayom 1, I just started at a new school and gradually learned English. I was quite happy with English for Reading and Writing as my English teacher was very kind. She gave me opportunities and more time for me, so my English was getting better and better. Her teaching style matched my learning style."*

To recall the VIS's background in ELL, the VIS were asked the interview questions to evaluate their ELL development in general. They wanted to continue to improve their English skills. Not only did the experience involve improvement in their English skills, but they also mentioned broader perspectives towards the other components which affected their development, ranging from perceptions on teaching approaches, their preference in ELL, and some certain limitations.

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In terms of pedagogical aspects, the VIS informed that studying English five days per week could create motivation to improve their ELL. Additionally, another VIS mentioned that he tended to pay more attention in English class when he found that the teaching approach used in the class seemed to be corresponding to his learning approach. Additionally, the interaction between teachers and the VIS made them realize that they were not neglected and wanted to practice more.

ST1: *"Well, here it is different from the other normal schools. I have to study English and take the quiz everyday too…Yes, we have to memorize the vocabulary for the quiz, so I have motivation and push myself."*

ST3: *"I started to pay attention in English class more and more, especially Matthayom 2, when I met the teacher who has teaching styles matching my learning style."*

ST3: *"The teacher gives me time and opportunity, so I get better. Also, there was a native teacher. He liked to talk to me, so I had a chance to practice my speaking."*

ST7: *"There was a native teacher and he liked to visit the Inclusive Program room and say 'hello' to me, asked questions and talked to me. I get skill because of that."*

Hence, it was obvious that both internal factors regarding ELL and the external factors involving ELL could possibly influence the ELL for the VIS.

4.1.3 The Perceptions towards Transitional Periods

Generally, most of the VIS in this study started their school lives in the school for the blind located in their province and were transferred to study in the inclusive setting later. The totally different atmosphere of the settings of these two types of schools also brought out the comparison in their English classes between when they were at the schools for the blind and the time after they were transferred to the inclusive schools. From the experiences during the transitional period, it is unavoidable to mention their state of minds which were expressed in either the negative feelings which occurred due to the big gap of difficulty level which appeared in the classes between pre- and post-transitional periods. Despite the negativity,

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positivity was expressed in the interview such as turning the critical period into a courageous feeling and being motivated.

Throughout their ELL background, they expressed their discouragement in ELL after they transferred from the special school, such as a school for the blind to an inclusive school. During the transitional period, they had to make self-adjustments due to the huge differences in English level.

ST1: *"I started a new school when I was in Matthayom 1. The teaching approach and all the content were new. I think this school is different from the school I came from. Here it is very advanced, and I could not catch up. But I kept adjusting myself."*

ST4: *"Oh! It was extremely different. When I started Matthayom here, English seemed to be more detailed, the content was deeper, and vocabulary was harder and the verbs we needed to change. There were too many!"*

The difficulties were mentioned mainly in terms of the remarkable difference of the content in English classes containing more details leading to failure to catch up with their sighted peers. However, it was not only struggles, the VIS also show positive sides towards the perceptions on ELL of the VIS.

ST1: *"Despite the very advanced English here, I have to study everyday with quizzes in class every day and I keep adjusting myself. I found myself really clever (in English) when I am in high school"*

ST6: *"I started to feel fun with English, never get bored and can explain the lesson to my classmates which I had never done before in English subject. I feel that English is not that hard since I moved into the university."*

ST2: *"When I moved to high school, it's time to be more interested (in English)."*

ST9: *"Moving to university level, I feel that I want to give it a try whatever the result will be. Ok, this time, it is my true intention. It is not that I am forced by anybody."*

All in all, although the VIS faced the difficulties in self-adjustment of ELL after moving from the school for the blind to the inclusive school, some of them found the positive enforcement to continue their ELL in the new environment with the higher level of difficulties.

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4.1.4 Limitations in ELL

In addition to the physical condition, the ELL factor, and the transitional period, one of the major factors which affect the VIS was elaborated through the responses explaining limitations in accessibility to learning sources. The limitations to improve their English skills included the inadequacy of learning sources especially in English and the lack of the English books in braille. Moreover, the impracticality in online learning was also mentioned as the VIS found that practicing through an online channel was not as effective as practice with a real person. Most of the VIS admitted that they failed to use learning strategies as they never experienced this practice before. One of them shared that she already had many assignments from other subjects, so it might be hard to follow along with the revision plan.

ST6: *"We cannot access the readable books…Well, to create a book for the blind, it takes a very long time and needs a lot of procedures, staff, money, etc. For example, I called one of the national organizations who has direct responsibility for this. That time, I thought they must be so ready for this. I asked them whether they had any available braille books to borrow. They replied that they did not have any."*

ST6: *"Yes, it's right that we study braille texts, but there are not any books or exercises to practice. If you visit the schools for the blind, they teach the English alphabet, and the students know how to write English braille, but there is no extra practice or additional activities."*

ST7: *"I do not know and never heard of vocabulary lists or doing the analogy or stuff like that."*

ST8: *"Well, I might spare some time for revision for English. Not too much though. I don't like it. Actually, when I followed the plan, it seemed so hard that I couldn't do it. There was a lot of work from other classes and I needed to do more revision for what I have learned during the day. I think that is very hard."*

This sub theme also contains broader aspects of the VIS to show their thoughts when they were addressed with interview questions which allowed them to further speak their minds extensively from the particular spots in ELL. The

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VIS provided additional information relating to the current English curriculum in terms of the effectiveness when using English in a real setting.

ST1: *"Let's talk about this frankly, learning English in Thailand is ineffective. I feel that I study rules and principles in class, but when I actually speak to foreigners, as they are language owners and feeling excited, I think this does not work."*

ST6*:* *"I feel that the curriculum keeps repeating grammar such as three major types of verbs."*

ST8: *"I feel that after I learned, I could only remember for the test in that semester. When the exam was done, everything was done too. I forget everything.*

In short, the first theme for the research question provided the perceptions of the VIS towards the ELL which could effectively present the relationship between the learners who had visual impaired condition and how they perceived themselves when they had to link their experiences to their ELL background and the current situations. The well-rounded angles were presented meaningfully through subthemes consisting of perceptions derived from intrinsic factors, perceptions derived from aspects involving ELL, the perceptions towards transitional periods and limitations in ELL.

4.2 Theme 2: Pedagogical Aspects

Through the interview questions, the VIS elaborated their background ranging from general information to the particular aspect involving their ELL background and their voices towards what they have been through during their ELL. However, pedagogical aspects naturally emerged as a major part of their core experiences. They recalled various perceptions as if they placed themselves in their English class perceiving how the lessons were delivered, as well as, other factors that affect their attitudes in ELL including how they were treated in their English class. Not only that, the VIS revealed their experience towards ELL as the recipients of all the teaching approaches they experienced in English classes. Non-verbal information was also presented in terms of teaching behaviors which mainly corresponded to their

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perceptions. The units of meaning were grouped into subthemes which were the starting points; perceptions towards instructional styles; reflection on teachers' personalities and attitudes; and relevant factors in inclusive classroom.

Table 4.2

Summary of Theme and Subthemes for Theme 2: Pedagogical Aspects

Themes	**Subthemes**	**Areas / Opinions**
4.2 Pedagogical Aspects	4.2.1 The Starting Point	- Limited knowledge - Learning alphabets and vowels in braille for too long and repeatedly
	4.2.2 Perceptions towards Instructional Styles	a. Positive aspects towards instructional styles - Showed understanding that they required special needs, care, native teachers - Balancing the class by integrating speaking and listening skills - Learning objectives and content in each class will be informed in advance. - Positive reinforcement feedback b. Negative aspects towards instructional styles - Traditional teaching method and barely gained knowledge - Impracticality of the in-class exercises - Imbalance in content proportion - Negative reinforcement feedback - Limitation on visual ability learning on screen
	4.2.3 Reflection on Teachers' Personalities and Attitudes	a. Instructors' characters and behaviors - Open-minded - Show understanding b. Situations in classroom - Aware of having the VIS in class - Pay more attention to the VIS in order to check their understanding towards the lessons during the class. - inappropriate level of attention on the VIS c. Teaching behavior adjustment - Reading aloud - Explaining details - Speaking slowly
	4.2.4 Relevant Factors in Inclusive Classroom	a. Classroom engagement b. Learning material and assistive technology c. Assessment d. Preparation of the instructors: Teaching methods, Assistive tools, Teaching materials

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4.2.1 The Starting Point

The first subtheme was derived from the obvious answers on what and how the VIS were taught at the very first stage when English initially entered into their lives. It appeared that most of the VIS started their ELL by learning to memorize all of the English letters and to write the letters in braille since they were in kindergarten. Although this might be the basic knowledge of studying English, details during this period revealed by the VIS were that they were taught merely English alphabet for a very long and repeatedly. most of the VIS including ST3, ST5, and ST7 mentioned that they were taught only letters (A – Z) repeatedly since they were in kindergarten till they started their primary school.

ST2: *"I started learning A to Z since I was in kindergarten and continued learning them until primary school"*

ST9: *"I started with memorizing and writing letters A to Z and the vowels. Then we moved to prathom1 still learning and trying to understand these 26 letters"*

This brought about the perceptions towards their knowledge in English as very limited and narrow as more than half of the students asserted that they gained almost nothing except for how to write alphabets and vowels in braille.

4.2.2 Perceptions towards Instructional Styles

In this subtheme, after the VIS were addressed with the questions involving their educational experiences, they also explained how they were taught, including sharing their thoughts on how the teachers performed in class. Primarily, the opinions were revealed through their answers in terms of positive and negative aspects towards the instructional styles of their teachers.

a. Positive aspects towards instructional styles

Generally, although the VIS wanted to be treated as normal students in class, the understanding of their different needs due to their physical conditions played a very important role for their ELL background. Thus, the positive aspects towards their teachers were expressed in terms of the impression of it being understood by their teachers that they required special needs, both from Thai and native English-speaking teachers.

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ST1: *"I felt ok with my English teacher when I was in M. 4 because of the teacher and many things. The teacher understood me very well. Whether the students in class were the sighted or blind students, he would read aloud and explain all the time. I felt very ok and active in class."*

ST3: *"During M. 2, the teacher paid attention to the text as she explained the hard part and a lot of examples. The teacher seemed to feel ok with me as well…In M.4 and M.5, there was a native teacher and most of the (sighted) students liked to avoid attending his class, but I did not, so he talked to me a lot. I got a chance to practice English from this."*

ST7: *"Back then, I came to meet my teacher after class to ask about homework and explanations. For the kind teacher, she would discuss the task and help me in writing."*

ST8: *"There was a teacher in primary school. She understood (my condition as a low vision student), so she wrote down what she planned to write on the board separately and gave that paper to me"*

After revealing their background in ELL, the VIS narrated their perceptions they were experiencing positively and negatively regarding instructional aspects in ELL. In terms of preferred instructional approaches, most of the VIS replied that they would like the teacher to teach English by integrating speaking and listening skills so that they can apply speaking skill into communication, and they preferred when the teacher or peers read aloud so that students can practice pronunciation. Additionally, the VIS in university level reported that they really liked when learning objectives of studying English were explained before the lesson started, as well as any relating information which will be assigned in advance as they could prepare for the activities in the following class and could catch up with their sighted peers. The VIS also showed their interest in ELL by listening to feedback from the teacher to improve their skills.

ST2: *"This English teacher seems ok for me as she has taught blind students for so long. She just read along what is in the book and let us read after her. She emphasized the complex words, so we have to pronounce those words after her. She also reviews grammar rules that we cannot remember."*

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ST4: *"In the class of the native teacher, he teaches knowledge together with doing activities, so we do not feel stressed…I like studying with the native teacher because he lets us actually practice and sometimes, we play games. When there is a game session, he will call us to play (with the sighted students)."*

ST6: *"When I started university, the teacher will tell me all the learning objectives. The teacher will let us do a presentation and create a video clip by talking about our simple things such as our personal stories and using any vocabulary that we have in our memory to create sentences…The teacher asks us to read aloud. Each one reads one to two sentences. I think doing this is the chance for us to practice listening and reading… For the hard word, the teacher will pronounce for us first, and tell us to pronounce after her."*

ST3: *"The teaching style that I like is that the teacher will tell us what to read or which exercise that we have to do and the students will read and complete the exercise and bring it to discuss in class. This might sound old school, but I feel equal to other (sighted) students."*

ST6: *"After the teacher grades our task, she will give feedback to us individually. She tells us which points we should improve, where we should start from, and in which part we should make corrections. This makes us know our weak points. I think not many people know their weak points."*

b. Negative aspects towards instructional styles

In contrast, there were several teaching styles which created the negative atmosphere in English class, stamping the unwanted memories towards their past experiences in ELL. Most of the negative aspects towards teachers involved teaching methods such as traditional teaching styles; however, some barely gained knowledge, including the use of negative reinforcement.

ST6: *"During the primary school, my English teacher was quite aged. She came into the class and told all the students to write down her words or what she wrote on the blackboard without any explanation. Later, in high school, there was a teacher with the same teaching style. This time she*

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gave two books to students; one was questions and the other was answers. What we did in class was just writing down the answer from one book to the question book. I learned nothing."

ST8: *"In primary school, the teacher usually hit the students by using the ruler when we could not pronounce the words. So I did not like this teacher and did not like studying this subject (English)"*

The VIS extensively elucidated the undesirable and ineffective instructional approach. The limitation of their visual ability when the lesson appeared on screen such as using the Kahoot application made them feel it was very hard to participate. They seemed to struggle when the tasks were required to be done in class through visualization on screen because the VIS generally needed more preparation time than the sighted students. For example, teachers sometimes used an overhead projector without explanation of what is showing on the screen. Especially, when the teacher tried to engage the classroom by using online applications such as Kahoot to create English games, there was a VIS who revealed the feeling of frustration during the class and felt tired of catching up with the activities.

ST8: *"It was once that the teacher assigned students to write the story on paper and performed group presentations at the end of the class and showed the paper on the screen. I had to present in front of the class holding my paper while the others (sighted students) could read on the screen. I did not feel alright when I read the note in my hand."*

ST2: *"Being a low vision student I might struggle in class as teachers always use the (overhead) projector...Yes that seems to be a problem…Generally, braille text does not have illustrations as appears in normal textbooks. The photo in that spot will be removed."*

Moreover, for some drilling exercises, which the VIS were unable to complete in class as there was no explanation given orally, they just decided to leave the task incomplete. In fact, this reflected that the impracticality of some certain tasks for the sighted students needs to be modified to engage the VIS as well. However, one of the VIS mentioned that he preferred the take-home task brought to discuss on the next day. This happened in most of class observations for school levels. In the classroom, when there was the reading comprehension exercise, the VIS

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generally received the same paper as the sighted students, and he always asked the teacher to keep the exercises to complete them later in the inclusive center. The teacher usually allowed the VIS to do the test outside class.

Furthermore, the VIS recognized that their English wouldn't improve by the conventional teaching styles such as when teachers made students write down words. The VIS emphasized their negative perceptions towards the imbalance of teaching styles. For example, the teachers mostly focused too much on grammar points without balancing the class by using other activities, or the VIS sometimes were overwhelmingly taught by native teachers for a long period of time.

ST3: *"I am not good at doing test practice in class. Teachers mostly bring the test practice in class and let the students complete the paper together. Doing this is good but I will forget it very soon and I don't understand the content. I will not bother with that anymore. ...Earlier, teachers would give us some take home exercises and discuss the answers in the following classes. But during this semester, the teachers will assign the reading tests and let the students finish the whole paper in class. For me, I am not very good at doing this because my reading skill and my brain could not catch up with English and I could not complete the reading tests in time."*

ST8: *"When the tasks must be completed in class, I do not feel ok because it seems that I do not get to prepare."*

ST2: *"Some teachers just read the exercise in the book item by item with the answer for each item and we just write down what she read for us...just tell us everything."*

ST6: *" There was once when my major held the English Club activity, all the freshmen needed to attend. We had to do activities with the native teacher who could not speak Thai for three hours, once a week. I remember that after we finished the course, the students were like zombies."*

Another cause affecting the VIS's perception on ELL is the instructors' reactions when they made mistakes. The teachers who replied with negative feedback and gave punishment to the students who made mistakes in the classroom unknowingly created hatred towards their ELL. The interview descriptions

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show that the feeling of dislike towards their English teacher was cultivated in their mindset resulting in the dislike towards studying English.

ST8: *"I do not like studying English because I was hit by the English teacher when I was in primary school and I have not liked learning English since then. The teacher used her ruler and hit us on the hands one by one if we could not pronounce the words."*

According to the VIS's narrations, the VIS were fully aware of what they needed for ELL; however, the awareness of having the students with different physical conditions in class seemed to be the major idea of creating the appropriate instructional styles to engage the sighted student without neglecting the students with the visual impairment.

4.2.3 Reflection on the Teachers' Personalities and Attitudes

Another aspect from the VIS's expression towards pedagogical aspects was their experience of being treated in English classroom by the instructors. This issue might not directly relate to the aspects in ELL; however, theoretically, the instructor is one of the key elements that shape the students' feelings towards pedagogical aspects and their performance in class. The statements were promptly mentioned when they explained their perceptions towards their current situations in ELL.

a. Instructors' characters and behaviors

The VIS revealed the personal characters and behaviors of the instructors who created the pleasant atmosphere and those who unintentionally isolated the VIS due to their misconceptions. During the interview, the teachers' personalities admired by all of the VIS were the open-minded teachers and those teachers who pay attention or show understanding to them in the appropriate proportion during the class, for example, the teachers who could be reached easily and allowed the VIS to discuss any problem regardless of the students' disabilities.

ST6: *"It's ok whether we answer the questions incorrectly… no complaints and make us do this and that. I really like the way that there is no comparison among students in class."*

ST1: *"I like the teacher who pays attention to me, especially, when the teacher knows that there is a blind student, and asks if we can catch up on the*

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lesson; or when the teacher gives an assignment, and knows that there is a blind student in class, I do not have to do the same as other (sighted students). The teacher will allow me to do the other task instead."

ST2: *"The native teacher seems to understand us. Sometimes, he even reads the whole passage or conversations from the book for us."*

These statements were evidenced by the situation in the classroom when the teacher in the school started the class by playing a video clip teaching 'conditional sentences' or 'If' clauses. The teacher asked the VIS to check whether he could hear the audio clearly. After the clip was played, the teacher gave handouts for the students and the VIS for exercises. He walked to the VIS again and asked if the VIS could understand the lesson. When the teacher would ask students to write answers on the board in front of the classroom, he would walk to the VIS and told him that if he wanted to answer, he could tell his sighted peer to come out and write for him. If the VIS answered the question incorrectly, the teacher would ask and eventually help the VIS correct the answer. Similar to the school level, all the lecturers in universities also showed their awareness of the VIS in the classroom; for example, the lecturer asked what type of file that the VIS wanted as his learning materials and how she could send it to him, whether by email or other ways. Most of the VIS cooperated very well and replied with their convenient channels such as Microsoft Word files.

b. Situations in classrooms

Through the lens of the instructors, the awareness of having the VIS in class was significantly mentioned. This aspect depicted the experience when the instructors were informed that there would be the VIS in their class, they decided to pay more attention to the VIS in order to check their understanding towards the lessons during the class.

T8: *"After I was informed that there will be a blind student in class, I was quite shocked as I hadn't prepared for this. When I knew this, I had to think more of how I would speak in class or what kind of activities that he could engage with."*

At school level, there was the teacher starting the class by playing a video clip teaching 'conditional sentences' or 'If' clauses. During the clip the teacher

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asked the VIS to check whether he could hear the audio clearly. Later, after the clip was played, the teacher gave handouts for the students and the VIS for exercises. He walked to the VIS again and asked if the VIS could understand the lesson. Moreover, when the teacher asked students to write answers on the board in front of the classroom, he would walk to the VIS and tell him that if he wanted to answer, he could tell his sighted peer to come out and write for him. If the VIS answered the question incorrectly, the teacher would discuss that to allow the VIS to correct the answer eventually. Additionally, two of the university lecturers mentioned that they preferred to talk to the VIS personally as the ice-breaking session from the very first class of the course.

T1: *"Every time I let the students do in class exercises, I will use this chance to walk to them and ask whether they understand the lectures because I don't think we can do any better as we have never been trained to particularly teach these students."*

T9: *"It's ok. I just need to have a talk with the (visual impaired) students first. If it was before the class started, that would be great. Normally, the first session will be the introduction part and if there isn't any particular issue, I will let the (sighted) student leave the class except the blind student and talk to the student personally.*

In contrast, the VIS could feel uncomfortable in class due to too many actions of the teachers. This was the level of showing attention by bringing up the terms of 'special' or 'disabled' student. Although the teachers do not intend to harm the VIS's feeling, being called on as such to the whole classroom caused the VIS to feel they were different and isolated from other (sighted) students. Moreover, asking for extra explanations on the lessons outside the classroom seems to be one of the VIS's practices to follow up what is taught in class, so the intimacy between the teacher and them could be the issue causing frustration during the semester.

ST6: *"I like when the teacher never specifically focuses on me because the word 'disable', when it is mentioned, most people will look at us as if we need special care. The word 'special' makes me feel differentiated."*

ST3: *"Normally, English and Mathematics will be two subjects that I have to talk to the teachers about after class because they are the main subjects*

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for my major which is the English-Math major. But I do not feel close to the teachers, so I hardly see them recently."

c. Teaching behavior adjustment

Most of the instructors elaborated how they made adjustments to their teaching behaviors and their teaching styles. For example, the school teacher normally walked around the classroom, and she frequently dropped by the VIS and asked if the VIS understood the lesson. Thus, the VIS was not afraid to call the teacher when she walked close to her seat. For group work, after the lecturer explained the task, all the students gathered members for their groups. The teacher walked to the VIS and asked if he had his group and the VIS replied that he had not been asked to join the group. Then one of the students asked her group member to have the VIS for their group although they already had the maximum number of the members. However, they had to give presentations longer than the other groups. The university lecturer read aloud almost every word on screen to the class and addressed the question to all the students in class equally including the VIS.

T8: *"Firstly, I read everything aloud. Secondly, I assign pair work, so they could help each other think and follow the others or work in groups. Thirdly, I will tell all students that we will read all the punctuations in class, but read normally outside class. For example, I would tell the class when the sentence ended and said that this was the full stop; this was comma; this was semicolon; this was hyphen, so that he could imagine."*

T9: *"I don't feel worried that much. There was only when I had to teach lessons with illustrations. In that case, I would explain the pictures. For example, in English for Aviation class, I explained how the airport arrival would be; at the check-in counters, there were many small tables with the belt conveyor at around your knees. I try to explain as much as I can"*

T10: *"I try to speak slower than usual; however, I wasn't sure that this pace would be slow enough, so I kept asking if my speaking speed was too fast. All the students didn't reply, so until now I don't know whether my speed is proper or not.*

Apparently, all of the university lecturers tended to take this issue seriously by putting their effort to speak slower than their usual speed, trying to read

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nearly every single word and punctuation which appeared on the slides, explaining details of the photos in the textbook and also the way they manage the classroom when there were group tasks.

4.2.4 Relevant Factors in Inclusive Classroom

The final subtheme recalled by the VIS through their background was the opinions involving atmosphere in the English classroom, which were the factors that directly influenced how they reflected their views on their recent ELL inclusively. The refined statements displayed their experiences when there were situations of classroom engagement; the learning materials and assistive technology which might or might not be considered very useful tools as they should be; and their experiences on the assessments.

a. Classroom engagement

The statements in this subtheme showed that the VIS felt engaged as a part of the classroom during the English class. However, in the case of a VIS who had low vision, she was blamed by her peers because she unintentionally blocked the other students' sight when she walked in front of the class as she could not see what was written on the board.

ST3: "When the teacher taught conversation … this made me feel like being a part of the classroom"

ST8: "I did not feel that uncomfortable. I got insulted by some friends when I needed to stand up or walked to look close to the board"

For the group task, it seemed to be usual and acceptable for the VIS when the teacher assigned group tasks as they did not mention problems on being recruited as the group member. After the group was formed, the VIS tended to be assigned only the easy tasks such as finding information or doing nothing. In this situation, the VIS seemed to be satisfied with being engaged in the classroom and there was no sign of frustration expressed through their statements.

ST2: "During my secondary school, I felt very good when we had group work as I did not have to do anything"

ST4: "When I was in the group, I mostly got assigned simple tasks such as help bringing this and that for the group."

b. Learning material and assistive technology

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When the VIS needed to learn English in the inclusive classroom, most of them used braille text and the tools helped their learning in class. Generally, the VIS seemed to use braille text for their textbook and use slate and stylus for note taking in class. However, from the interview, the VIS also mentioned about using smartphones and the internet. These tools started to be a part of their educational experiences in terms of the assistive tools to help them learn when there was no braille text and when they could not see written content on the board. Nonetheless, the VIS stated that in their early education lives that braille text and modified sheets were hardly provided in advance. Also, they did not own smartphones during their childhood; however, if they had one, they were still not allowed to use smartphones in class.

ST6: "Well, I think there was the internet, but the signal was very low. Besides, I did not have a smartphone, so I did not learn English from outside the class and learned only what was taught by the teacher."

ST8 (Low vision student): "Normally, I used my mobile phone to take photos of what the teacher wrote on the board or the content appeared on the screen. However, when I was in school, all students were not allowed to use mobile phones in class."

c. Experiences on the assessment

The final aspect involving studying in an inclusive educational setting was the assessment that should be modified according to the VIS's condition. There were statements concerning the issues of reasonable adjustment for the VIS and the repetitiveness of the test format.

ST4: "Sometimes, while other students took the multiple-choices exam, I would do another format. The teacher would tell us what to do separately."

ST9: "During my primary school time, I started taking tests by choosing the correct meaning for the provided vocabulary. I took this kind of test until I was in Prathom 3. Just like that."

d. Preparation of the instructors

Not merely the voices from the VIS, most of the instructors also reflected that they had to be more thoughtful about their teaching preparation when they had to teach English in the inclusive classroom. The teaching preparation included how they designed teaching methods; teaching and learning materials; and

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the assistive tools. Most university lecturers discussed with the VIS inside and outside the classroom if the student had any request for the types of preferred learning materials such as PDF files or Word documents. Corresponding to the observation, most of the lecturers asked what type of file the VIS wanted as his learning materials and how she could send it to him, whether by email or another way. Three school teachers also mentioned that they had to do adjustments in learning materials. Creating extra learning materials for the VIS, in addition to those for the sighted student, led to increasing workloads.

T2: *"The teachers will have to do more tasks as we have to think and design for different types of students. Instead of preparing only one form of teaching, we have to think more and work more to deal with the blind students."*

T7: *"Well, teaching materials are the major issues, for example, we couldn't imagine what the blind students will see [as a picture in their head]. Hence, all the handouts were created by using Microsoft word files and we found that they could not recognize the table as the program wouldn't read it aloud, so we had to type in vertical columns as well as bold or underlined font styles."*

T8: *"Earlier, I would let the students read the passage themselves to learn paragraph format, notice word use, structures, and transitional words. However, with this blind student, I was not sure how to activate his learning in class, so I made a special teaching material as the tactile writing model. I use the buttons as the transitional words, clips to signal indent spots, the A4-size feature board as paper. Also, I explain that the summary should use words with similar meaning to the topic sentences. I created this special material to solve the problems I found earlier. Well, it could help at a certain level as I could see from the journal writing task. The blind student started to indent, using transitional words and capitalizing the letters correctly."*

All in all, in this main theme, there were four subthemes expounded by both viewpoints of the VIS and the instructors. beginning with, firstly, the starting point of the participants' ELL, in which they were taught repeatedly merely writing the English letters in braille leading to inadequate English knowledge evidenced by

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the statements revealing limited or almost none of knowledge gained during their early stage. Secondly, the perceptions towards instructional styles conveyed their experiences in terms of both positive and negative views of what the teachers employed in English classes. Apart from their complaints on teaching methodology, the second subtheme emphasized that special care or actions showing understanding from their teachers were needed and the negative reinforcement was not effective for them. Finally, the VIS and the instructors expressed the past experiences relating factors when studying in inclusive classroom. The classroom engagement was the only aspect that the VIS seemed to be comfortable with, such as when attending group work. In contrast, the VIS revealed certain aspects in the lack of readiness in learning materials and limitations in using assistive technology.

4.3 Theme 3: English Skills

This theme portrayed the statements which are the other vital data in this study, which were the descriptive information towards the VIS's English skills in their early lived experiences. This theme consisted of the focal areas of the study which were the expressions of the VIS on both receptive and productive English language skills: listening, reading, writing, and speaking. The expressions of the VIS towards their English skills were intertwined among the narration which required the VIS to recall their general background and answer showing deeper information about their English skills during the period of the data collection. The remarkable statements were grouped into four subthemes (1) listening skill, (2) writing skill, and (3) reading skill.

According to the data, the VIS tended to feel satisfied with their listening and speaking skills while they were struggling with reading and writing skills. Additionally, the instructors explained their perceptions towards the English language skills of the VIS by narrating their experiences on all skills: listening, reading, writing, and speaking skills. Among these four skills, most of the instructors seemed to be impressed by the ability of the VIS in listening skill; in contrast, writing was the most concerning skill for the VIS. However, all the instructors mentioned very little about reading skills of the VIS.

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Table 4.3
Summary of Theme and Subthemes for Theme 3: English Skills

Theme	Subthemes	Areas/ Opinions
4.3 English Skills	4.3.1 Listening Skills	a. Positive views relating to the listening ability - Able to understand the conversation when teachers use English as media in class - Able to catch all the details b. Problematic issues - Recognition of English language without understanding - Unable to catch the word spoken by native teachers
	4.3.2 Reading Skills	a. Difficulties in reading skill - Lack of vocabulary size and knowledge - Unable to use skimming and scanning technique for audio book or during the exam - Lack of readiness in braille text and word files b. Satisfaction on reading ability. - Considered as their best English skill
	4.3.3 Speaking Skills	a. Negative aspects in speaking skill - The worst skill - Limitation in practice b. Positive aspects in speaking skill - Able to communicate regardless of grammatical concerns - Confidence in giving presentations
	4.3.4 Writing Skills	a. Difficulties in writing skill - Lack of vocabulary and grammar knowledge. - The worst skill and most difficult as they could not see the sentence structures b. Possibility in development - Able to write when learning from braille - Could write familiar sentences
	4.3.5 Strategies to Improve ELL of the VIS	a. Strategies for all English skills - Vocabulary - Extra exercises - Revision outside class - Plan to study abroad - Practice through the exam preparation book b. Strategies for each skill - Listening skill: listening to English songs; watching English TV programs - Speaking skill; talk to native speakers outside classrooms; join the English club in the university; try to respond to the teachers in English; practice speaking to a person (not an online source) - Writing skill; memorizing sentence structures by writing repeatedly; attend extra classes

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4.3.1 Listening Skills

Under the umbrella of all the English skills, listening and reading skills might be the skills that were generally assumed to be the best skill that the VIS could acquire and perform. Hence, it might be comprehensible that positive views were initially stated by most of the VIS.

a. Positive views relating to the listening ability

From the narrations, when the native teacher or Thai teacher used English as media in class, it turned out that the VIS in university level could understand the conversations. The VIS also mentioned that they were able to improve their listening ability gradually as they had repeatedly encountered classes taught by both native English-speaking teachers and Thai teachers.

ST2: *"Well, I quite understand listening (English) because I listen to the native teacher frequently at school (for the blind) and meet him often.*

ST4: *"I can listen to the native teacher and sometimes can reply. The native teacher will give us the oral test. He asked us what type of sport you played, asked about hobbies, like that. I can understand these topics."*

ST6: *"I put listening as my first skill, as did everyone. If it is in-class listening, what we mainly gain from listening is listening to the teacher anyway. Then, it depends on which language the teacher chooses to use in class. Like the teacher in yesterday's class, she started with using English which was fine for me. For those students who could get it, they would understand. Then, she explained in Thai later on."*

ST1: *"I think I could listen to English language at a certain level as I studied English a lot and I did reading in class frequently. This made me be quite good at listening"*

ST6: *"When I moved to high school, teachers started to teach in Thai and mixed it with English, so I started to understand English from listening"*

In terms of reflections from the instructors, three of the university lecturers stated that the VIS performed very well in catching the details in listening tasks, and could tell most of the details and the noises reflecting the situation in the audio clips. Additionally, at school level, a few teachers often played the video clips

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when teaching grammar in order to let the VIS listen to both the language and the explanation of grammatical rules such as sentence structures.

T1: *"As these students have visual problems, they can only listen. The major skills will be listening and speaking. Like today, I played a video clip with the explanation of how to use conditional clauses, so the (blind) student could listen to the sentence structure. Actually, we were supposed to have speaking skills such as sharing ideas by speaking in class, but there was only limited time to have such activity. Thus, we mainly focused on listening in class….so we started from allowing the student to listen and for speaking, it was when he answered questions from the handout."*

T7: *"I think he was a good language learner and a very smart blind student. In every listening class, he was always the only student who could catch every detail. Once in the speaking class the learning input was listening and there was not any conversation. There were only noises: door opening, door closing, cats crying. The task was asking the students to listen and use what they hear to create a story. He did the best in class."*

b. Problematic issues

However, in listening skill, problematic issues found among the VIS were similar to the problems faced by other sighted students, especially when they could recognize that this is English language; however, without understanding the meaning in the sentences. Also, most of the time they failed to catch the words they heard from the native teacher.

ST5: *"I can listen to English, but I don't understand what they are saying. When the native teacher asks the questions… It seems I know, but I cannot compile the meaning of what has been asked. Oh! When I say I can listen, I mean I know that this is English."*

ST7: *"Listening is my worst. I am trying though, but I wonder why I can't catch up, why I don't get used to it although I have been listening many times. I must be dead in the exam! Fifteen points.*

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4.3.2 Reading Skills

After the perceptions of the instructors in both school and university levels were elaborated, the following information was also essential to fulfill the missing part of the whole picture of ELL of the VIS when they studied in the inclusive setting. In this section, the statements derived from the support staff, the other group of participants, were presented to show another aspect as the different viewpoint of the key persons who play their role in ELL including educational services of students with disabilities outside the classroom. The responses from the support staff were categorized into 4 themes: (1) Factors in ELL development, (2) Support in ELL of the VIS. (3) Importance of the ELL for the VIS, and (4) Perceptions towards inclusive classroom.

a. Difficulties in reading skill

Initially, when the reading skill was addressed, the VIS pointed out their difficulties when they needed to read English text. The major problems were the lack of vocabulary size and knowledge, as well as spelling ability and limited understanding of grammatical rules.

ST4: *"Although I could read the English words, I could not translate those words. Sometimes, teachers would translate in class when we read passages, but I would forget after that. If I did not know the meaning, I would just guess the answer."*

ST9: *"It seemed that the resource teacher tried to make braille text for me, but I could not read at all. That was the big problem. I had never been trained to read."*

The difficulties were also linked to their visual limitation as they could not use skimming and scanning technique for audio books or reading passages during the exam. The lack of braille and little preparation of soft files for learning was also a problem. Additionally, there were other problems involving vocabulary knowledge, as the VIS mostly struggled with the unknown words and did not know the meaning or they might be able to read despite without meaning recognition.

ST2: *"Reading? Err..I read slowly. When a long word appears, I can hardly read it. I can read at paragraph level, but when I find the long words, I*

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cannot spell them. I have to read the sentence and guess. Sometimes, correct. Sometimes, incorrect. I can guess the story then."

ST6: *"*Reading *and writing are problematic recently. Well, reading and writing come together. If it is in the classroom and for the visually impaired students, we must check whether the accessibility (media) is ready."*

ST8: *"If I can read but do not know the meaning. Is this considered as I like it? I can probably read, but I do not know the meaning. Like that."*

b. Satisfaction on reading ability.

However, there was a VIS who showed his satisfaction on the VIS's reading ability and the acknowledgement on how they would perform when reading passages through his ELL background.

ST1: *"Reading has always been the skill I think I am good at. I could find the meaning of the unknown words by using context. I might not be able to translate the words, but might use the familiar sentence structures to guess the meaning.*

The VIS's perceptions towards reading skill seemed to be improved as evidenced by a few university students who evaluated themselves that reading skill was their best skill. They demonstrated that they could at least perform reading better than speaking and it was not too hard to guess parts of the story from the whole passage.

ST4: "I feel reading is the best because I can read. To be able to read is better. I don't why, reading is better than speaking."

ST2: "I tried to read sentences and I could guess what the story is about."

ST3: "Reading and writing seem to be difficult, but they are not that hard for me unless there are unknown words I've never seen before. Apart from that, I could read normally."

4.3.3 Speaking Skills

a. Negative aspects in speaking skill

Unlike listening and reading skills, most of the VIS revealed that speaking skill was one of their weakest points in English and the most difficult skill as they could not see the sentence structures. They pointed out that their actual practice for speaking skills were very limited.

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ST5: "Speaking is the worst. I feel afraid to speak (in class) compared to other subjects. I am quite afraid to reply in English."

ST2: "Sometimes, I don't know how to speak (in English) because I am afraid of putting words into sentences incorrectly. I am quite shy to speak to foreigners."

b. Positive aspects in speaking skill

Opposing the opinions which appeared in the negative direction, the responses also showed positive perceptions towards speaking skill. Most of the VIS mentioned that while they were speaking English regardless of grammatical issues, they did not have to be afraid of making mistakes, and just focused on meaning for communication or formality. Moreover, when they were in class presentations, most of the students were not allowed to read their notes during the presentation and only allowed to have a glance at their slides on screen. This was also the challenge for the VIS as it was impossible for them to see the content on the screen. However, for the totally blind students, they preferred giving presentations as they could memorize the script without reading it in front of the class. In the classroom, when there was a presentation, the VIS also gave a presentation the same as the other sighted students did. The VIS memorized the part that she needed to present and could speak by memory. Hence, they considered speaking English as their best skill or the skill they felt fine with.

ST6: *"We speak whenever. Well, speaking does not have to be formal. Sometimes, I randomly compile sentences, but it turns out comprehensible. In my view, if foreigners practice speaking Thai, they sometimes mix up the order, but we can understand them. Well, the core of speaking is to communicate our needs to the other. Just ensure that they understand. We don't have to speak grammatically but if we can, that's fine. We can start speaking randomly. Do not be afraid of mistakes. Just like that."*

ST7: "I feel that when I speak, I can memorize, but I just speak randomly. Actually, I like giving presentations as I feel I can speak. I may practice speaking in my free time."

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T8: *"This (blind) student seemed to be quite good at English. I forgot to ask the reasons why as I noticed that many (sighted) students tended to speak with him in English, especially, his close friends also use English to communicate in their group."*

T10: *"I noticed that she seemed to be very confident in speaking. The student would reply that 'Yes, I can. I am sure about this.' I assumed that this group of visual impaired students might have ability in speaking."*

In brief, struggling in listening, rearing, and speaking skills was expressed through the background experiences towards English skills of the VIS which seemed to majorly imprint the mixture of their negative and positive perceptions towards their ELL. However, for speaking skill, positive atmosphere was mostly displayed by the participants through the data collection.

4.3.4 Writing Skills

Apart from receptive skills, productive skills which are speaking and writing skills were elaborated by the participants meaningfully. From the interview, the VIS evaluated their experiences in acquiring writing skill through the major proportions in difficulties and the possibility in skill improvement.

a. Difficulties in writing skill

The VIS tied their writing ability to their level of grammar and vocabulary knowledge. In other words, the VIS thought that they had low writing ability due to their limited grammar and vocabulary knowledge. A few of them complained that their writing skill was the worst English skill among the others.

ST8: *"I had problems with writing as I did not know vocabulary, so I always failed the exam since I was in Matthayom 2."*

Although some of the VIS mention that they could write sentences in English, they could merely write along what was read aloud by their teachers, not as initiation by themselves. Creating sentences was found as the problematic issue for speaking as well due to the VIS not knowing how to produce sentences to reply to the interlocutor, especially foreigners.

ST1: *"Writing is my worst English skill. I can think of the sentence in Thai, but cannot write it in English. For error identification, its rules are so hard,*

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especially the structure. Oh! No! Not only the rules, we need to be precise about sentence structures and grammar."

ST2: *"I cannot write because there is very little vocabulary in my memory and I don't know much about sentence structures."*

ST3: *"My writing skill is the worst one. Well, I do not write much. When I need to write, I try to put words in the order which I am sure is incorrect grammar."*

ST5: *"I consider myself as being able to write, but if I have never heard of the words, I cannot write. The word must be heard before such as 'apple'. I must be told 'a', 'p' like this. Letter by letter and then I write them down. After I finish writing, I will know that word."*

The difficulties in writing skill were confirmed by the reflections of the instructors. Most of the instructors agreed that the VIS seemed to be struggling with learning writing. Obviously, the instructors explained that the most problematic point was when learning sentence structures such as using passive voice in sentences and how to use punctuation in compound sentences.

T7*:* *"The student had certain limitations in writing sentence structures, for example, combining sentences or converting sentences from active to passive voice. His reading method was by moving the cursor from left to right and if he had to convert into passive form, he would forget. He would forget after reading the sentence as it was the long sentence. Some sentences were long, so when he could choose the subject for the passive voice structure, he forgot the rest and needed to read again."*

T8: *"It might be difficult as he doesn't know the position of punctuation such as full stop or semicolon or comma. I could see this from his writing and in the quiz. When studying in class, I would read punctuation aloud. For example, if there were compound sentences using the conjunctions 'but', 'or' and, I would read 'comma but' or 'comma and', so I expected that he could write this type of sentence correctly. However, when I looked again, I thought that he might only acknowledge or he might not understand one hundred percent."*

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b. Possibility in development

Apparently, while writing skill was mentioned earlier as the most difficult skill for the VIS, they seemed to be aware of their weak points and intend to fix the problematic spots such as the use of punctuation in sentences. In this writing issue, one of the VIS pointed out that he was able to write when learning from braille as punctuations normally appeared in braille text, so it would be better learning writing skill by using braille text. Some of the VIS revealed that they tried learning to write by memorizing the structure of simple sentences until they felt familiar with and could imitate the sentences that they could remember.

ST6: *"I feel that if we read braille text, we will know how the words are spelt and if we can read, we can write. Well, for Braille 2, it was invented to save the space in a page, for example, to write the word 'an' in Braille 1, we need three cells. However, for Braille 2, only one cell is enough. This braille uses its codes. But, if we keep using Braille 2, we won't know the full words in Braille 1 and can't even write. Hence, it is a must to know Braille 1."*

ST7: *"I quite like writing. Sometimes, I like going through vocabulary banks with the pronunciation and definitions that pop up for the reader. Sometimes, I click on the write bottom and move through the word and the App will spell it. I write after the spelling about ten words and try to memorize bit by bit. I have studied grammar since I was in high school. I can write familiar sentences, not too hard. If it is the sentence used daily, I can put it in order."*

4.3.5 Strategies Used to Improve ELL of the VIS

Another relevant topic in ELL is the learning strategies which, in this study, were narrated by the learners whose visual ability was limited in terms of general methods to improve overall points in English skill and strategies applied particularly to improve in each skill.

a. Strategies for all English skills

From the responses, the VIS clearly stated that they applied learning strategies to improve their ELL regularly to expand vocabulary size and knowledge

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by using memory strategies and synonyms to remember the unknown words. However, not all the strategies seemed to be applicable with the VIS. For example, a few of the VIS informed that although they tried to create and use the vocabulary list, this strategy did not work well and they failed to apply the word list in the exam.

Apart from memorizing vocabulary, the VIS also learned to prepare for the exam by practicing their English skills by doing extra exercises. For the in-class lessons which they could not understand, the VIS informed that they usually listened to the records from voice recorders repeatedly until they understand the missing points. Moreover, the VIS studying at school level mentioned that they wanted to study abroad if they did not have financial difficulties.

ST2: *"Usually, the teacher will guide us on what will be in the exam. We just do the revision on that part. Keep reading that part and memorize the vocabulary. Mostly, it will be the phrases. Just need to remember the words."*

ST7: *"Sometimes, I made vocabulary lists, but I feel this doesn't work for me. The tutor used to create the list for me, word lists, definitions, spelling...there were pretty much, but I couldn't remember well."*

ST7: *"Although I prefer discussing with real people, I don't mind listening to the recordings. If there is any part that I don't understand, I repeatedly listen to the recordings that I recorded in class."*

ST2: *"I think I will try looking for the GAT exams from the earlier years and read through them. It's the easiest and quickest way for me. It must work best for me. I'm not a person who reads from textbooks."*

ST3: *"I will look for the national entrance exam book that gathered the exams from previous years. I think that the easiest and the fast way."*

ST3: *"If I do not have financial problems, I would want to improve my English ability and study abroad because I think that one way to be able to remarkably improve my English skills."*

b. Strategies for each skill

In terms of strategies that the VIS used to improve their ELL for each skill, they'd rather focus on listening, speaking, and writing skills than reading skill. For listening skills, the VIS mentioned that they planned to listen to English

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songs such as American songs and tried to listen to the meaning of the song, instead of merely listening to the melody of the songs. They also planned to watch TV programs and movies in English in order to listen to the accents pronounced by native speakers.

ST1: *"I was really crazy about an American singer and just simply thought that if she came and visited the school of the blind and my English was bad, would I be able to talk to her?.so I thought that now it was the time that my English must be perfect. Then I started listening to the English songs more and more."*

ST6: *"Well, if I felt the movies were too long, I just swapped to listening to English songs. I think learning English from listening to the songs can help if you don't just listen to melody. We should take a look at the meaning of the song. If you ask me whether this is wasting time or not, I would say yes, it takes time. But I think what we learn will be automatically memorized into the brains. We will recognize the meaning in the songs. When we find this sentence later, we will be able to think of the meaning. I think this way is better than creating a ten/twenty-word list and memorizing the words from that list."*

ST1: *"I also subscribed to the Hollywood Life channel. I just kept listening whether I understood or not."*

ST6: *"I learn English from watching movies. That makes me learn idioms and listen to English native accents and practice speaking along with the movies. Later, I can speak English. Also, I rechecked the spelling for the unfamiliar words."*

To improve speaking skill, the VIS chose to talk to native speakers outside the classroom, try to respond to the teachers by using English, join the English club in the university, and practice speaking to a person instead of using online sources.

ST2: *"Umm…Quite a lot and my mother, she has a foreigner husband, so I have to listen and speak to him sometimes."*

ST6: *"There was an English club in the university. Well, the club held the activity and all the freshmen had to join it. The activities were run by all*

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the native teachers for three hours a week. I remember we were like zombies back then…if those who had never heard foreign teachers speaking for so long, when they came out, they must realize and think about how they can improve themselves."

ST6: *"Well, if we talk about in-class speaking practice, it must be when we responded to the teacher like generally answering the questions from the teachers."*

ST7: *"Well, I don't know. I feel that if I practice with the machine, I won't learn much. If there is a person talk to me, I think I can tell that person some words such as 'again please, speak slow' like this.*

Lastly, for writing skill, the VIS explained how they acquired sentence structures by memorizing the whole sentence and rewriting the same sentence until they could write it fluently. However, in addition to self-study, there were a few of them who planned to improve their writing by learning in extra classes.

ST4: *"When I found a new sentence, I will write it down and read. Then I will write the sentence repeatedly until I can write the whole sentence automatically.*

ST7: *"Well, I study extra classes and will ask the teacher to teach reading and writing."*

According to the responses, although the VIS tended to feel they were struggling with reading and writing skills, they showed satisfaction in their listening and speaking skills in large proportions. Regarding the instructors' views, the difficulties revealed by the VIS might alter their understanding of the ability in listening skills due to the fact that the VIS were unable to catch the vocabulary in the sentences. Interestingly, despite considering writing skill as their worst English skill, the VIS were well aware of the importance to improve their writing and find out the suitable strategies to pursue the development.

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4.4 Theme 4: Importance of the ELL for the VIS

After the interview questions with different objectives were addressed to the participants, various details ranging from general background to specific data involving focal points of the study were ready to be connected. This theme emerged from the interview questions of the final set when the participants were asked how they understand ELL and the meaning of the ELL to their lived experiences. All of the participants highly valued the ELL for their lives; however, there were thought-provoking aspects revealed through the reflections of the instructors and support staff regarding the level of importance in ELL for the VIS. The units of meaning were presented in four subthemes: awareness of the importance of the ELL; expectation on ELL of the VIS; and benefits of ELL for the VIS, as categorized in the table below.

Table 4.4

Summary of Theme and Subthemes for Theme 4: Importance of the ELL for the VIS

Themes	Subthemes	Areas/ Opinions
4.4 Importance of the ELL for the VIS	4.4.1 Awareness of the Importance of the ELL	a. Unaware of the importance during early education background - Uneducated about the importance - Failed to pay attention from the beginning resulting in difficulties to start again, inadequate foundation b. Increasing awareness in higher education - Broadly spoken language - Got informed from teachers - English is as the tool for communication - Be obliged to study in the inclusive education c. Depending on the need in ELL for the VIS - Expand job opportunities - How the VIS set their life goal
	4.4.2 Expectation on ELL of the VIS	a. Expectation towards instructional approach in class - Integration of English skills - Adjustment in teaching material - Teaching along with verbal explanation b. Expectation towards the use of English language - The use inside classrooms - The use outside classrooms - Lower assessment standard than the sighted students

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Table 4.4

Summary of Theme and Subthemes for Theme 4: Importance of the ELL for the VIS (Cont.)

Themes	Subthemes	Areas/ Opinions
	4.4.3 Benefits of the ELL for the VIS	a. Communication - International language /Social connection - Be able to communicate with foreigner directly without translation b. Use for improving living standard - Knowing English breaks learning barriers - Expanding career path

4.4.1 Awareness of the Importance of the ELL

a. Unaware of the importance during early education background

During the interview, the VIS admitted that they seemed to be unaware of the importance of English since the very beginning of their ELL at school or never acknowledged about how English was important. Consequently, the gap in ELL was created as the VIS tended not to pay attention to learning English. This brought about the difficulties when they moved up to the next grades or moved to the universities and, eventually, resulted in low English ability among most of the VIS.

ST3: *"I started to realize that English is important when I was in Matthayom 1 as I had to study many more English classes. Although I tried a lot to keep up with the lessons, it still was not good.*

ST6: *"I did not see the importance of English. Even the English teacher spoke Thai to me."*

ST6: *"The teacher in the university would tell students in every class about how English was important whereas when I was in school, the English teachers just came into class, no introduction, and started writing on the board right away."*

b. Increasing awareness in higher education

However, when the VIS turned to be students in higher education, all of the VIS confirmed that studying English was essential for them due to a range of reasons. Therefore, the awareness was enhanced by seeing English as the broadly spoken language leading to posing English as the necessary language to learn.

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However, not all VIS earned the awareness by themselves due to the fact that parts of the VIS were informed by their English teachers.

ST5: *"Really, it is very important right now. Maybe because a lot of people speak English, so I think it's important like on YouTube and some TV programs I watched."*

ST6: *"I started to see the importance of it as the teachers will tell how English is important every time, which I never was told about this. After I know, I pay more attention."*

ST2: *"It's important anyway because English is the language that we all must use. I think English is always necessary because everyone must be able to know about English more or less...they must."*

In terms of the importance of ELL specifically for the VIS, they clearly stated that they are human and need to live in this society and English is a tool to communicate, otherwise they might limit their opportunity regarding success in career and education. For example, one of the VIS described that English was very important as it was the international language and could be used for future careers such as a translator.

ST2: *"Despite being blind, we can speak…. Because the blind need to speak anyway. If we don't speak, what can we do? This means that we must learn languages."*

ST6: *"At least, when we (the blind students), enter university, if we have to study with the sighted students, we must study English anyway. … Being blind or whatever, we are one of all humans. We need to live in this diverse society. We are human. We are similar and different. Thus, English is a tool which allows us to be able to communicate with other people. If we think that we are blind, so we don't have to learn English, that is the huge cutting of our opportunities in terms of either working or studying."*

Few of the VIS admitted that it was unavoidable for the blind as they were required to learn English in inclusive education with other sighted students as one of the compulsory subjects in the curriculum. In fact, several of the VIS

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interestingly pointed out that ELL was probably unnecessary for them as they might avoid studying English unless they were obliged to learn English.

ST7: *"Reading stories can be fun sometimes. Hmm, I feel that if it's not a compulsory subject, I will not study."*

ST9: *"Normally, I will not try to avoid English, but if it is in the classroom, I will definitely try to avoid it.*

c. Depending on the need in ELL for the VIS

According to the reflections on the importance of the ELL for the VIS elucidated by the instructors and support staff, a remarkably high level of awareness also emerged through the descriptions. The data showed that most of the instructors were aware that ELL was necessary for expanding opportunities, particularly job opportunities of the VIS.

T4: *"Well, in the future, they might be speakers for the shopping malls. They must know about pronunciation, the '-ing' form, why the '-ed' must be added, or even foreign accents. When they work in the information center for foreigners, they could provide information in English."*

T9: *"It is definitely important…. I always tell them that knowing English is the opportunity of life as it is the door to anything. We don't know the future. Although you might be selling lottery tickets on the sidewalk, there might be some foreign customers."*

However, a few of the lecturers disagreed to bring the ELL as the issue to force the VIS to be pressured in ELL. They pointed out that it depended on the goal of the VIS whether they really needed English in their career path or as the major part of their lives.

T7: *"Hmmm, actually, it is the same as the other students in the way that it will be important when the thing they want to do in their future or in their lives require English language. It is not that it is necessary because they are special students."*

T8: *"I also ask myself whether he will actually use English for work or just reply to comments on an internet platform. We need to think for his future. If English is important, as if he is an English major student, we might need to be more serious. However, if he is a non-English major student,*

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so he might not use English in his career that much, so basic knowledge is enough. It is up to him."

In addition to the instructors, the support staff admitted that English was important to the VIS as it was an international language and provided ranges of advantages for the students in terms of broadening their job opportunities. However, the support staff seemed to leave some room for the idea that not all the VIS must be able to adopt English as their major part of living. The staff reported that in the end it would be their choice and depended on the VIS's life goals and the career path they chose.

SuT2: *"English is spoken in every class and every country, so yes, it is important. Umm. To consider if it is important for the visually impaired students or not, I don't really know, but I think it is definitely important for the blind students who want to continue their education or who have their own goals. That will be very essential for them. Yet, if they are the blind students who plan to graduate at high school and work as the masseuse, I am really not sure. Well, it might be important if the customers are foreigners."*

SuT8: *"I think it is one of the issues for these students. We must admit that their impairment causes concern about employers not accepting them into their workplaces. So! If they have extra skills such as computer or English skills, that will be easier for them. There was a student. He was a trainee in Vietnam and his English is ok, so after he graduated, he got a job right away. Well, I think we should just ignore what we don't have, but focus on what we should develop."*

4.4.2 Expectation on ELL of the VIS

In this subtheme, the aspects involving the importance of ELL for the VIS were expressed through the different angles of expectation on ELL of the VIS. Due to the increasing awareness in the importance of ELL, the VIS depicted various aspects relating to the expectation in terms of the idealistic instructional approach in class. Unlike the VIS, the instructors put their position on this topic as adults who considered the practical action resulting in lowering the expectation in ELL of the VIS.

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a. Expectation towards instructional approach in class

Regarding the pedagogical aspects, the VIS also have their picture of how they want to be taught and treated in English classes. The VIS described that the English class should be taught by having the integration between four English skills with two-way communication and extra activities to reduce pressure. However, in case there will be games in class, the VIS mentioned that it will be good if such games do not require using visual perception. Moreover, the teachers should teach along with the explanation on what is written in the text or shown on screen, and the adjustment should be made to teaching materials in accordance with the learners.

ST2: *"Normally, there* are pictures in the textbook, these pictures should be *explained. Well, in the braille text, the pictures were removed and they do not exist."*

ST4: *"Just like in a class taught by the native teacher, I want to learn knowledge and do activities, so that I will not be too stressed but can relax."*

ST8: *"I want the teacher to help magnify the font size and if there are videos such as conversation situations, I want the teacher to explain what happens in the videos. Also, play the game that uses only a little visual perception."*

b. Expectation towards the use of English language

Regarding the aspects narrated by the instructors, when the English teachers were asked about their expectation on the ELL of the VIS, they revealed their opinions in three major aspects ranging from the expectation when the VIS were studying inside the classroom, the expectation on the VIS English ability when they were outside classroom, and the expectation when compared to the sighted students. Generally, regarding the expectation on the ELL in class, most of the instructors would aim at the achievement in learning objectives as identified in the course syllabus and expect the VIS to reach that goal. On the contrary, the instructor tended to lower their expectation of the VIS when they had to use English outside the classroom. Moreover, most of the teachers mentioned that although they applied all the pedagogical aspects equally to the VIS, they would not expect the VIS to perform at the same level as the sighted students.

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T1: *"The word 'expectation' means learning objectives. such as when teaching conditional clauses students should know which verb should be for sentences type 1, type 2, or type 3. That is, we use learning objectives as the indicator, so we have to achieve that goal. The expectation would be how to take him to such objectives set for each lesson."*

T1: *"I would expect them to use English for basic communication, and don't have to be at an advanced level. At least they should be able to create sentences, use vocabulary for communication, and tell information. I think that should be ok. We do not expect them to use any complex structure. Just ensure that you can use it in daily life such as understanding, being able to give responses, and telling others what you need. Well, just to emphasize that after you learn, you can utilize English language for your own benefits. I think this is the expectation of these students."*

T2: *"I think this group of students may not use English for their job that much, so just knowing the basic level should be enough. In case they have to be in a certain situation, they can use vocabulary or can understand some words. At least they know something. It's better than knowing nothing. We don't expect the maximum ability, just a moderate level, and let him have the chances to study inclusively with the sighted peers. We teach and give advice the same as what we do to normal students, but we wouldn't expect that he could do work at the same level as his peers. We need to lower our expectation as he is different from the others, so it's impossible to think that he will be equal to his friends.*

4.4.3 Benefits of the ELL for the VIS

Apart from the vitality of ELL, the VIS also mentioned other aspects of the language learning by mentioning the benefits gained from being able to use English. Most of the VIS pointed out that the ability to use English helps them in various dimensions. The advantages of the practicality of ELL consisted in the use of English as a tool in communication; expanding knowledge; and a broad range of other living aspects from daily living to their professions.

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a. Communication

Most of the VIS were fully aware of the benefit of ELL due to the fact that they could use English as the international language and engage in social connection. In terms of the employment of English, they explained that if they could use English well, they would be able to communicate with foreigners directly without translation.

ST1: *"English is the international language. When we go abroad and we get lost, the (English) language can help or when foreigners ask us for directions, we might meet new friends speaking English."*

ST4: *"We speak more English to the foreigners. It's like we can communicate with them more easily without speaking Thai or need other people to help translate for us."*

ST6: *"(English) can help a lot. If we can use the (English) language, that means we have already removed the wall. Let's say, we are Thai and can only speak Thai, and we leave Thailand to go overseas. Although our bodies are in other countries, we cannot communicate with anybody. Don't need to think about (using English) for studying or working, but even for daily living, we are unable to use it."*

b. Use for improving living standard

For the VIS, they perceive ELL as the importance tool for educational aspects such as to pass the exit exam as the graduation requirement for the university. Clearly, the VIS mentioned that they could use English to expand their knowledge; however, they pointed out another dimension of learning knowledge. They asserted that knowing English could break learning barriers and expand their career path to have better life opportunity.

ST6: *"We can learn from more various media instead of reading only websites written in Thai. Sometimes, we can take a look at articles or other academic papers written in English. This makes us know more."*

ST1: *"Well, it's beneficial in all aspects. Despite moving back to my hometown in the countryside, (children in) my generation will be adults and might have to expand socializing further than only in Thailand."*

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ST2: *"For career, knowing English can help as they firstly want the one who can use the second or third language. When they choose the employee, they must want to hire those who can use English anyway. it is quite necessary. Besides, there will be more and more foreigners coming into our country."*

All in all, although the VIS expressed their feelings towards their ELL by evaluating their ability in ELL as lower than the average standard, all participants agreed that ELL is important and provides a number of benefits for the VIS. However, the instructors and the support staff described that ELL might not always be the first priority in future lives of the VIS as a necessity and the function of English that they use in reality should be prioritized. Under the paradoxical aspects between the VIS and the instructors, together with the support staff, the descriptions of the expectations in ELL of the VIS should be taken into consideration as the beneficial factor for the curriculum development.

4.5 Theme 5: Perceptions towards Inclusive Education

Another area in which the researcher intended to elicit in-depth information from the participants is the details involving the inclusive classroom experiences. The perceptions of the participants towards the English classrooms taught inclusively were explored through the research instruments on the perceptions and definition of the terms 'inclusive classroom'. including their attitudes towards related elements of the inclusive education concepts. All the statements were not elaborated by focusing on purely the inclusive classroom concepts; however, the participants also tied in their ELL which are the subject areas of the study. The interview data and the recorded information from the classroom observation were analyzed and clustered into five themes consisting of perceptions towards inclusive classroom; assistive technology; learning materials; classroom engagement; and assessment.

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Table 4.5

Summary of Theme and Subthemes for Theme 5: Perceptions towards Inclusive Education

Themes	Subthemes	Areas/ Opinions
4.5 Perceptions towards Inclusive Education	4.5.1 Perceptions towards Inclusive Classroom	a. General understanding towards inclusive classroom - Objectives of the inclusive classroom: performing the academic and non-academic activities with sighted peers. - Social opportunity b. Equality - Being recognized as a friend of the sighted students - Peers' perceptions: equality and discrimination - Equal ability as the sighted students with different communication channel - Not perceived as a burden - Issues of support: reasonable level c. Positive perceptions - Time to step out of the VIS's safe zone - Opportunity to share various educational experiences with the sighted students - Increasing the VIS's learning motivation d. Negative perceptions - Difficulties in classroom: unable to catch up with lesson in class - Prefer separated class with comprehensible and modified teaching approach
	4.5.2 Assistive Technology	a. Functional assistive tools - Voice recorder, mobile phone, braille sense notetaker b. Limitations in the use of the assistive technology - Impracticality of the assistive technology such as slate and stylus, notebook, audiobook, magnifier - Using assistive tools prevented the VIS from being able to catch up the lesson. - Reading without knowing the punctuation doesn't help with English - No assistive tools in class - Most technology for the disabled is expensive

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Table 4.5

Summary of Theme and Subthemes for Theme 5: Perceptions towards Inclusive Education (Cont.)

Themes	Subthemes	Areas/ Opinions
	4.5.3 Learning materials	a. Using braille text in class - Drawbacks of using braille text: time consuming; inconvenience as the paper is thick and the dots may fade. - The page order doesn't match with the original text book the sighted students use. - The importance of braille text b. Considerations in producing braille text
	4.5.4 Classroom engagement	a. Uncomfortable feelings of the VIS - Unwilling to do group work due to the relationship gap with friends - Misunderstanding of the teachers about task completion - Concerning characters of the VIS: hardly responded or no responses in class and lack of self-study b. Performing as the active learners - Enjoy doing work with close friends - Preferred to give presentation for the group
	4.5.5 Assessment	a. Accommodation in assessment - Separated exam room - Modification on test format - Time expansion - Permission to bring the test outside classroom and complete with the support staff b. Issues in assessment accommodation - Difficulties during the exam sessions - Uncomfortable feeling when they would like to ask the volunteer to read the passage - Different evaluation standard - The issues affecting the assessment

4.5.1 Perceptions towards Inclusive Classroom

When the participants were asked to freely explain how they understand the term ‘inclusive classroom’ or what came up in their minds when the term ‘inclusive classroom’ was mentioned, they obviously showed their familiarities towards this term in the similar direction. The elaboration conveyed how they

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perceived the inclusive classroom by recalling their experiences leading to the emerged areas which were (a) general understanding; (b) equality; (c) positive perceptions; and (d) negative perceptions.

a. General understanding towards inclusive classroom

By elaborating the general views on what the inclusive classroom should be, a few of the VIS further described the objectives of the inclusive classroom that they perceived as the actual reason behind the inclusive educational concepts. The VIS asserted that studying inclusively aimed to provide opportunities for the disabled to live in society and let society learn from the disabled. Additionally, all of the VIS agreed that their first impression of the term 'inclusive classroom' is the place where they had chances to perform the same tasks and activities as their sighted peers.

ST3: *"I think the inclusive learning project is the idea held by Princess Maya Chakri Sirindhorn. I presumed that Her Royal Highness actually does not focus on acquiring high scores. She might want us to gain experiences in living with other people in the society….and the society can learn from us as well."*

ST2: *"It is when disabled peers study together with non-disabled peers and stays in the same classroom* just *like normal people."*

ST6: *"I understand that it must be separated into two types. If we focus on the term 'study', it is to normally study with peers. For the term 'inclusive', it is to join the activities with friends. It is not only for studying. Then, it is to bring the disabled students to study in the same classroom and learn together, integrate us together, and do the activities together.*

Similar to the VIS, the instructors agreed that by learning in inclusive class, the VIS could have an opportunity if receiving education equally to the sighted students under a non-discriminating society. Moreover, most of the school teachers emphasized that the main objective of inclusive education was not purely for academic purposes; however, it aimed to provide social skills for the students with disabilities.

T1: *"My feeling about inclusive classrooms is giving an opportunity for the disabled students to study inclusively with the sighted peers, so there will*

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be an assistive atmosphere helping each other. It is like they are a part of the classroom. In my view, this is inclusive education."

T5: *"From my view, inclusive education allows disabled students to gain equality, not being discriminated against, and aims to let these students learn the same as what the other students learn, but with more intense safety."*

T6: *"The major goal is not the academic issue; it is the social skills. If it focuses on such issues, it should be fine as the student will have a very good opportunity… I really want other people to see this as the major objective of inclusive education."*

Regarding the data narrated by the support staff, the informants acknowledged that they perceived studying inclusively as the chances for the VIS to acquire knowledge equally to the sighted students including to learn social skills to prepare for their real life after the educational setting.

SuT1: *"I understand that inclusive classroom is the classroom in which the special need students study with normal students. They are arranged in the same classroom so that they learn the same thing and are able to acquire knowledge equally."*

SuT2: *"To my understanding, it is the place where special students who might be visual impaired or hearing impaired have chances to study and do activities with normal students. I think it is to help disabled students be able to live in normal society and get accepted and have equal educational opportunity."*

SuT7: *"Here, in inclusive study we apply the evaluation criteria to the disabled students the same as we use for every student in the university. This is because, on graduation day, the disabled students will be proud of themselves, that they graduated with pride and dignity as equal as the others."*

b. Equality

Another remarkable point presented by the VIS was the term 'equality'. From the description, the feeling of being perceived equally from their sighted peers happened when the VIS were recognized as a friend of the sighted

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students. A few of the VIS stated that sitting in the class inclusively made us feel that we were not different from the sighted students and the sighted friends who talked to us would feel that we are just normal. Additionally, the sighted peers did not feel they are different as they think that we are their friends just that we could not see things.

ST1: *"I feel totally different as I am happier in high school, maybe because I can choose to study what I like such as Languages, Social Sciences, less Mathematics. Besides, my close friends, we are similar, they don't see me as blind and different from them. They just look at me as a student who cannot see things."*

According to the understanding of the instructors, the instructors viewed the VIS as the learners who had equal ability in ELL to the sighted students and did not see them as the burden needed to be set aside, although some of them admitted that they needed to put extra effort into teaching preparation. One of the university lecturers even made the point that it might be unfair to focus only on the sighted students who were the majority in class and leave the VIS behind.

T8: *"Of course, I have to work harder, but I never look at the student as if he is a burden. If we see him as a burden, it is like the limitation in education. There was training and one of the speakers emphasized on integrating technology in classroom teaching, so I asked what to do if there was a visually impaired student in class. The speaker replied that we must develop for the majority. I wasn't satisfied with the answer, so I told the speaker that we mustn't leave such students behind. If we go, we have to go together."*

In other words, this subtheme emphasized that the VIS had potential to study English as most of the university lecturers mentioned in the same direction that the VIS were able to acquire knowledge the same as the sighted students, only with different channels of communication.

T7: *"I feel that actually if we use the same ruler as the sighted students to measure these students, we might find them having lower ability. But If we look again, these students have their own receptive channels or different way of understanding. I feel that actually it is not that they have lower proficiency or learning ability. It is just the differences.*

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Nonetheless, the support staff relayed the other side of their views of how much support and services should be provided to the VIS. They mentioned that support should be provided to the VIS in the reasonable proportion aiming to help the VIS access their learning and not too much that it might be considered as unfair treats.

SuT7: *"There will be preparation for these students such as additional classes or using assistive tools during the exams or translators. This group of students also have the right to extend the exam hours according to the appropriateness under the teachers' consideration. These things are not cheating. It is the appropriate accommodation they should receive."*

SuT8: *"I don't think according to the theory. It is the study where the impaired students' study in the same classroom with normal students but with the...ummm… it is not having more advantages. It is the support so that they can be accessible to the learning. For example, we might need to think about how we can help visually impaired students be able to learn. It is not that we ask for extra points from teachers, but only the accessibility."*

These transcribed information from the other groups of participants who are the English teachers and the support staff revealed the different angles of the experiences concerning the issues of equality in the ELL of the VIS.

Despite the equality, there were certain situations that provided the opposite side as the feeling of being discriminated by the sighted students. Although the VIS were primarily perceived by their sighted peers with the sense of equality, they described the situation showing the attitudes of their sighted classmates who thought that they are different from them. This issue might be noticed from the reaction of the sighted peers when they might have to do pair work with the VIS. For pair work, the VIS asked the sighted peer sitting next to him about what to do for the task. However, the VIS's pair tended to discuss the answer with the other sighted peers more than with the VIS and be the person who answered to the class. Another reason that makes the VIS feel they were different was how the teacher treated them in class. The VIS explained that when they were mentioned by the teachers

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frequently, other sighted students might think that the teacher paid too much attention specifically on us, leading to negative behaviors of the sighted peers.

ST9: *"We study with them, but we are not a part of them. They still look at us as we are blind.*

ST6: *"Let's say if we are sitting in the (inclusive) classroom with one disabled student sitting there as well, and the teacher keeps calling up the disabled student's name more often than the others. From the teacher's view, she may think that this student couldn't probably catch up with the lesson, but in the view of the peers who are also sitting in the same classroom, they will think that the teacher pays too much attention to this one. This could make other (sighted) students be jealous of the disabled one."*

c. Positive perceptions

Different from the understanding of the concept of studying inclusively which the participants expressed through their thoughts, the VIS expressed the benefits of studying inclusively in accordance with the actual situation experienced from the inclusive classroom setting. When the VIS had to step out of their school for the blind to study at inclusive schools, it is the time that they had to step out of their safe zone. After they moved to the inclusive setting, they elaborated their responses that they could employ the inclusive setting to prove themselves; whether they might have higher abilities than the sighted students, or to discuss and exchange knowledge with their sighted friends. In the classroom, there were both situations showing that the VIS spent time having discussion with their sighted peers and sitting by themselves separately. When they had to do group tasks or do pair work such as completing vocabulary exercise in class, the VIS generally let their sighted peers read the exercise for them then they came up with the answer together.

ST3: *"I think we should have this idea. It is better to just let the disabled put themselves together in the school which they think that's their safe zone, the zone which they feel safe."*

ST2: *"This might give the opportunity for the disabled to live in society. I think the blind students get the best chance compared to the deaf students. Well, I do not know about other types of disabled students, but the blind student*

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can come out and study with the sighted students. What I know is that the deaf students can only stay in the school for deaf students."

ST6: *"I think it is like we study together. If I get a book, can I complete it? O.K. I can or I might ask the teacher for the answer but what if the teacher doesn't tell the answer, we will not know whether we completed it correctly or incorrectly. But, if we discuss with friends, we can make the arguments. There will be discussion throughout the class which is the same as learning. Despite no teaching from the teacher, it is like we learn from our friends…Let's say there might be some blind students who are good at some certain skills, and if we are out there, maybe we can do better than the others."*

Regarding the instructors' opinion, they admitted that when the VIS learned English inclusively with their sighted peers this could be linked to the general understanding of inclusive education. They asserted that the VIS were able to gain a number of benefits including having chances to communicate with their peers, which is similar to communicating in the natural setting. Furthermore, compared to studying separately with only the VIS, it was better for the VIS to put themselves among the sighted students as it was the chance to prove their actual ability.

T1: *"By studying in inclusive education, the blind students will gain the same support as the others, or even more than their peers as everyone seems to offer help for them. Especially if they are lucky and have the opportunity to study with nice classmates, the students will definitely help them."*

T5: *"Well, if they study separately, it will be like when the sighted students learn their extra classes, and the lesson will be more intensive. Yet, studying` with peers, they can use English to communicate just like when they use it in a real setting."*

T7: *"I think it works as it is the natural setting and I think the students like it as they are treated just like the others. In an inclusive classroom, students can question the teacher in real time."*

T8: *"I think it is beneficial for the blind student in terms of he needs to encourage himself to catch up with friends. I mean if he studies with the sighted peers, their peers will be able to know the different styles of*

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learning. And if we let him learn with only the blind, I think that his ability may not be fully elicited. If he studies with other sighted peers, his learning proficiency will be drawn by the sighted students."

In the view of the support staff, learning motivation of the VIS emerged through the experiences in both school and university levels. The responses confirmed that transferring from studying with only the VIS to studying with the sighted peers in an inclusive classroom created motivation among the VIS in terms of being active learners and putting more effort into studying English at a higher level.

SuT1: *"Some of our students had problems when they moved from schools for the blind as they had low ability in English. In the school for the blind, we learn only vocabulary and not much. For this student, he couldn't get used to studying English here, but he tried to find a way to learn and got motivated by good experiences, so he likes English."*

SuT5: *"When it is the inclusive classroom and they know that the sighted peers can speak or do things in class, they will be more active or be motivated as they should be able to do so too."*

SuT8: *"Although there will be many differences in learning English when moving from high school to university, to pass the test even if it is general English can be very good motivation for them, so that they put their effort into learning a higher level of English."*

Furthermore, the support staff explained that the experience in ELL of the VIS was different from that of the sighted students; therefore, learning English in the inclusive classroom provided more various chances to learn English skills and to gain support from their sighted peers, in addition to the help from their teachers or staff. In the classroom at school level, most of the VIS always have discussions with their sighted peers while doing exercises and planning group presentations. They also let their sighted peers read the exercise for them and came up with the answer together. Unlike in the university level, the VIS usually sat by himself and talked to the other students only when doing pair or group work. The support staff also expressed their experience in the same way as the situation in the classroom.

SuT4: *"For English, if the students get engaged, there will be a lot of benefits for them, but if not, they can only listen. Well, although they could only*

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listen, when they hear conversations of the sighted students, they will learn the updated language and they can collect such things."

SuT5: *"We know that the visually impaired students tend to have low ability in terms of studying English compared to the others, especially students from schools in Bangkok. Hence, studying English and engaging with peers in class help them develop the skills, but whenever we set only these students in class and all of them have low English skills, there will be only teachers who can help them. Differently, studying in an inclusive classroom, there will be both the sighted peers and teachers that can help them."*

d. Negative perceptions

The final aspect in this subtheme is the situation when the VIS faced difficulties during their English classes. Their struggles were related to the learning styles and their learning pace. In fact, the VIS had to rely on the assistance of their sighted peers in certain aspects. The examples from the responses revealed that the VIS needed to catch up with the lessons in class by borrowing textbooks from the sighted peers so that the staff in the school for the blind could use the books for explaining the lesson. However, they were unable to do this as the sighted students also needed their books for revision. Moreover, the difficulties studying in an inclusive classroom were added to directly by the statement showing their preference towards studying in a separated class as it would be more comprehensible and the teaching approach will be modified appropriately for their condition.

ST1: *"...but it is quite a struggle. Well, we study with the same hours and periods. Sometimes, when there were not enough volunteers at the school for the blind, I had to keep the rest of the task until the exam was coming. For example, when the exam was coming in two weeks, the teachers would teach as much as they can to follow along the lesson plans. My friends would really need to use their books, so what about me? Whose book can I borrow?... I admit that I learn more slowly than the (sighted) peers."*

ST5: *"Actually, I'd rather let the teacher teach me one-on-one. This will make me understand more."*

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ST7: *"Studying separately is slightly better because the teacher will adjust their teaching method in accordance with us. Like this is to teach the blind. Maybe…well, if I study with the sighted peers, sometimes, we need to mainly follow along with the majority in class."*

The drawbacks of this concept also emerged through the statements of the instructors. A few of the instructors pointed out that it might be true that the idea of having a chance to learn with the sighted students provided a lot of positives; however, it might be better for the VIS if they could learn English in separate classes. The reasons behind these responses were the issues of learning pace and the teaching approaches which should be prepared specifically for the VIS.

T1: *"When talking about difficulty, it would be some sighted students who might not be ready to study and interrupt the class. This could obstruct learning as teachers might be distracted and have to manage the class, so they couldn't pay full attention to the whole class. To be frank, studying inclusively might not be good for the blind students as, let's say if they learn English with all the students who are blind, teachers will have special teaching techniques and specific technology to let them learn all four skills within the classes of one or two hours. I think if such schools don't have financial problems, they might use technology to assist teaching and do not try to push these students to other schools."*

T4: *"Of course, it is not 100 percent proper, but it is a good learning method for them as they can learn to socialize. Yet, if we want them to learn the same content as their friends, we might let them learn in separate classes with only blind classmates."*

T5: *"Well, as we all know, if these students haven't been well prepared, they may have a slower learning pace compared to the others, and they will have to prepare their learning assistive tools so that they can catch up with their sighted peers."*

In brief, participants showed their general understanding towards inclusive classroom by mentioning the objectives of the inclusive classroom; performing the academic and non-academic activities with sighted peers and increased social opportunity for the VIS. However, the concept of equality was not

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always actually pursued, the discriminating perceptions were found through the sighted peers and the issues of support. Additionally, both benefits of the inclusive classroom were interestingly mentioned in details, such as the time to step out of the VIS's safe zone and the increasing learning motivation of the VIS; in contrast the drawbacks were present as the issues of learning pace and the comparison with learning in a separated class.

4.5.2 Assistive Technology

One of the major elements of the inclusive educational setting is the accessibility to instructional materials and the learning resources of the d students with disabilities In this study, the VIS were also asked to elaborate on learning materials or the assistive technology that they are using in their English class. The responses showed that there were various aspects grouped as (a) the functional assistive tools and (b) the limitations in the use of the assistive technology

a. Functional assistive tools

From the interview, there was assistive technology that the VIS considered as the useful tools which they found could really help them with learning in the inclusive classroom. The VIS mentioned that, in their English class, they regularly used the voice recorder, mobile phone, and one of them used the braille sense notetaker. They reported that each tool contributed different advantages depending on the functions of the technology and the situation to which it is applied. Corresponding to the observation that, although the VIS did not use braille text, one of them carried the braille sense notetaking machine and used it in class while the teacher explained the lesson, such as grammar rules; the other two of the VIS used the voice recorder in every class so that they could make notes later outside the class. Another example was the student with low vision who used her mobile phone, as it was very convenient to take a photo of slides on the screen so that she could look closer; one of VIS in the university level brought the external keyboard and connected it with the mobile phone to facilitate his notetaking in class. Interestingly, one of the VIS borrowed the braille note taking machine or the braille sense notetaker from the school for the blind and employed the functions that come with the machine to help her learning.

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ST3: *"Well, normally I have the recorder and bring it into the class and record the content in every class."*

ST8: *"I don't have many problems. If the font size is small, I just use my mobile phone to take photos and read from the phone… Using a mobile phone is already convenient."*

ST2: *"It is the braille writing machine, but I don't have to use much energy (compared to slate and stylus to write) or don't need paper. This machine has an English menu. It comes with the electronic clock, calculator, and everything."*

ST6: *"I will put everything on the phone ...everything. I downloaded Microsoft Word, Excel, Power Point into the phone and signed in to the online services provided by the university. It's for free."*

Referring to the statements from the instructors, the assistive technology that seemed to be used mostly was a notebook computer which was used by the VIS for notetaking and file reading.

T7: *"The student will tell his requirement that he needs readable files and read along with the moving cursor. If not, he would use braille. There was one student using an electronic braille machine. … Well, I just gave the files for reading. Don't have to give in advance. … For writing, it is in accordance with reading. He would type in his laptop most of the time like 90 percent, and followed by listening to what he typed whether it was correct."*

T8: *"If we want him to use technology, it must be a computer or laptop so that it is readable and can be used for listening. However, for the in-class activities, we may need to reduce using technology, but we can still give assignments via computer. We need to consider this issue as if we don't start, who will? And how can he continue his job?"*

Although most of the assistive technology could facilitate the ELL of the VIS, not all of the technology could be employed in every situation. The functions of each of the tools were utilized in particular situations and the appropriateness in the use could be found to be either agreeable or disagreeable to the learning approach.

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b. Limitation in the use of the assistive technology

The VIS used various assistive items to increase their capabilities in class which are slate and stylus, notebook, audiobook, magnifier, recorder mobile phones, as well as, the braille note taker. However, not all the VIS used the assistive tools in class due to the fact that they experienced the impracticality of using such tools in class. As observed, only two of all the VIS used slate and stylus to take notes while the clip was playing including when the teacher explained the lesson. There was some noise from the use of the tools, but it was not too loud. Most of the VIS did not use slate and stylus frequently as using these tools prevented them from being able to catch up with the lesson.

ST5: *"I bring slate and stylus. Actually, I don't use them frequently. I think sometimes if I use them to take notes, I cannot catch up on the lesson. Don't know why I should use it."*

ST7: *"When I use slate and stylus, I need to write in codes and it is 4-5 dots for each code. This slows down my writing. While writing, I must listen to the teacher who I cannot follow up with, so I use a recorder to record the lesson and then type into my notebook as it lasts longer than writing in braille."*

ST1: *"Notebook, I use it for typing, not often used for searching for information, not for in-class learning."*

In terms of other assistive tools such as the audiobook, they perceived this tool as the technology which could help them read books; however, without knowing the punctuations, it didn't help them with English. Additionally, for the students with low vision, although they were expected to use the magnifier machine, they revealed that the size of the machine was too big and they had to borrow it from the support center, so it was not convenient to use in the classroom. The final point in this subtheme was not the tool itself; however, it was the cost of the assistive technology which seems to be expensive.

ST6: *"Well, for the audiobooks, imagine if the reader reads an English story and also read the word 'full stop' out loud, I don't think that will work. I understand that an audiobook is made from a person reading sentences. The readers just keep reading like they normally read a book. They don't*

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tell when there is a punctuation or capitalization, so it affects our writing. Well, we don't know the position of punctuations, and don't know these details, so when we do the writing, we do it totally incorrectly. Although we spell the words correctly, if we don't know about writing rules, it is wrong anyway."

ST8: *"Last semester, I got a chance to borrow the magnifier from the DSS. This semester I am too lazy to borrow it again. I just use my mobile phone. I think that's enough."*

ST1: *"many tools for the blind are very expensive. There is a machine that can scan the screen and turn into an output or something like 2D or 3D. I can't remember. It costs about five hundred thousand."*

Another experience in the inclusive classroom revealed when the VIS were asked if they actually used the assistive technology was that they frequently decided to spend their learning experience time by bringing nothing in class. They further explained that they felt more comfortable to just simply sit, listen to the teachers, and notice what was happening in class without any assistive tool. The situation occurred mostly with the VIS in the university level as they tended to just sit at their seats without any tools or learning materials.

ST3: *"Most of the assignments comes in sheets or papers. I just completed it and handed it in. If it's the lecture in class, I will listen and write it down later. I remember quite a certain amount."*

Another aspect reflected from teaching the class mixed with the VIS was the assistive tools that the students used to facilitate their ELL. However, the instructors restated the issue of financial concerns as most of the technology provided for the disabilities was obviously expensive. Due to the cost of the assistive technology, the instructors admitted that it was good for the VIS who had financial support and could afford the machine so that they were able to use it in class and increased their learning potential. However, the instructors reported that they hardly had students who actually owned and used such assistive tools in class.

T1: *"There was a (blind) student who told me that the assistive technology was not updated. It was a kind of a machine that could transform text into braille or something. to have such electronic devices needs a lot of*

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money, if you are not a rich student, you wouldn't have a chance to use it. I am not sure if there is a machine like this provided in the school for blind."

T7: *"There was one student using an electronic braille machine. The braille dots would pop up towards his fingers. I couldn't remember if the other students also had this tool. It must be expensive."*

All in all, despite the functional assistive tools, there were limitations in the use of the assistive technology in terms of impracticality of the assistive technology and other issues concerning the high cost of the tools which should be taken into consideration apart from the utilities.

4.5.3 Learning Materials

Another key element of inclusive classroom that the VIS mentioned alongside the assistive technology is the learning materials, particularly braille text. The appropriate learning materials played a vital role in learning English for the VIS. From the interview, they primarily described the situation in using braille text in various ways, which were both the drawbacks and the issue of whether the braille text would be replaced by the new assistive technology, including the importance of the braille text to the ELL.

a. Using braille text in class

There were two drawbacks revealed by the VIS during the interview concerning time consumption in braille text production and the inconvenience of carrying the braille text to the classroom. Generally, it took time to produce a braille text, so the VIS often received the learning text far after the lesson in class had passed. Additionally, there was inconvenience when they had to carry the braille text and use it in their English class due to the changes in size of the paper and the differences of page numbers. In terms of the quality of the text, the VIS complained that when they used braille text, the dots in the script may disappear and sometimes there was not enough paper. As observed, there was only one VIS who carried her braille textbook into the classroom; however, she hardly used it and mostly used her braille sense notetaking machine. The rest of the VIS did not bring their braille text into class as observed and supported by the following responses.

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ST1: *"Ah, yes, sometimes we can ask the resource teacher to produce the braille text, but it takes time turning text into braille. The paper for braille is expensive. So many issues, like if we do the reading task and need to use braille text, three hours won't be enough."*

ST6: *"Well, if we want to read an English book, there are so many steps to take. We have to bring the text to the DSS and the staff will produce the braille version for us and that takes ages. After we get the braille version, we have to read through, so we will be slower than the class anyway.*

ST2: *"If we look for the books from (book stores) outside, it would be very hard because we need to use braille text. Even the English textbooks used in school, we could get it in the middle or almost at the end of the term, unless we study on YouTube."*

ST7: *"I couldn't catch up with the class using braille text. Sometimes, the class was reading on one page which was the same page of my text, but the content was different. Well, page order of braille text is different from that of the normal one."*

Although the difficulties in using braille text were addressed during the interview, several VIS elaborated that using braille text still provided a number of contributions to learning English writing skills. However, they explained that recently people tended not to see the importance of braille text and they were not aware of how much the braille text was important to people with visual impairment and this could affect their ELL indirectly.

ST6: *"This is the problem that other people may not know if they don't intentionally ask or directly come and have serious discussion like this." Well, the others don't know that it is an important issue as people will be concerned that if we are blind, we have to primarily rely on listening. At this point, they don't focus on braille text. They know that the braille text is for the blind, but they don't know how much it's important to us. I used to think that sometimes computers and technology were coming and the braille text might be unimportant, but when I look again it's not like that. Well, I can listen and understand what it means, but when I want to reply how I can write properly? In the view of blind people, to read is to listen*

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to the audiobook in which we can only get the main ideas, but we don't know where to capitalize, put the commas, semicolons. Then, there is a big *problem now in the Academic Writing class. Well, in the exam, we got asked to correct the capitalization in the passage. I was like I got messed up!"*

b. Considerations in producing braille text

The issues of the process to produce braille text were elucidated by the support staff. Generally, one of the responsibilities of the support staff under educational services is to produce learning materials for the VIS such as braille text and files for reading. However, not all the text specified in the curriculum would be created in braille version. The decision to create the learning materials depended upon the evaluation under the conditions of financial issues, time duration and the braille text kept in the school. The support staff explained that they would check whether the school already had the current braille text used in the English class or not. Additionally, they might have to consider whether the VIS would really need and use the materials; otherwise, it might be unworthy to spend time and budgets on this.

SuT2: *"If they are eager to learn, there are plenty of English textbooks in braille. They should never be worried about not having enough textbooks, especially from the school for the blind. We usually request the braille paper from there."*

SuT4: *"It is very easy for English subject. We just request from the head of the English department and the English teacher will send the scanned files to us. Then we printed in braille text. This process will take a week, so English text is quite easy compared to Thai text. Turning Thai books into braille might take a year."*

SuT8: *"Normally, teachers from the language department will give us the English textbooks with the marked pages that will be in the exam and we will scan these pages, then create braille text from that. Well, the teachers knew that the blind students would have braille textbooks in their hands, but the teachers didn't see these students carrying the braille text around. This made teachers wonder if we created the braille version for the students or not."*

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Therefore, this section showed that using braille text still played as the key toll for the VIS to use as the learning materials in their ELL. However, to create a braille textbook, there were more than merely the functions of the book itself; various factors were also carefully considered before the production.

4.5.4 Classroom Engagement

To ensure that the inclusive classroom is effective, classroom engagement seems to be another key point that should be identified in this study. From the interview, classroom engagement was referred to as the time when the VIS were assigned to do group work. They expressed their uncomfortable feelings for various reasons; however, having opportunities to participate or interact with their sighted peers created their positive attitudes towards classroom engagement. In addition to the VIS, the instructors who were also in the classroom reflected their concerns in how the VIS reacted in inclusive classroom.

a. Uncomfortable feeling

When the VIS were asked if they felt like being a part of the class, they showed their frustration and narrated that they did not like doing work in groups as ninety percent of the task could not be done in the classroom, and the situation got worse when they had the relationship gap with the group members. Some of the VIS were not assigned any task and they did not like sitting and doing nothing. Furthermore, according to the teachers' attitudes, it was assumed that their task might be completed by assistance from the sighted peers, not by themselves.

ST3: *"For group work, sometimes, the tasks must be done in class and 90% of the tasks are the tasks that I can't do. I feel quite bad, so I don't like group work."*

ST3: *"There is the gap in relationship between me and my friends, so when it comes to group work, I feel frustrated.*

ST6: "*Normally, friends in the group will agree on the duty for each member, but the teacher...well, it depends on the teacher whether she understands that we are helping each other as there might be other blind students who let their peers do the tasks for them."*

Not only had the feelings expressed by the VIS, the responses from the instructors also showed that the characteristics of the VIS made the instructors feel

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uncomfortable while teaching. Normally, as appeared in classroom observation, a teacher would ask some questions to check the understanding of the learners such as asking the students to fill the terms in the blanks or what should follow the given word in the question; however, the VIS hardly responded in class or did not answer the question at all. In the case of no feedback, it seemed hard for the instructors to evaluate how much the VIS could follow along with the lesson or how much they knew about the study topic.

This was seen in the classroom. In one instance, a VIS just sat and listened to the class. He only answered the teacher's questions a few times. There was once, for example, when the teacher asked the meaning of a word, that the VIS moved his lips and replied with the answer quietly. Most of the time, the VIS moved his lips to pronounce the vocabulary that the teacher spoke in class. When the teacher addressed the questions with choices to the class, the VIS were able to answer the questions by showing their fingers to indicate the number of the choice they chose.

T2: *"I feel that this type of student doesn't seem to be very alert in learning. I feel frustrated with this as they have low enthusiasm. But I assumed that they might not use English much for their career."*

T4: *"I want him to answer the questions. I tried to encourage him by asking questions. He didn't answer and didn't have any interaction. For example, when I let students do group tasks by creating sentences from the given gerund words. I think he knows, but he did say anything, so I don't know whether he understands the lesson or not. I even walked to him with a microphone, but he didn't speak."*

All instructors emphasized that the VIS also needed to encourage themselves and study hard outside the classroom if they want to catch up with their sighted peers. Hence, most of the instructors insisted that the VIS should manage themselves on how they would handle their ELL by doing self-study.

T1: *"There has hardly been any problem. The only problem is the student himself as he might not want to study English and want to do other activities such as play music and sports. That is the issue of the student."*

T4: *"Teachers must emphasize that you need to study more by yourself as no matter if the teachers are very good at teaching, if the student doesn't do*

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more exercises, practice pronunciation, or learn from other sources outside class, he will not obtain such skills. Normally, for the classes with Thai teachers, he could learn writing, reading, and grammar skills; for native teachers, he could learn listening and speaking skills. The important thing is that he must study by himself.

b. Performing as the active learners

Although there were situations of VIS showing frustration in doing group work, the VIS might prefer doing group work and completing exercises in class together with their sighted friends if they helped each other. This clearly appeared in the observations in the schools, as when the worksheet was given to the VIS, most of them would keep it in the drawer under the table and work with the sighted student sitting next to them. The sighted student would read the worksheet for the VIS and they completed the exercise together. The responses also showed that the VIS mostly got assigned to give a presentation for the group, which they seemed to be willing to do as other friends already completed other tasks for the group.

ST1: *"My close friend is happy. Normally, he sits next to me in class, so we help each other do the exercise."*

ST2: *"Well, having a group task for me is fine. It's better than leaving me just sitting and doing nothing."*

ST7: *"For group work, group members will make an agreement on the tasks. Sometimes, I just wait for the others to assign me what to do. Well, I like giving presentations and I think others get tired of finding information or other things, but I don't have to write. If we are allowed to read the script, I will just write in braille."*

Hence, both negative and positive aspects in classroom engagement were explained as involving feelings, particularly doing group work and include characteristics of the active learners who enjoyed being a part of the classroom activities such as volunteering to give a presentation for the group.

4.5.5 Assessment

For the assessment in English, all the participants provided fruitful information as all of them were directly involved in this element of the inclusive

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classroom concept. Two major ideas were presented in terms of the accommodation in assessment and the issues resulting from assessment.

a. Accommodation in assessment

Generally, the VIS informed that there were two main protocols for the exam arrangement; either they were tested in class with their sighted peers, or separately with the resource teachers and the volunteers. In the second type, the exams were carried on in the separate room prepared by the DSS for the university students and by the resource teachers cooperating with the volunteers from outside for the school students. Most of the VIS showed their satisfaction towards modifications and accommodations which were carefully arranged for them in both school and university levels. The accommodation included a separated exam room, modification on the test format, and time expansion, as well as the listening skill test protocol which allowed the VIS to apply assistive technology according to the assessment.

ST3: *"As there is only me as the VIS in the school, so they will give all the tests to the resource teacher, and I can manage my time to complete them freely."*

ST4: *"There were sometimes the teacher told us that if we couldn't do it, we could change to do other things. For example, there was once the teacher gave us the animals' voices and we had to match the voices with the correct animals while the other students did the different test format. "*

ST6: *"I can talk to the teacher and I am allowed to choose the test format, whether I want to do it on computer or on paper as the braille test."*

ST8&9: *"I am ok with this, like there is no restriction about the time. They will let us enter the exam room earlier. For example, if the test starts at 2 pm., I can enter the exam room at 1 pm. with the same ending time as the others."*

ST1: *"There is no problem in the listening exam. Here we have to take a listening exam. They will give an audio CD to listen to on my laptop and I will tell my answers to the volunteer, then they will write the answers like multiple choices on the paper exam for me."*

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The aforementioned responses referred to the summative assessment while the adjustments for the formative exam appeared during the classroom observation. To take formative exams, if the VIS was not totally blind, they would complete the test in the classroom, but for those who were totally blind, they were allowed to bring the test back to the inclusive center for the support staff to help read for them. There was once when the teacher told the VIS to take the vocabulary test after school instead of doing it with the sighted students in class, although they were not allowed to bring the exam back as she was not sure if the VIS would do the test by themselves.

b. Issues in assessment accommodation

In the previous subtheme, the VIS conveyed benefits from the accommodation supported by the related agents; however, in this subtheme, the VIS revealed the challenges they faced during the exam time. Generally, English tests contain a reading comprehension part and it was difficult for the VIS to complete the reading passage. The VIS felt uncomfortable when they would like to ask the volunteer to read the passage back and forth to find out the answer. Additionally, the same feeling was informed when there were illustrations included in the exam paper because the readers might have to answer the questions for the VIS or they might complete the exam for the VIS. For speaking assessment, the VIS mentioned that they were worried about certain speaking criteria which basically applied to the sighted student such as having eye contact while giving a presentation.

ST1: *"We take the tests with the volunteers. For reading, they need to read through each passage which is very long, followed by three to five questions and all the choices. I feel that's too much and I have to ask them to go back and repeat some spots in the passage. I feel bad. That's the problem with the reading test."*

ST1: *"We use exactly the same exam paper as the sighted peers, so if there are graphs or tables… that is terrible! And the volunteer who reads for us doesn't know where to start or how to explain, so I have to ask about the picture question by question."*

ST6: *"...I feel that it's fine if I have to give presentations. Well, I just go out and speak in front of the class, but what I have to do is make eye contact*

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with the listeners. For the sighted students, they just look back at the audience, for me, how many people will focus on me or listen to me. Or the teacher won't take this as the criteria for me, or what? I'm quite worried now."

An earlier aspect was the perceptions elaborated by the test takers, whereas the opinions of the instructors were pointed out through the level of restriction when they assessed the VIS. Although both the school teachers and university lecturers applied the same standard for the instructional practice, when it came to the assessment of the VIS, they tended to be more flexible and lower their restrictions.

T6: *"Well, he doesn't take the exam with the others as he will do the tests in a separate room and normally, testing procedures for the normal students must be very strict. For this student, I am not the one who grades him as after he takes the test, the answer sheet will be sent to the center. I think it is quite impossible to grade by using the same standard as for the sighted students."*

T8: *"For writing, it will be more flexible than grading other sighted students, specifically for punctuation and spelling as he sometimes doesn't know how to spell, or capitalizing letters. For the other parts, he still needs to know things such as the title or topic sentences. We still need to check."*

Interestingly, the issues affecting the assessment involving the deficiency which occurred during the process were uncovered by the instructors. These issues provided an alarm for the assessment notion as the information could affect the accuracy of the test result and the assessment of the VIS's performance. Few of the school teachers explained that mistakes in transferring the answer from the VIS to the answer sheet might have occurred due to the unskilled readers who were obliged to write down the answer for the VIS. Moreover, not only the issue of the assessment process, but also the test topic could be one of the difficulties which prevented the VIS from taking a test in that particular topic. For example, to have a test on how to use prepositions, the instructors and the VIS had to discuss in advance that the test would be provided in the modified version.

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T1: *"I checked the test of the student. It was the writing test. The students had to read and translate. I noticed that some of his answers were wrong, for example, the present simple tense or the verb after 'would'. I asked him if we have to add 's' for the verb after 'would', and he said 'no, we don't have to'. Well, this shows that the teacher (who wrote the answer for him) might have written it incorrectly because when I rechecked with the student, he could answer correctly. This might be the issue of the support teachers. If those teachers also have skills, the students should gain more of what they are supposed to learn."*

T9: *"Well, in English, to have a paper based on evaluating prepositions in English is impossible. If we test the others, there will be a picture showing a box on the table, a ball under the table, or whatever to evaluate in, on, or under. For this case, we have to have a test in practice separately, for example, we will hold their hand and put on the objects and let them explain and ask where that object is. Sometimes, we will talk to the students if they feel uncomfortable to have a test on this particular topic and if they want to pass this, we will write down and mark that this part will be skipped for this student."*

According to the responses from the support staff, the VIS who were totally blind would take their exam in the separated room in the DSS in the universities and the inclusive center in the schools. However, several concerning issues were revealed during the process of arrangement in terms of the exam leak issue and the difficulties in completing the exam. The support staff explained that there were a few English teachers who seemed to be unwilling to provide test papers for the staff to read for the VIS due to the exam leak issue in the school. Moreover, some of the VIS were unable to complete the exam in time, although the duration was extended, as it was difficult for them to read by moving the cursor through the reading passage.

SuT2: *"For English exam, it is quite difficult to read for students, so we have to ask for the test paper from the teachers to create the braille version. Some teachers feel frustrated and unwilling to provide the exams as they were afraid that the exam might be leaked. It is about the feelings not the*

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process, not the difficulties. Recently, most of the students requested that they wanted the exams to be on paper as they can listen and answer right away. They feel that it needs too many steps (turning it into braille), so they want to keep the process short with the same result. Yes, that's what they insist."

SuT4: *"If we were blind, we would prefer reading. Reading means to read by hands. If it is reading by others, that means listening, so reading by themselves is the best, so they can concentrate. Hence, what I really want to happen is this. I want the school to assign me to receive the exam directly from the teachers in the exam room and if they are afraid that the exam will be leaked, they can create two different versions, one for the sighted students and the other for the blind students, so that I will bring it to create the braille version. Then, our students can read in braille and we can write down only the answer. Recently, what the school helps about this is by arranging 4 to 5 staff to read the exam for our students. Well, they don't totally ignore us."*

SuT8: *"For our university, each faculty is responsible for exam arrangement, so earlier I was the one who took the exam paper and turned into braille. The teachers were quite uncomfortable and afraid of the exam leakage. Well, now it seems to be better, so they just deliver the exam to my office for me to create a braille version and return the exams to each faculty. Oh! There was one student, he used his laptop to do the exam. He could not complete the exam in time as he had to move the cursor back and forth repeatedly. It was like listening to Siri on I-phone and he could not understand the passage, also he was not good at English. Well, our students usually retake English courses many times."*

In conclusion, to learn English in the inclusive setting, the VIS had to deal with the classroom issues and the ELL at the same time. Therefore, the aforementioned five themes revealed the aspects covering the main factors in relation with the inclusive classroom. The first subtheme showed the perceptions towards the inclusive classroom which were combined with the general understanding towards the concept; equality; and positive and negative perceptions. The second subtheme

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involved the assistive technology which presented the actual habits of the VIS in terms of the useful assistive technology and limitations of assistive tools in the classroom. The third subtheme of learning materials was one of the most essential in the ELL in the IC. In this theme, the VIS pointed out the use of braille text which tended to be replaced by the more modern assistive technology. It was admitted by the VIS that there were drawbacks of the braille text; however, there is also an important role for the braille text to the ELL especially in learning writing skill. The fourth subtheme, classroom engagement, was presented through both negative and positive feelings divided into uncomfortable feelings and the characteristics of being active learners. Finally, the assessment issues which were mentioned by the VIS positively regarding the arrangement processes of the exams and negatively via the difficulties the VIS faced while they were taking exams.

4.6 Summary

This chapter elaborated textual description from the findings answered in five major themes on the basis of different angles of three sub questions of the study. In the first research question, the learning background of the VIS were the main area in the transcribed information; the second research question revealed the lived experience of VIS dealing with two focal areas of the study which were the ELL and the inclusive classroom issues; and the final research question was answered by the English instructors and the support staff. The textual description in this research question provided supportive evidence in terms of the perceptions towards ELL of the VIS, pedagogical aspects, English skills, importance and expectations in ELL of the VIS, and issues involving inclusive classroom.

In brief, most of the VIS informed that they started their ELL by learning merely English alphabet repeatedly, leading to limited and narrow English knowledge. In the higher level of education, despite the limitation on their visual ability, they still prefer the instructional approach which mixed all English skills in a balanced proportion by balancing the amount of each skill. Fortunately, the responses from the instructors seemed to correspond to the instructional adjustment needed to facilitate ELL. All the instructors mentioned that they had adjusted and designed

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teaching methods, teaching and learning materials, and the assistive tools, including putting their effort to speak slower than usual speed with the clear punctuations including explaining details of the illustrations in the textbook. For English language skills, most of the VIS in the school levels confessed that they could recognize that it was English language without understanding the meaning during their listening. For the reading skill, the restrictions on sequential reading characteristic of the VIS caused difficulties in using the skimming and scanning techniques. In speaking skill, challenges might come from internal factors such as their physical limitations, although the VIS tend to express their positive feelings towards speaking. The final skill was the writing skill, which has been mentioned as the hardest skills for the VIS as their grammatical and vocabulary knowledge were limited. However, the VIS noted that by using braille text, they could identify the function and position of punctuations in sentences and were able to improve their writing skill.

Regarding the importance and expectations in ELL, although the VIS expressed their feelings towards their ELL by evaluating their ability in ELL as lower than the average standard, all participants agreed that ELL is important and provides a number of benefits for the VIS. However, the instructors and the support staff described that ELL might not always be the first priority in the future lives of the VIS as the necessity and the function of English that they use in reality should be prioritized. Through the aspect of inclusive classroom, the term ‘opportunities’ means having the chances to attend the same learning setting as the sighted students and the term ‘equality’ was recognized as the main objective of inclusive education to provide both academic achievement and enable the VIS to improve their social skills.

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CHAPTER 5
DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

Drawing the essence of the phenomenon through this research from the experiences and perceptions of the VIS and the other two key parties who are the instructors and the support staff, three key elements of the phenomenon were analyzed in themes and presented in the previous chapter. The findings were analyzed to answer each sub research question. Although each of participants narrated their responses differently, these differences do share certain commonalities. In this chapter, the interrelated data are organized in order to present the meaning of the key points of the study and intertwined to create the essence of the phenomenon. All the responses from the previous chapter were assembled into five themes discussed under the remarkable units of meaning in each theme: (1) perceptions and feelings towards ELL; (2) pedagogical aspects; (3) English skills; (4) importance and expectation towards ELL; and (5) inclusive classroom. In each theme, theories and policies were also discussed to reveal the conformity and the mismatch between the findings and the existing theories and support policy.

5.1 Perceptions towards ELL

In this section, perceptions and feelings towards the overview in ELL are elaborated through the view of the VIS and intertwined by the perceptions of the instructors. Responses in this theme consisted of, firstly, perceptions derived from internal issues; secondly, perceptions derived from aspects involving ELL; thirdly, perceptions towards transitional periods; and finally, limitations in ELL.

The reason why this section starts with the negative perceptions is simply because the VIS tended to address their feelings towards their ELL by evaluating their ability in ELL as not as good as the general standard of those who were the sighted learners. The VIS linked their low ability in ELL with the condition of being blind or having low vision. They blamed this on internal limitations more than the other external limitations. This mindset appeared to be the default mode of thought in some

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of the VIS in the way that not much improvement occurred despite their high effort through English class. Similar to the sighted students, the feeling of dislike towards English subjects leading to failing to pay attention from their early chance in ELL were addressed by the VIS resulting in difficulties and an inadequate foundation when they stepped up to the higher level in ELL. Interestingly, the VIS wanted to deliver the message that the presumption of having superior listening and speaking in English skills than the sighted students might not always be true. In fact, their listening and speaking skills were developed similarly to the other students.

In contrast, their personal experience could create positive aspects towards ELL. The VIS admitted that one of the most influential influence on one's ELL is the preference towards the subject. In this study, the preference in ELL of the VIS could be triggered from their school life experience, for example, participation in the school event joining with an international school. In other words, their improvement could be led by their personal judgment towards English; whether they liked or disliked it. Therefore, the VIS admitted that they would be willing to spend their time practicing on the subject they like. The support staff also shared their perception that the VIS tended to form the character of being active and more industrious learners in ELL at a higher level when they could get along well with the sighted peers in an inclusive classroom.

Not only putting the causes of limitation in ELL on their visual conditions, the VIS in both school and university levels mentioned the issues in English curriculum that have been used in the way that the curriculum was ineffective and could not be applied in the real setting. However, to sort this issue out, the curriculum development must include the practical inclusive model, which requires readiness in a number of areas such as infrastructure, teacher training, education services, and curriculum development (Vorapanya & Dunlap, 2014). In contrast, the understanding from teachers and the mixed activities in ELL were the positive aspects which emerged through the study. Although the VIS did not place the positive perceptions at their first glance, they emphasized that the understanding from teachers conveyed through instructional styles in class by arranging mixed activities and providing comprehensive explanations also created their demands in ELL.

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Most of the VIS confirmed that their ELL would become better when the teaching approaches delivered in class fits their learning styles. Moreover, the interaction between teachers and the VIS was the indirect factor in ELL development as having interaction with their instructors during the lessons made them realize that they were not neglected and the unwanted. Not only is the interaction between the instructors and the VIS a factor, the support staff also revealed their thoughts that the development in the ELL of the VIS could also benefit from learning English in the inclusive classroom due to broader chances in acquiring English skills and gaining support from their sighted peers instead of merely from their teachers or staff.

Another topic which has been apparently an outstanding topic for the educational pathway of the VIS is the transitional period when the VIS have to change their environment and level of education from a segregated school to inclusive school. Basically, most of the VIS move to the inclusive school when they are ready in terms of living skills and educational knowledge, as this scheme has been encouraged by educational sectors to provide benefits to all the students with disabilities (School of Changmekers, 2015). In reality, the VIS explained the situation during their transitional period that they had to encounter paramount differences in educational settings. Most of the VIS expressed their discouragement in ELL after they transferred from a school for the blind to inclusive school as they had to make self-adjustments under the huge differences in English level during their transitional periods. Moreover, the remarkable difference of the content in English classes contains more details leading to failure to catch up with their sighted peers. However, all of the inclusive schools will provide a separate room as the center which is responsible for facilitating this group of students during their school lives (School of Changmekers, 2015). Hence, there were some VIS who admitted that they could survive the transitional period well and turned the critical period into feeling courageous and being motivated to study in inclusive school, including being more encouraged in their ELL. However, there are situations where the center was unable to provide teaching material during the school terms and the VIS had to learn without learning materials. The VIS needed lots of assistance from their peers and teachers until texts in Braille are ready (School of Changmekers, 2015). In that case, both

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positive and negative feelings could either bridge or widen the gap of difficulty level between pre- and post-transitional.

In order to improve the ELL of the VIS, accessibility to learning sources and materials is one of the most essential factors. As regulated in Section 20, stating that 'the agencies involved shall be responsible for providing suitable and necessary facilities, medias, services and any other educational assistance for persons with disabilities' (Persons with Disabilities Empowerment Act, B.E. 2550 (2007)), the limitations in accessibility to learning sources, including the inadequacy of learning materials in English and the lack of the English books in braille, should be taken into account. However, this ideal policy seems to be contrasted with the real situation where the challenges in accessibility were reported. However, not all the cases were purely under the responsibilities of the service providers. Although the VIS could access learning materials online, the difficulties were mentioned as the VIS admitted that practicing through an online channel was not as effective and practical as practicing with a real person.

Although the VIS mentioned the challenges and limitations preventing their ELL, the VIS clearly stated that they could still apply learning strategies to expand vocabulary size and knowledge by using memory strategies such as the use of synonyms to remember the unknown words in order to improve their ELL (Oxford, 1990). However, not all the strategies seemed to be applicable with the VIS as one of the VIS informed that although she tried to create and use the vocabulary list it was not successful and some of them admitted that they failed to use learning strategies as they never acknowledged this practice before. Apart from memorizing vocabulary, the VIS also learned to practice their English skills by doing extra exercises and listening to recordings from voice recorders repeatedly for the in-class revision and preparation for the exams (Oxford, 1990). At this point, the VIS were well aware of applying the metacognitive strategy when they tried to manage their time for the extra classes and memory strategies as they listened to the lessons in class frequently. Moreover, the VIS studying at school level mentioned that they wanted to study abroad if they did not have financial difficulties.

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5.2 Pedagogical Aspects

The first theme was framed from the starting point in learning English language followed by the aspects of the teaching approach perceived by the VIS and the instructors, and finally, the perceptions particularly towards the instructors including their behaviors in class and their personalities elaborated by themselves and the VIS.

To begin with the starting point of the ELL of the VIS, although the VIS started their preschool level in the school with a special educational pathway separated from the mainstream school, these segregated schools provide basic education for every type of disabled student under the same curriculum written in the Thai national curriculum. However, the VIS mostly continued their education in primary schools, which are exclusively established as the special schools for students with visual impairment, who have low vision or blindness. Additionally, most of the schools are boarding schools as it is convenient for support in their educational and non-educational lives. In this level, the visual impaired students are firstly introduced to braille in the forms of Thai and English versions. Most of the VIS informed that they started their ELL by learning all of the English letters and to practice writing the English alphabets in braille, since their pre-school education. In reality, although this basic knowledge of studying English was delivered in accordance with the national curriculum, the VIS explained that they were taught merely the English alphabet repeatedly for a very long period. As a result of these perceptions, most of the VIS mentioned that their English knowledge was limited and narrow. The VIS also asserted that they gained almost nothing except for how to write alphabets and vowels in braille. This reflected that the content they were taught through their learning background needed to be reconsidered whether it should be more concrete and broader for the VIS during their early stage of ELL as the preparation before transitional period to the inclusive schools.

The next issue is the discussion on teaching approach in English inclusive classroom. Although the learning channel of the VIS were different from the sighted students due to the limitation on their visual ability, they still prefer the instructional approach mixed with all English skills in balanced proportion. Most of the VIS

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replied that they would like the teacher to teach English by integrating speaking and listening skills so that they can apply speaking skill into communication. Moreover, feeling comfortable might help their ELL and is their preference when the teacher or peers read aloud so that the students can also practice pronunciation along with the class. As evidenced in the relationship between education and instructions, education basically provides information, knowledge and understanding to the learners (Karsli, 2007, p. 9) while the instruction is the process to allow the learners to develop their ability and capacity (Karsli, 2007, p. 9). Hence, the instructions which are suitable for particular English skills could create the development in ELL among specific groups of learners.

In contrast, while the VIS wanted to be taught by integrating all four English skills and by balancing the amount of each skill, they also explained that the imbalanced instructional method, which is referred to as the conventional teaching styles or rote learning, did not improve any of their English skills; for example, when teachers only made students write down what they taught. Apart from the negative aspects towards teachers which involved traditional teaching styles, the VIS expressed their struggle when the tasks needed to be accomplished by using pictures or illustrations and the tasks are required to be done in class as the VIS generally needed more preparation time than the sighted students. For this point, they offered that any information that must be used in the following class should be provided in advance, so they would be able to prepare their learning and could catch up with their sighted peers during the lesson. Obviously, the issues in pedagogical aspect consist of balancing what is to be taught in class and how the lesson should be planned to facilitate the ELL of the VIS. In fact, these issues affect the VIS's knowledge of English and their learning pace in ELL. To address these concerns, the collaboration with the special need schools might be the answer for the situation, as the inclusive schools are responsible for providing assistance to the disabled students as needed (OEC, 2006). Hence, by seeking advice or practices from the special schools, the instructors might benefit in terms of specific instructional approaches and could integrate them with their English language teaching in class.

Additionally, the responses from the VIS and the instructors in the finding seemed to correspond to each other in terms of adjustment to facilitate ELL. As the

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key person who delivers knowledge of English to all students in the classroom, the instructors, either lecturers in the universities or English teachers in the inclusive schools, have to make adjustments in both instructional methods and their attitudes to embrace the VIS in the classroom and run the class under the inclusive environment. The corresponding perceptions between the instructors and the VIS showed when the VIS explained their preferences on the teachers' personalities and attitudes in class in the same way that the instructors made adjustments to their teaching behaviors. For example, the VIS preferred studying with teachers who were open-minded and those teachers who pay attention or show understanding to them in the appropriate proportion during the class. In the same way, the teachers decided to pay more attention to the VIS in order to check their understanding towards the lessons during the class. Nonetheless, too many actions by the teachers showing attention to them and bringing up the terms 'special' or 'disabled' student in class obviously could cause the VIS to feel unwilling to sit in that classroom. However, pedagogical aspect does not merely rely on the feelings of the VIS, there were the certain characters of the VIS causing frustration to the teacher when they hardly showed their responses in class or not answering the question at all. These actions seemed to be in contrast with how the instructors perceived the VIS that, although these students only applied different channels of communication to acquire knowledge, they shared the other aspects of being students the same as the sighted students. Hence, this might be the opportunity for the instructors and the VIS to learn the proper proportion to finely tune their attitudes and actions to each other in the inclusive setting.

Regarding the teaching' adjustment, all the instructors mentioned that they had adjusted and designed teaching methods, teaching and learning materials, and the assistive tools. Most university lecturers personally discussed with the VIS if the student had any request for the types of preferred learning materials as well as putting their effort to speak slower than usual speed, trying to read nearly every single word and punctuations which appeared on the slides, and explaining details of the illustrations in the textbook. However, as evidenced in the previous studies, to apply a teaching method to teach students with disabilities, the teacher had to work with more preparation than for the normal class (Vorapanya & Dunlap, 2014). Consequently, the concerns involving workload issues which emerged through the teachers' perceptions

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in the previous studies should be take into consideration. All in all, pedagogical perceptions in ELL mainly concern the preferred instructional styles and the behaviors and attitudes of the instructors and the VIS, which requires proper adjustment to meet the agreeable methods and facilitate ELL for the VIS.

5.3 English Skills

The discussion on issues during the VIS's early stage of ELL including pedagogical aspects from the VIS and the instructors has provided the understanding of the ELL background and the recent details of ELL setting. In this section, all of the English skills: listening, reading, speaking, and writing are discussed through the combination of perceptions of the VIS and the instructors.

To begin with the listening skill, although a few of the VIS in university level informed that they could understand the conversation when the teacher lectured in English, most of the VIS in the school level confessed that they could only recognize what they heard in class was English language without understanding the meaning and they were barely able to catch the words they heard from the native teacher. However, a few of the VIS tended to look at this skill positively as they were able to improve their listening ability gradually after they had encountered English repeatedly in classes regardless of being taught by both native English-speaking teachers and Thai teachers. Moreover, the possibility in improvement of listening skill of the VIS was reflected in correlation with the responses from the three university lecturers stating that there were several of the VIS who performed very well in catching the details in listening tasks, and could tell most of the details of the situation in the audio clips. This positive aspect could be explained by the VIS's learning process as they learn information from auditory input through reading audio books, so reading and listening skills could be found during reading as listening activities (Veispak 2012). In fact, hearing as reading plays an important role to help improve reading and listening comprehension for the VIS (Al-Said, 2010).

For the reading skill, this skill involves many difficulties in using the skimming and scanning techniques due to the restrictions on sequential reading characteristic of the VIS. Hence, it might be difficult for the VIS to go backwards to

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the previous parts of the passage and skip to the section of the answer. Therefore, overloading the memory of the VIS is required when they work on reading activities or exams leading to more time consumption in comparison with the sighted students (Hatton, 2014). Apart from the reading techniques employed in ELL, the VIS pointed out the issues concerning other problematic elements in reading including the lack of vocabulary size and knowledge, as well as spelling ability and limited understanding of grammatical rules. Regarding the problems involving vocabulary knowledge, the VIS mostly struggled with the unknown words and did not know the meaning and they decided not to guess the meaning from context. However, several VIS in the university level who explained that it was not too hard to guess parts of the story from the whole passage mentioned that they were better at reading than speaking. This effect might imply that the VIS had higher concerns towards their reading comprehension task during the exam when they had to integrate reading techniques to complete the task.

In terms of speaking skill, although the VIS tend to express their feelings by speaking, this does not mean that they are always good at speaking skill especially in ELL. The challenges in speaking skills might also come from internal factors such as their physical limitations, lack of visual knowledge to link to the vocabulary, low self-confidence and negative perceptions towards English language (Veispak 2012). However, when the responses were provided by the VIS, they focused the difficulties in their speaking skills in relation to the limitation in creating sentences due to the lack of vocabulary and sentence structures, so they eventually failed to produce sentences to reply to the interlocutor, especially foreigners. Unlike the internal factors, the external factors that limit their speaking skill is the classroom environment, particularly when they need to give a presentation in English in front of the classroom. In reality, most of the students were allowed to look at the slides on the screen; therefore, there might be challenges for the VIS as it was impossible for them to see the content on the screen. However, this detail was not mentioned by the totally blind students, as they could memorize the script without reading it in front of the class. Hence, the blind students tended to be perceived as confident speakers by the instructors in terms of their English communication and self- confidence in English speaking tasks.

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The final skill to be discussed is the writing skill, which has been obviously recognized as the hardest skill for the VIS. To learn writing, learners tended to rely on grammatical and vocabulary knowledge including sentence structures and using punctuations. Similar to the sighted students, the VIS thought that they had low writing ability due to their limited grammar and vocabulary knowledge. Additionally, these claims were evidenced by the responses of the instructors when the VIS had to study writing sentences in passive voice sentences as the VIS seemed to be confused when changing the word order from active to passive voice, and they had to practice more times than the sighted students as they had to memorize the structures to convert to the passive form. Additionally, constructing different types of sentence structures were found problematic as they lacked how to use punctuation in compound and complex sentences. However, very useful information emerged through the responses of the VIS that by using braille text to read and learn English, they could identify functions and positions of punctuations in sentences and were able to recognize the sentence structures which are necessary for writing skill.

From the responses, the VIS clearly stated that they applied learning strategies to improve their ELL regularly to expand vocabulary size and knowledge particularly by using memory strategies and synonyms to remember the unknown words. However, not all the strategies seemed to be applicable with the VIS. In terms of the plan or strategies applied for each English skill, the VIS included listening, speaking, and writing skills in their plans; however, they did not mention practice reading as the major skill they would improve using strategies. For listening skills, the VIS planned to listen to English songs focusing on the meaning, instead of the melody of the songs, as well as watch TV programs and movies in English in order to listen to the pronunciation of the native speakers (Oxford, 1990). This means that the VIS selected the cognitive strategies for their listening skills when they tried to comprehend and generate new knowledge. To improve speaking skill, the VIS mentioned using English as the language for communication for inside and outside the classroom, which shows that they applied both of the cognitive strategies as they encouraged themselves to speak English and tried to talk in English. Moreover, joining the English club in the university was mentioned as one of their choices, which could imply that they tried to look for the opportunities to use English. This

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strategy was also one of the metacognitive learning strategies (Oxford, 1990). Lastly, for writing skill, instead of learning parts and word order in sentence structures, they decided to memorize the whole sentence by rewriting the same sentence repeatedly, which is considered as memory strategy (Oxford, 1990). However, it might not be the effective way to improve their writing skill as English sentence structures come with various patterns. In addition to self-practice, a few of them planned to improve their writing by learning in extra classes. This plan was also mentioned by the support staff as one of the educational support schemes that they arranged for the VIS. Generally, extra classes added in the timetable were arranged for the VIS, either when there were requests from the students, or by initiation from the schools or universities. In short, the VIS tended to utilize a broad range of learning strategies which were memory, cognitive, and metacognitive learning strategies. Regarding social strategies, although the VIS did not mention these strategies as their plan, they tended to utilize these strategies during their ELL in class as they informed in their interview responses. The only group of strategies that did not emerge through the finding was the compensation strategies. The reasons possibly come from the techniques in this strategy which involve using context and gestures to replace the unclear words during communication, which has been the limitation of the VIS.

5.4 Importance of ELL for the VIS

The responses showed that all participants agree that ELL is important and provides a number of benefits for the VIS; however, the essence of the findings indicated that ELL might not always be the first priority in their future lives. Like other sighted students, the VIS should not be forced to master ELL due to the different levels of necessity and the function of English that they use in their real lives.

The VIS, the instructors and the support staff are aware of the importance of ELL for the VIS as, if they perform well in ELL, this could broaden opportunities and equip them with a number of advantages particularly in their education and careers, such as a tool for communication, expanding knowledge, and even their daily

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lives (Nilsuk, 2003). To begin with, the level of awareness of the importance of English was considered as the starting point of the beginning of the VIS's thoughts and could affect their ELL. During the interview, the VIS admitted that they seemed to be unaware of the importance of English since the very beginning of their ELL at school or never acknowledged about how English was important to their education lives. Hence, this background experience could affect their recent situation as they might feel demotivated during their recent ELL.

The awareness of the importance of ELL became higher when the VIS moved into high school and university levels. All of the VIS confirmed that studying English was essential for them due to ranges of reasons including that English was the broadly spoken language and the tool for communication; and they were informed from teachers that English was the language they must learn. All of the reasons brought them to the conclusion that they perceived English as the necessary language to learn. In contrast, there were opinions from a few of the VIS who pointed out that ELL was probably unnecessary for them as they might avoid studying English unless they were obliged to learn English. Also, the instructors and support staff expressed their thoughts to confirm this idea; that it depended on the goal of the VIS whether they really needed English in their career path or as the major part of their lives.

When the goal of ELL depends on the needs of the VIS in their real lives regardless of the level of importance of ELL for the VIS, the expectations on the level of achievements on ELL of the VIS appeared to be varied. The expectation was different depending on whether the expectation was delivered from the VIS or the instructors; and whether it was considered under the setting of inside or outside the classroom. For the expectation inside the inclusive classroom, different angles were manifested through the VIS and the instructors. If the thoughts were from the view of the VIS, they were reflected by mentioning about the expectations on the instructional aspect. The VIS described that their ELL should be the integration between the four English skills with two-way communication and extra activities to reduce pressure. However, the activities should not require using excessive levels of auditory functions. Not only the instructional styles, but also the accommodations from instructors and the teaching materials were emphasized repeatedly. This finding underlines the support policies in Section 20 of the Persons with Disabilities

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Empowerment Act, B.E. 2550 (2007) that the involving agencies are responsible to provide suitable and necessary facilities and services including other educational assistance for the persons with disabilities. Regarding messages delivered from the instructors, most of them put their in-class expectations on the achievement in learning objectives as identified in the course syllabus and expected that the VIS were required to reach that goal equally to the other sighted students. Unlike the in-class expectations, when the instructors explained their thoughts towards their expectations in ELL of the VIS outside classroom, their expectations changed and tended to be lower. The instructors did not expect the VIS to perform at the same level as the sighted students. They explained that the aim of the ELL of the VIS could be merely to understand basic skills of English for basic communication. This seems to be good for the VIS as they will not be pressured in class. However, if the expectation was shaped from the teacher's false beliefs it could negatively influence the VIS's performance and achievement. In this situation, the regulations or principles which enhance the integration between the physical and mental conditions of the students with disabilities would play a vital part. For example, in Section 20 of the Persons with Disabilities Empowerment Act, B.E. 2550 (2007), education under the national education plan should be arranged as suitable for the students with physical and mental disabilities in both specific and general educational institutes.

5.5 Inclusive Education

In this section, another key term in this study is discussed which is the educational concept that almost all of the students with disabilities have to be involved in their educational pathway. The discussion will be presented according to the different aspects drawn from the VIS, instructors, and the support staff as the fruitful information in terms of general perceptions showing how they understand the concepts and practice of the inclusive classroom, including the benefits and drawbacks of this classroom setting, as well as, the relating topics which come with the inclusive education. The inclusive classroom concepts have been advocated for in both international and domestic levels. In Thailand, there are a number of policy supports which emerged under the educational regulations, particularly in the

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Education Provision for Persons with Disabilities Act, B.E. 2551 (2008). In Section 3, the term “Inclusive education” was defined as the education where “the persons with disabilities could access to the general education system, at any level and in various settings, including enabling education provision to enable schooling for all groups of persons, including persons with disabilities”. The definition in this section was defined clearly in terms of equality in education, as well as in Section 5 in the same Act where the educational rights for the students with disabilities were regulated, especially the standard and quality assurance in education with the appropriate and special requirements for each individual. Moreover, in Section 18 of this Act it states that the educational service area offices shall be encouraged to provide extensive and of-good-quality inclusive education in the areas under their authorities. Hence, regarding the findings, it is obvious that the general understanding of the VIS, the instructors and the support staff matches the objectives of the inclusive classroom as regulated in the educational laws.

From the responses, the term ‘opportunities’ means having the chances to perform their learning abilities while they are in the same learning setting as the sighted students. This created atmosphere also affects the feelings of the VIS towards the VIS’s sighted peers as they felt that they were perceived as normal students in class. The term ‘equality’ emerged through the perspectives of the instructors as most of the school teachers emphasized that the main objective of inclusive education was to provide social skills for the students with disabilities to live in society, not purely for academic purposes. Apart from the equality in educational opportunities, there are other benefits of the inclusive classroom including reshaping the VIS’s personalities and attitudes as they had to move out of their safe zone where their learning time was spent in special school having only the VIS. Moreover, having chances to communicate with their peers provided the virtual setting similar to communicating in the natural setting. Regarding the aforementioned benefits of the inclusive education, Katz and Mirenda (2002) revealed another positive effect which appeared as the benefits from in-class interactions between students with and without disabilities including development of self-esteem, social skills, positive emotional and behavioral changes, and a sense of friendship.

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On the contrary, while the VIS had their equal chance of accessibility to education by sitting in the same classroom with the sighted students, they might face the drawbacks of learning inclusively. The responses form the VIS revealed that they were sometimes discriminated against from their sighted peers due to the attitudes of their sighted classmates who thought that they are different from them. This is not the situation of being discriminated by intention; when the VIS were mentioned by the teachers frequently, unintentionally, other sighted students might think that the teacher paid too much attention specifically to the VIS leading to negative feelings from their sighted peers. Another pitfall of the result of learning inclusively was the struggles of having different learning styles and learning pace and it might be even more frustrating as the VIS had to rely on the assistance of their sighted peers in certain aspects. These situations were also witnessed by the instructors and the support staff. The instructors suggested that it might be better for the VIS if they could learn English in separate classes as the issues of learning pace and the teaching approaches could be prepared specifically for them. For the support staff, their concerns were the level of providing reasonable proportions of support to facilitate the VIS in the inclusive classroom in the way that was not too much and not to reach the level of cheating.

Although the general concepts of the inclusive classroom have been well understood, in practice, to have effective inclusive classroom, many elements must be taken into consideration. These elements of inclusive classroom, which are deeply discussed in this section, consist of the assistive technology, learning materials, classroom engagement, and assessments. The first element is the assistive technology. The assistive tools are used to fulfill the auditory ability of the VIS to perform the tasks, as asserted by Castellano that the visual impairment condition affects the person and requires them to use “alternative skills and tools in place of, or in addition to, eyesight in order to gain information or perform tasks” (2005, p. 16). However, not all the VIS applied all the types of the tools to facilitate their ELL. According to their ELL background, the VIS have used the voice recorder, mobile phone, and the braille sense notetaker in their English class depending on the functions of the technology provided in each tool. In their early educational lives, the VIS could hardly own smartphones; however, if they had, they were not allowed to use smartphones in class

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as using smartphones in class were prohibited for all students. Recently, the attitudes towards using smart phones and internet for education in class seems to be more acceptable. Hence, the findings show that although some of the VIS still carry braille text as their textbook and use slate and stylus for note taking in class, most of them preferred using smartphones and the internet to help learning in class. Regarding the students with low vision, it might be assumed they use the magnifier machine to read their learning materials. However, they revealed that the size of the machine was too big and they had to borrow it from the DSS or support center, so it was not convenient to use in the classroom and they ended up not using that machine at all. A few of the VIS further explained that they felt more comfortable to just sit in class without using any assistive tool. The situation occurred mostly with the VIS in the university level as they tended to just sit at their seats without any tools or learning materials on the table. There was another concern regarding the assistive technology in ELL. The issue of financial concern was brought up by the instructors as most of the technology provided for the students with disabilities was obviously expensive. The instructors reported that they hardly found the students who actually owned and used such assistive tools by purchasing them using their personal funds.

The next component to be considered in having inclusive classroom is the learning materials for the VIS. Generally, to produce the braille text, there must be a process involving other relating parties such as support staff and the process of sending the original version to the school for the blind, which was located in different places from the inclusive school. This simply means that these processes take time. Consequently, the first challenge was the time-consuming issue. In reality, the issues were not the process to produce learning material; it was the decision regarding whether to create the learning materials at all which played an important role in creating the materials. To produce the learning materials for the VIS, support staff had to evaluate several factors such as the expenses, how time consuming it is, and its worthiness. In school level, the support staff had to check whether the school already had the current braille text used in the English class or not. The struggle was also discovered during their university level. Although there were the DSS in the university, the evidence from the past revealed that the VIS still encounter struggles, including the delayed text production, and mostly rely on electronic readers, which

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require specific audio files resulting in requiring extra time for study, exam preparation and assessment. Such delay in having learning materials in class means the VIS often had the learning text far behind the lesson in class. Additionally, there was inconvenience when they had to carry the braille text and use it in their English class due to the changes in size and the differences of page numbers. There was an interesting point involving using braille text in classroom. The VIS applied more technology to help them learn and did not perceive braille as their major learning materials. However, without braille, the VIS might have missed the punctuations used in reading and especially in writing skill. In brief, although braille text might be generally understood as the major learning tool for the VIS, the issues of time consumption and practicality must be sorted as using braille text would be beneficial for the VIS in terms of meaningful reading and writing development through their ELL.

Another composite of learning inclusively is classroom engagement as this issue could shape the characters of the VIS into either the learners with frustrated feelings or active learners. This topic seems to link to the issue of pedagogical aspects such as the instructional approach, and the activities in the lesson plan could directly affect the VIS's feelings towards ELL. Particularly regarding the in-class group activities, the VIS did not like doing work in groups as the nature of the group task was that it is expected to be finished in one period. Thus, the VIS did not prefer doing group tasks as they could not be done in the classroom. Not just the instructional aspects, but also the attitudes of the instructors tend to influence the VIS's motivation to be engaged in the class. The VIS informed that they thought instructors may be biased against their work because the instructor may think the task assigned to the VIS might be completed with the assistance from the sighted peers, not by themselves. However, it might not be fair to blame this on the teachers' presumptions, The findings showed that some of the VIS's tasks were completed by the sighted peers or with help from the support staff or volunteers in the school for the blind. Hence, to ensure the classroom engagement, the difficulties in both emotional and pedagogical concerns might have to be considered through the perspectives of the VIS and under the conditions of the students' impaired vision. (Kocyigit & Artar, 2015).

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On the contrary, having a well engaged classroom could turn the VIS into active learners. However, this would happen under the situation where the VIS feel intimate with their sighted peers. When they become close friends, doing a group task is considered as the enjoyable activities for the VIS, especially because when the assignments must be followed by the group presentation, the VIS were mostly assigned to be the speakers for the group. If not, all the members would be able to manage the responsibilities. In short, the complexity which emerged through English teaching/learning in terms of internal and external concerns should be considered in teaching the VIS (Kocyigit & Artar, 2015).

The final element of the inclusive classroom is the assessment which requires a number of modifications and accommodation. Generally, the assessment protocol in each educational institute has been practiced and continually adjusted for the improvement in evaluation systems for the disabled. In fact, the VIS showed their satisfaction towards modifications and accommodations in the procedures of assessment. For example, the arrangement of the separated exam room, modifications of the test format and the time expansion; as well as the listening skill test protocol which allowed the VIS to apply assistive technology according to the assessment. The satisfaction with assessments also came from the cooperation from the instructors. When the test takers were the VIS, most instructors in schools and universities showed familiarity with the measures on providing appropriate test format to this group of students. However, the problematic part emerged through the reading assessment, particularly in the reading comprehension part which appeared to be difficult when they had to complete the reading passage. For example, the VIS felt uncomfortable when they had to ask the volunteer to read the passage back and forth to look for the answer. Not only reading assessment, also the test topic could be one of the difficulties and which prevented the VIS from taking a test in that particular topic such as using the prepositions. Another defect found in the assessment issues was explained by the school teacher, which were the mistakes in transferring the answer from the VIS to the answer sheet might occur due to the unskilled helpers who were obliged to write down the answer for the VIS.

In addition to the issue of the assessment process, the mismatch in terms of equality in education was revealed by the instructors. Although both the school

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teachers and university lecturers applied the same standards for the instructional practice, when it came to the assessment of the VIS they tended to be more flexible and lower their restrictions. Additionally, according to the viewpoints from the support staff, which play a key role in the assessment procedures, the issues concerning exam leakage and the difficulties in completing the exam were revealed during the process of assessment preparation. The support staff explained that there were a few English teachers who were obviously unwilling to provide test papers for the staff to read for the VIS due to the exam leak issue in the school. In fact, to figure out these challenges in assessments, collaboration with the special need schools should be taken into consideration as more solid measures in terms of providing assistance are needed (OEC, 2006).

This reflected the deeper layer of accommodation compared to the existing information which seemed to primarily present the well-prepared procedures, particularly in accommodation for assessment. In other words, there were negative aspects which emerged from the study to remind the practitioners to listen to the issues of support services alongside the accommodations in order to prevent the misinterpretation on the level of support applied to the VIS (Bualar, 2017). This concern seems to be in accordance with the regulation of the UCRPD, article 24, which emphasized that the state parties shall ensure that the inclusive education will be provide with reasonable accommodation regarding the individual requirements.

5.6 The Implications for the ELL for the VIS in Inclusive Setting

According to the responses and the discussion on the findings, the researcher found relationships among the emerged themes. Firstly, the link between the English taught at the beginning stage of the VIS and their perceptions towards transitional period (Figure 5.1). All of the VIS mention that they were taught English to acquire very basic knowledge, focusing on the letters and simple vocabulary, repeatedly for years. Consequently, most of them expressed their feeling towards the level of difficulties of English that there was a gap which existed from the level of English taught in the special schools to the level of English taught in the inclusive school. However, it might be unfair to claim that the limited knowledge of English

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was due to the mistakes of the national curriculum. Basically, the special schools were responsible for teaching living skills to the students with disabilities (School of Changmekers, 2015); hence, an amount of time had to be spared to teach skills for independent living, and it might be inadequate for also teaching the academic part.

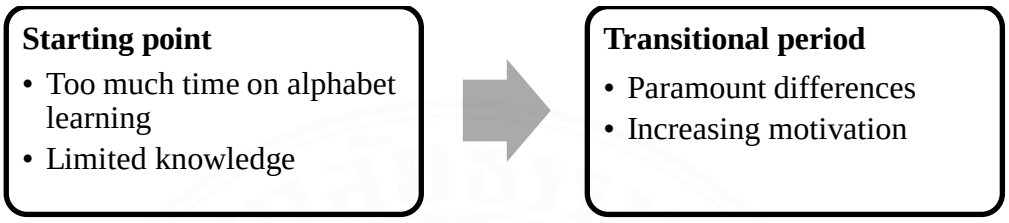


Figure 5.1 Relationship of Pedagogical Aspect - the Perceptions towards ELL

The second relationship was the links among pedagogical aspects, perceptions towards ELL, and classroom management. Apart from the starting point, the instructional styles, the teaching approach, and the instructors have been found to correspond to the perceptions towards ELL of the VIS, leading to classroom engagement (Figure 5.2). This link is divided into two sub situations where the pedagogical aspect conveyed the positive (Figure 5.3) and negative effects (Figure 5.4) to the perceptions in ELL and the classroom engagement.

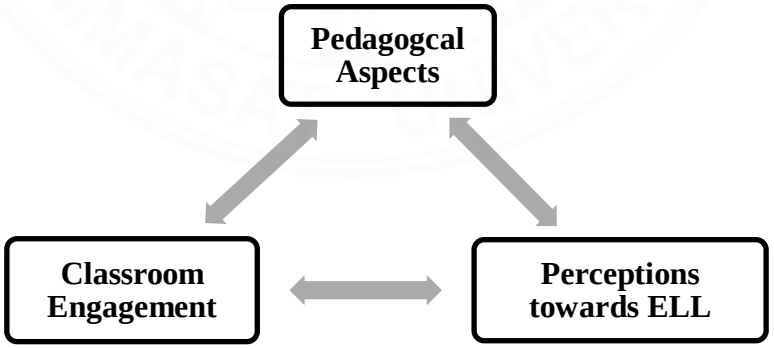


Figure 5.2 Relationship of Pedagogical Aspects- the Perceptions towards ELL – Classroom Engagement

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Generally, in order to provide content and assistance in accordance with specific needs of the VIS, teachers who are responsible to teach students with visual impairment are required to have both appropriate pedagogical skills and attitudes (Nyoni et al, 2011). Regarding the instructions provided in classroom, it functions as the process to allow the learners to develop their ability and capacity (Karsli, 2007, p. 9); however, to deliver the knowledge, the teachers do not only play the role as a facilitator for students to reach their goal through the educational system, they also manage the class, and provides evaluation on the student's abilities. In other words, the teacher also influences the students' attitudes towards the atmosphere of the classroom. In the setting of ELL of the VIS, although this group of students are assumed to be keen on listening and speaking skills, they require to be taught all the English skills with the practical instructional approach such as the activities which they could prepare for the lesson in advance and the activities should not rely much on visual information. However, if the VIS were taught under instructions with which they could not follow along, the negative feelings towards ELL might be developed as they already positioned themselves as low ability in ELL. This could lead to demotivation as they felt uncomfortable in class and shut themselves down from engaging in the classroom.

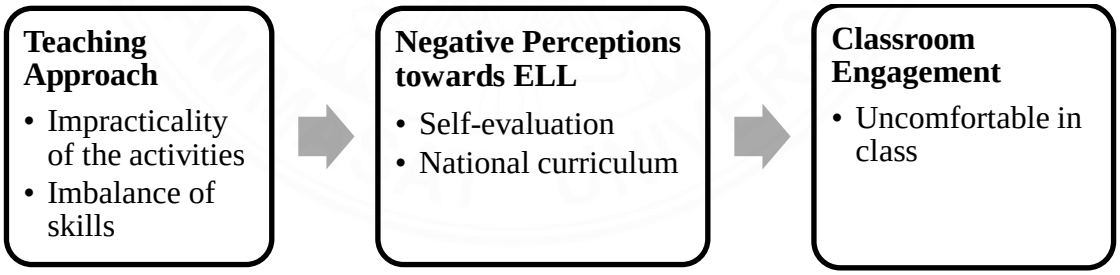


Figure 5.3 Relationship of Teaching Approach – Negative Perceptions towards ELL – Classroom Engagement

Another relationship is the relationship of positive characteristics of the instructors and the positive attitudes of the VIS in ELL resulting in the characteristic of active learners who are ready for classroom engagement. This phenomenon occurred due to positive attitudes of the teachers expressed by showing understanding such as showing interest in the VIS during ELL. Theoretically, when the interaction in

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class increases, the students' motivation and self-confidence could lead them to success. By providing support, approval, and giving constructive feedback or compliments, the students could feel that they are being paid attention to, being thought of and assisted. Particular in the ELL of the VIS, the perceptions towards the ELL of the VIS were obviously positive when they felt that they were understood by their English teachers in terms of the teachers' attitudes and adjustments in the instructions. This was correspondent to the responses from the instructors and the reaction of the learners when they actively engaged in classroom activities.

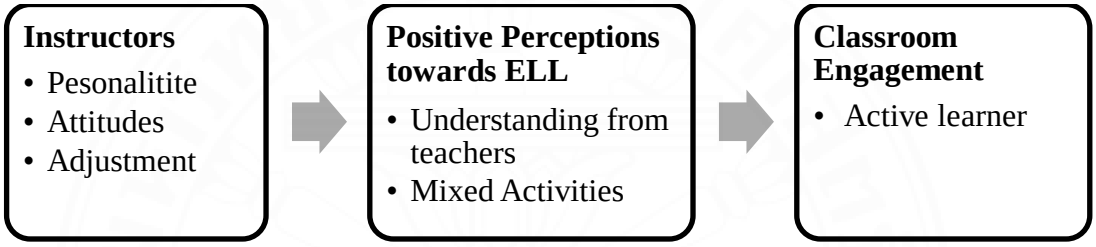


Figure 5.4 Relationship of Teaching Approach – Positive Perceptions towards ELL – Classroom Engagement

The relationship between English skills and factors of inclusive education shows particularly in reading and writing skills (Figure 5.5 and Figure 5.6). Struggling to employ skimming and scanning techniques leads to the difficulties to complete reading comprehension tasks during the exam as the VIS read the passage differently from the sighted students and reading back and forth requires a large amount of time. For writing skills, this implication concerns the issue of the reduction in using braille text and replacing it with other assistive technologies. Most of the VIS in the university level emphasized using English braille text in ELL as they found it gave the benefits of learning sentence structures and positions of punctuations in sentences, which were considered as one of the key grammar rules in writing. Consequently, this could imply that English braille should be encouraged for learning the writing skill. However, the issue in producing braille text must be taken into consideration including the time-consuming process and the expense.

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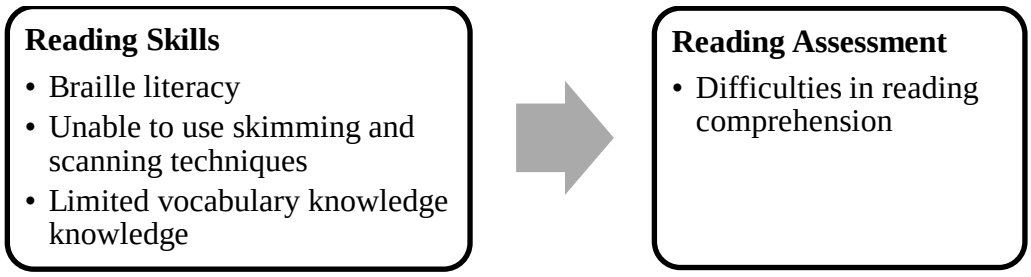


Figure 5.5 Relationship of Reading Skills – Inclusive Education

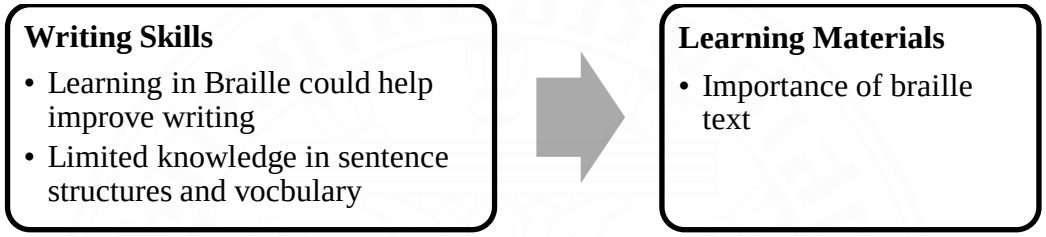


Figure 5.6 Relationship of Writing Skills - Inclusive Education

The final implication could be either the starting point or the ultimate thoughts of all participants in this study as it shows how the VIS, instructors and the support staff perceived the ELL of the specific group of students in the inclusive setting. All participants are aware of the importance of the ELL and they agreed that ELL in the inclusive classroom provides benefits to the VIS. However, when it comes to each group of participants, the necessity and the expectation were varied. For the focal participants of the study, the VIS insisted that ELL is important to them for their own sake of benefits in their futures leading to the preferred instructions they wanted to be taught. For the instructors and support staff who were the facilitators inside and outside the classroom, they tended to level their expectations depending on the future of the VIS; whether the students really need English knowledge in their career path. In the case that the expectation was shaped from the teacher's false beliefs, it could negatively influence the VIS's performance and achievement. For example, if the instructors set their perception in the career path for the VIS that these students were unlikely to need English in their future, the instructors would not need to be strict on the assessment for the VIS and the VIS might not employ their full capability in ELL.

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To prevent this negative influence from the false expectation, the necessity of ELL among the VIS might have to be reconsidered starting from removing the presumption of the VIS's needs or the limitation on their career opportunities. Hence, the physical support should be provided together with the mental conditions to set the learning goal in the class and keep the VIS motivated in ELL.

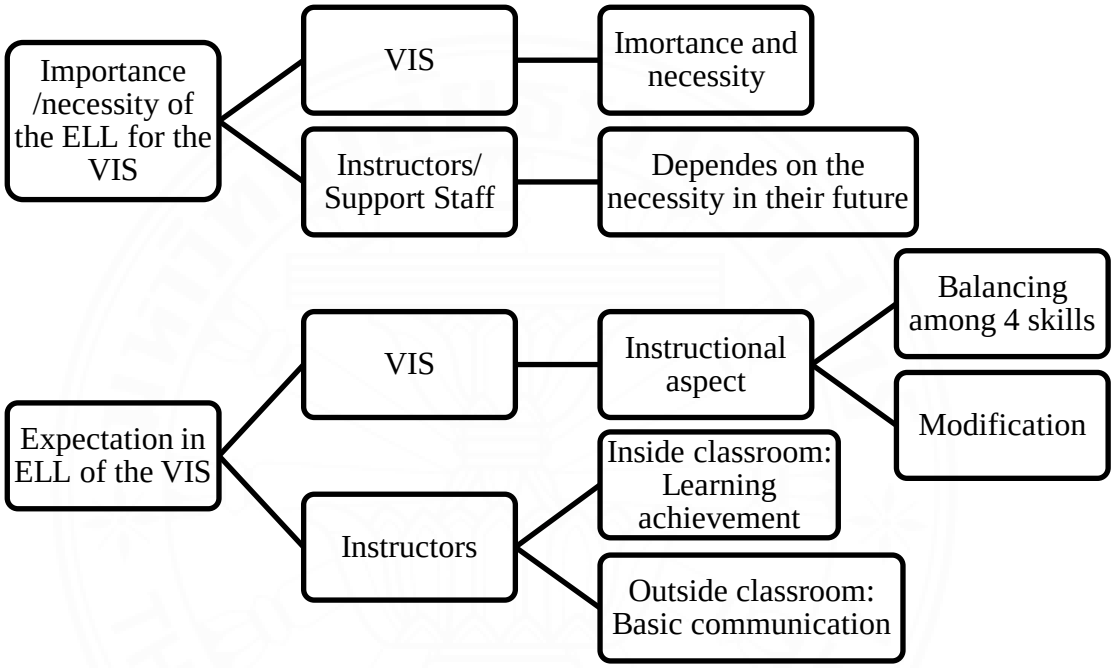


Figure 5.7 The Perceptions towards Importance of ELL in Inclusive Setting – and Perceptions of Participants

5.7 Summary

This chapter discussed the main research findings of the study, which was the answer for the main research question. The results showed that the responses and the observed data towards ELL of the VIS in the inclusive setting could reveal the essence of the phenomenon. As for the pedagogical aspect, the mismatch between policies and practices was discussed through the VIS's negative view on the limited knowledge of their starting point and the teaching approach, including the personalities and attitudes of the instructors. Nevertheless, there were several

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satisfactory aspects in the same issues where the preferences of all the participants were in agreement.

Regarding the discussion on ELL, writing and reading skills were the most challenging skills for the VIS due to their internal limitation and the factors involving inclusive education, especially accommodation in assessment. Next, the perceptions and feelings towards ELL were synthesized to showed the positive and negative viewpoints in ELL. The used and unused strategies for improvement of the ELL were also discussed. In this part, the concerns during the VIS's transitional period were one of the major topics discussed. The other focal issue involving ELL was the importance and necessity of the ELL for the VIS, which were not taken for granted as the most important subject matter provided that they did not require English in their career path. Finally, the inclusive education was discussed through the lens of participants showing a number of benefits for the VIS in their ELL.

After the discussion, the implications of the research findings were presented in the charts of relationship between each theme intertwining in the phenomenon. The charts were related on the basis of the how the reasons behind each theme convey the results in the other themes. The outstanding themes were linked to show the relationship among each other in order to provide beneficial information for the administrative level and help the practitioners transfer the situation to their context.

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CHAPTER 6
CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter summarizes this phenomenological study by starting from the summary of the study which provides the overview of the rationale and how the research was conducted. The essences of this research are presented as the whole picture through the diagram followed by the limitations of the study. Finally, this chapter closes by providing recommendations for stakeholders and further study derived from the research findings and implications in the previous chapter.

6.1 Summary of the Phenomenological Study

Under the light of educational equality, visually impaired students (VIS) have the right to improve their quality of life through educational achievement. Fortunately, policies and regulations encourage inclusive education and support all types of students including students with visual impairment. Receiving equal support means that the VIS are also required to complete the compulsory educational requirements including studying the English language at secondary, and university levels. When it comes to the practicality of this, the mismatch between the objectives of the support policies and the practicality towards ELL among these students still exists in Thailand, including the difficulties facing VIS English language learners which remain uninvestigated. Hence, this study was established based upon the unsolved issues.

The aims of the study were to explore the essence and meaning of English language learning (ELL) in inclusive classrooms derived from the perceptions of the visually impaired students (VIS), instructors, and support staff. To elicit the lived experiences from the participants, the phenomenological methodology was employed as the research design. The findings were drawn from three groups of participants. The first focal group of participants was obtained through purposively sampling from 9 students with visual impairment studying in an inclusive classroom setting. The other groups were instructors and support staff who work in 4 universities and 4

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schools in four regions across Thailand. This group consisted of 4 university lecturers, 5 school teachers teaching English, and 8 support staff. The data was collected from in-depth interviews and the classroom observation.

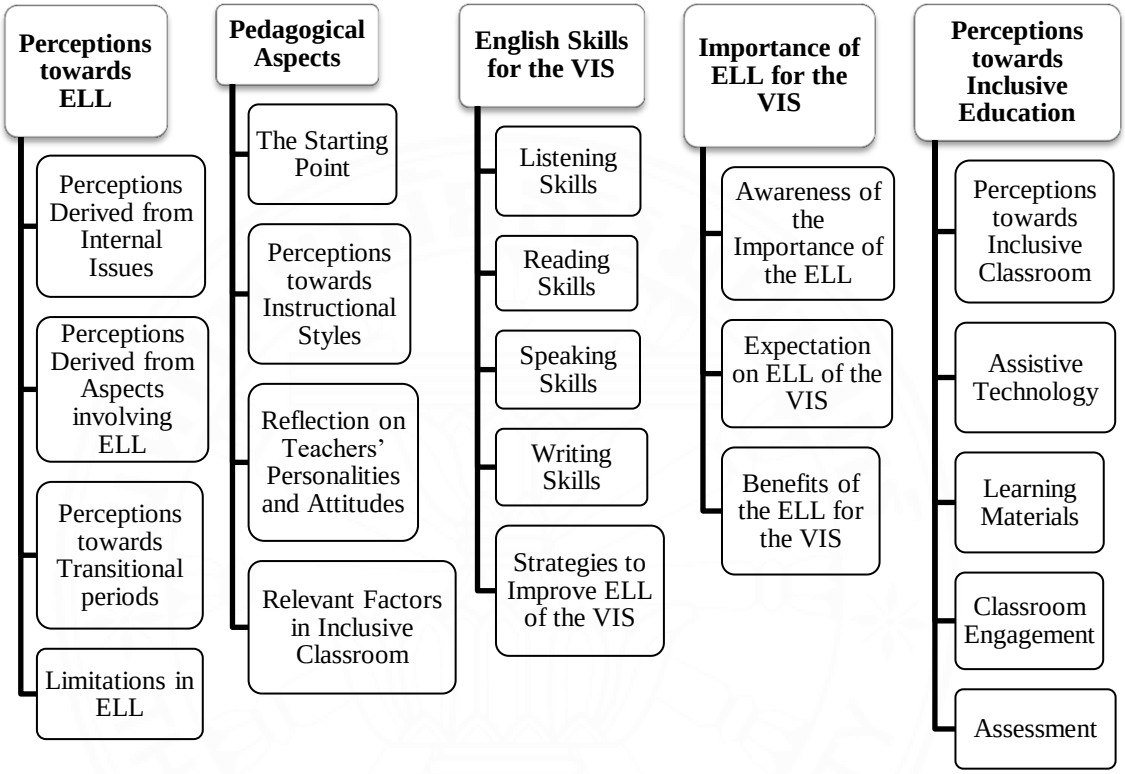


Figure 6.1 Summary of Research Findings

The collected data were grouped into units of meaning or themes and summarized as presented in Figure 6.1. The figure shows the essence of the phenomenological study that, although the assertions in the mismatch in support of inclusive education towards ELL were presented as the major aspects in this study, there were also many positive aspects of ELL in an inclusive setting. Interestingly, the issues involving the ELL of the VIS in an inclusive classroom were presented through the details underneath the essences which are extensively deeper than the written policy. All in all, studying English inclusively provides a huge number of benefits for the VIS regarding the ELL and was perceived as the vital element in the VIS's lives. However, the level of necessity of English in their future also played a crucial role and remarkably influenced ELL of the VIS.

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6.2 Reflection of the Researcher

6.2.1 Reflection as a Researcher

As a researcher, having conducted this phenomenological research to explore the lived experience of the VIS in ELL in the inclusive classroom allowed me to discover the focal areas in the world of ELL of the students with disabilities. During the data collection period, I have learned to utilize the problem-solving skill to handle the unexpected situations and develop my mindset to be adaptable to any circumstance as the data were collected from different regions across Thailand. To conduct the effective interviews, I also learned that being comfortable with the interview questions is very helpful when I had to address the interview questions to the individuals. Moreover, to obtain the in-depth narration from the participants, I found that being the engaged listener encouraged the participants to continue expressing their experience. In order to form the textural and structural description from the collected data, the transcribed information was read through repeatedly over and over to ensure the emerged themes in the phenomenon were noted and presented. Although I have studied the data analysis process elaborated in the handbooks written by the scholars, these steps were truly self-discovery and I found this period was precious and provided valuable contributions to me as an immature researcher.

6.2.2 Reflection as an English Teacher

Another reflective aspect conveyed from the study was the reflection expressed through the lens of a teacher whose experience came across in teaching English to the VIS. This research revealed that the mismatch between the support policies and the actual practices in the empowerment of the educational equality and the inclusive classroom concept still existed. However, the perceptions on the importance of the ELL have never been diminished among the VIS, the instructors, and the support staff. All the participants agreed that ELL has increasingly become a vital part of the VIS' future. Therefore, my reflection on the research finding would be expressed with the hope to present the notions from the angle of the researcher.

To begin with the reflection on the challenges in the ELL of the VIS, it was obvious that most of the VIS had low levels of English proficiency. The

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most mentioned critical period was the transitional period when the VIS had to move from the special school to the inclusive school or when they had to enter into the university. The ELL they encountered during their special school was very much different from the ELL in the inclusive setting. This discrepancy could be predicted; however, I feel that it should not be so large that it causes difficulties for the VIS. Thus, the academic preparation in both the previous school and the following institution might need to be reconsidered.

The next point is the reflection towards the relationship with the particular characteristics of the VIS and the ELL in each skill. I found that, generally, the VIS received information through listening and sequential direction. If we take this into consideration, the VIS would be able to learn how to use punctuations in sentences by listening to the readers who also pronounce punctuations used in different sentence structures. Alternatively, if the readers are the sighted peers in the classroom, this would be beneficial in learning both speaking and writing skills.

Additionally, I learned that although it has been presumed that the VIS tended to be at ease in listening and speaking skills, they would prefer learning all four English skills integrated into the lesson. Interestingly, another presumption that using technology could help improve ELL might be merely partially true since the voices of the VIS showed that they found that using simple English braille text allowed them to know sentence structures and the position of the punctuation used in the sentences leading to improvement in writing skills. Consequently, to support ELL for the VIS might not always depend on how advanced the assistive technology is; instead, it is how the basic learning material such as braille text will be effectively utilized in their ELL.

Another point I would like to emphasize in this research involves the language learning strategies (LLS). Regardless of the difference level of expectation of the instructors and the support staff towards their ELL, all VIS are aware of the importance of ELL and had full intentions to improve their ELL to have better English language skills. Nonetheless, most of the VIS hardly experienced the LLS, or they might not know that these tools exist and are beneficial in ELL. Hence, in addition to exploring what learning strategies have been used, the unknown

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learning strategies should also be presented to the VIS to allow them to be motivated in ELL.

In terms of the pedagogical issues, I would confirm that the instructional approach and the personalities and attitudes of the instructors play vital roles in ELL of the VIS. Fortunately, it has been clearly seen that all the instructors expressed their comprehensiveness in teaching the VIS. However, the situation in the classroom would be better if the major principles in teaching students with disabilities were provided to the teachers followed by the details that could help in creating a positive learning atmosphere, such as the appropriate proportion of level of concerns that instructors should express towards the VIS in classroom.

Finally, I have learned that the concepts of inclusive education have been applied very effectively in terms of equipping social skills to the VIS in accordance with the support policies. The cooperation between the schools and practitioners has been performed well. However, in the context of ELL, which requires a number of academic supports, there were several aspects awaiting to be reconsidered. The issues I found which urgently need to be prioritized started from the understanding of ELL in inclusive classroom where the differences in individuals should be more considered and the terms ‘reasonable support’ should be based on different context in each place and applied comprehensively without negative bias. Additionally, it is true that the equality in education is important; however, the practitioners should not limit the modifications and adjustment for the VIS by the misunderstanding of this concept. Instead, the supports in the academic preparation, providing extra classes and challenges in the assessment for each English skill should be conducted appropriately by using all possible and different methods. This rethinking is not due to the failures of practitioners; in contrast, it is for the fulfillment of their good intentions to embrace the beneficial outcome of the implementation in teaching inclusively.

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6.3 Limitations of the Study

This phenomenological study is considered meaningful and beneficial as it has reached the objectives and provided the essences of the ELL of the VIS in the inclusive classroom. Nonetheless, there were some limitations on participants in terms of size, demographic details, abilities in English language skills, and varieties in different regions.

Referring to the restrictions on criteria of the major group of participants who were the VIS, the first limitation in this study is the size of participants; purposive sampling of up to nine people in each group was fairly small. Although this number might be acceptable for the research methodology, it provided a limited view of the ELL in inclusive setting. Additionally, the focal group of participants was limited to only two grade levels in the schools and only two levels in the universities. Moreover, the specific criteria required only the students with visual impairments, the VIS in this study consisted of mixed levels of visual impairment. Hence, the readers might have to be aware of this concern before transfering into their context. The limitation also includes the broad range of educational backgrounds of the VIS, especially levels of English skills resulting in the perceptions based on different educational backgrounds.

Regarding the limitation on different practices in each educational institution, although all the schools and universities arrange their curriculum in accordance with the national curriculum, teaching styles and programs were different due to the various context in each region. These different practices convey varieties of perceptions towards educational and professional values that the participants perceived on the importance and meaning of ELL, inclusive classroom, and the characteristics of the VIS. Differences in norms, context, and values also affected mindset of the VIS towards their life goals which reflect on their perceptions on their ELL.

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6.4 Proposed Implementations and Recommendations for Future Practice and Research.

Based on the reflections from the researcher, the findings, and implications from the research, I do believe that several notions could be contributed to the stakeholders in one way or another. Therefore, the researcher would like to present the proposed implementations for practitioners and recommendations for the related parties ranging from the administrative levels as the policy makers to the practitioners like instructors and support staff.

6.4.1 Proposed Implementations for Future Practices

According to the reflections from the researcher and the implications from the findings, the areas for the proposal cover the notions in the importance and necessity of the ELL; pedagogical aspect; the effectiveness of learning materials for English skills; the issues in inclusive classroom; and the appropriate curriculum in ELL as illustrated in figure 6.2.

All the participants agreed that ELL was important for the VIS; however, the opinions were different in terms of whether it was necessary for them in their career path. Hence, the needs of the VIS in ELL might be the primary area to be reconsidered and investigated to redefine their learning goals and the direction in ELL development. This leads to the reconsideration in the existing practices. Although the responses from the findings show that all the instructors understood the concepts of inclusive classroom and they made adjustments in their teaching approach and styles, cooperation with the experts, such as training sessions from the special schools, could provide the principles to be integrated into the English teaching techniques from the instructors resulting in more effective ELL for the VIS. Consequently, the following proposed area is the professional development in terms of teacher training which provides not only instructional principles, but also includes details of attitudes and the well-rounded practice concerning the reasonable supports for ELL. Furthermore, the cooperation also means the collaboration between English instructors and the teachers teaching students with special needs in the schools for the blind. The meaningful information should be integrated by both parties to solve the problems involving the

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large difference in English lessons between the ones taught in special schools and those provided in inclusive schools and universities.

Another proposed action would be to create awareness of utilizing the learning materials regarding the different functions in each type. In this study, English braille text was mentioned by the VIS as being useful for developing their English writing skills. However, to discover particular useful functions of each of the learning materials for the VIS, including assistive technology, which is suitable for each English skill would be beneficial and highly support their ELL. Not only in writing, when it comes to the issues in ELL, but the acquisition in each English skill is also important. Although the VIS have particular characteristics due to their limitations of visual ability, careful attention to their learning styles during the acquisition in each skill followed by reasonable support could help them develop their ELL in the inclusive classroom. Regarding the notions in inclusive classroom, the accommodation in assessment should be reconsidered, particularly in assessment for reading skills. Merely the time extension might not be adequate due to the struggle in employing reading techniques of the VIS and their frustration about requesting the volunteer to reread the passage.

All in all, this leads to the proposal of concrete dedication to the curriculum adjustment in ELL for the VIS which requires more practical teaching and learning methods including the activities in accordance with the needs of the VIS. In this area, both providing the appropriate learning setting and the level of expectation from the instructors could develop motivation and increase learning autonomy to improve the VIS's ELL in the inclusive classroom.

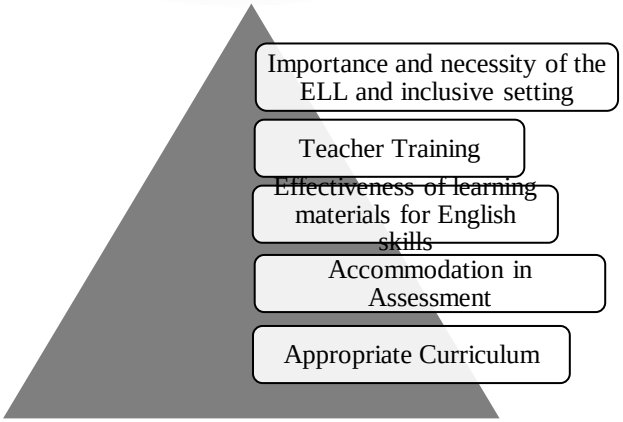


Figure 6.2 The Areas of Proposed Implementations for Future Practices

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6.4.2 Recommendations for Future Research

The essences of the phenomenon in this study were found through the responses of the focal participants and the supporting information from the instructors and the support staff. Accordingly, the recommendations for future study include the areas of research on particular groups of the VIS, which are other grade levels, abilities in English skills, and the ELL in specific regions. The investigation on specific characteristics of the VIS would provide deeper information in how they perceive ELL in each context and condition.

Additionally, another suggestion for the future research would be to look at the effectiveness of using English braille text in learning writing skill. To study writing, the VIS need to receive the information about word order and punctuations through reading. The findings in this study confirmed that reading braille text allowed the VIS to learn the position of punctuations and structures of the sentences. Therefore, further investigation is required as evidence to prove the contributions of English braille text to the development of writing skills for the VIS.

Finally, one of the most worthwhile issues for further study involves the language learning strategies. Although there have been a number of researches conducting on the strategies that they used in learning language, the reasons behind their selections and the factors that enhance or restrict the employment of their learning strategies are worth exploring. The reasons why the VIS decided to use or not to use each strategy might be unexpected and could be the hidden aspect which provides beneficial information for learning and teaching English for the VIS and the instructors.

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APPENDICES

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APPENDIX A
THE INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR THE VIS

A. Interview Questions Group One

The questions in this group allow the students with visual impairment to describe how their background information has become from the past until recent time. The information includes description on their lives under the different levels and conditions of visual impairment.

Item	Interview Questions
1.	Could you please tell me about yourself? กรุณาแนะนำตัวและเล่าประวัติโดยย่อเกี่ยวกับตนเอง
2.	What is your vision level? Please explain about your vision condition. ระดับการมองเห็นของคุณอยู่ในระดับใด โปรดอธิบาย
3.	What do you think is the difference (or challenge) growing up with a decreased ability to see? ประสบการณ์การใช้ชีวิตที่ผ่านมาเป็นอย่างไรบ้าง และเราใช้ชีวิตแตกต่างจากคนอื่นอย่างไร
4.	How does your current visual level affect your daily life and most significant in what aspect? คุณคิดว่าระดับการมองเห็นของคุณมีผลกระทบต่อการใช้ชีวิตประจำวันมากน้อยแค่ไหน และกระทบด้านไหนมากที่สุด

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B. Interview Questions Group Two

The questions in this group were developed to elicit concrete details of experience regarding the areas in this study from the broad perspectives on general education experience to the more specific areas regarding their lived experience towards experience on English language learning; their learning experience in inclusive classroom; and factors that affect their ELL such as accommodations and support services provided by the schools or universities.

Item	Interview Questions (Education Aspects)
1.	How have you been as a student at school or in the university? คุณใช้ชีวิตการเป็นนักเรียนในโรงเรียน/ นักศึกษาในมหาวิทยาลัยอย่างไร
2.	As a student, what is an experience (or learning activities/ tasks/ games) you found beneficial or enjoyable? คุณคิดว่าประสบการณ์ใดจากการใช้ชีวิตในฐานะนักเรียน/นักศึกษาที่เป็นประโยชน์ต่อตนเองหรือเป็นประสบการณ์ที่คุณชื่นชอบ
3.	What experiences that you think they have been problems or you felt difficult to go through? คุณเคยพบปัญหาหรือเหตุการณ์ที่คุณรู้สึกว่าผ่านไปอย่างยากลำบากหรือไม่ อย่างไร
4.	When you encountered such difficulties, what did you usually do to deal with them? Or What do you usually do to deal with such challenges or difficulties? เมื่อเกิดปัญหาแล้ว ผลจะเป็นอย่างไร และมีวิธีแก้ไขอย่างไร
5.	How is your relationship with friends, teachers, or other people at school/ university like? ขอให้เล่าเรื่องความสัมพันธ์กับเพื่อน ครู/อาจารย์ หรือบุคคลรอบข้างในโรงเรียน/มหาวิทยาลัยเป็นอย่างไร

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Item	Interview Questions (English Language Learning)
1.	Could you please tell me about your background on your English language learning? การเรียนภาษาอังกฤษเป็นอย่างไรบ้าง เช่น เรียนอะไรบ้าง อย่างไร
2.	If the visual limitation impacts your learning, please explain in both positive and negative ways. ถ้าระดับการมองเห็นของคุณส่งผลต่อการเรียนภาษาอังกฤษ ขอให้อธิบายทั้งผลกระทบเชิงบวกและเชิงลบ
3.	What were the problems in learning English due to the visual limitation? How did you handle with those situations? ข้อจำกัดทางสายตาทำให้เกิดปัญหาใดบ้างในการเรียนภาษาอังกฤษ และคุณจัดการกับสถานการณ์นั้นอย่างไร
4.	How do you plan to improve your ELL? คุณวางแผนจะพัฒนาการเรียนภาษาอังกฤษของคุณอย่างไร
5.	During the study of English, what kind of instructional method or activity do you think help you learn the most? ระหว่างการเรียนภาษาอังกฤษในชั้นเรียน วิธีการสอนหรือกิจกรรมใดที่สามารถช่วยในการเรียนภาษาอังกฤษได้มากที่สุด
6.	What do you think teacher should take into account on teaching English to the VIS? อะไรที่คุณคิดว่าครูผู้สอนควรคำนึงถึงในการสอนภาษาอังกฤษให้นักเรียน/นักศึกษาที่มีความบกพร่องทางการมองเห็น

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Item	Interview Questions (Inclusive Classroom)
1.	Have you ever heard the term ‘inclusive classroom’? If yes, in your view, what the inclusive classroom should be like? คุณเคยได้ยินคำว่า ชั้นเรียนแบบเรียนร่วม หรือไม่ หากเคยได้ยินแล้วคุณคิดว่าชั้นเรียนแบบเรียนร่วมควรจะมีลักษณะแบบใด
2.	How do you feel studying in inclusive classroom with the sighted peer? คุณรู้สึกอย่างไรเมื่อเรียนร่วมกับเพื่อนร่วมชั้นเรียนที่สามารถมองเห็นได้ตามปกติ
3.	How has studying inclusively affected your participation or learning in class? จากการเรียนแบบเรียนร่วมมีผลต่อการมีส่วนร่วม หรือการเรียนในห้องเรียนอย่างไร
4.	If you used to study in school for the blind, how is studying in the class provided specifically for the VIS different from the class mixed with sighted students? หากคุณเคยเรียนในโรงเรียนเฉพาะทางสำหรับผู้พิการทางสายตา คุณคิดว่าการเรียนในห้องเรียนที่มีเฉพาะนักเรียนที่มีข้อจำกัดทางสายตาด้วยกันแตกต่างจากการเรียนแบบเรียนร่วมอย่างไร

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Item	Interview Questions (English Language Learning in Inclusive Classroom)
1.	What are your learning materials or other assistive technology used in English class? Please tell me about that. สื่อการเรียนรู้หรือเทคโนโลยีสิ่งอำนวยความสะดวกประเภทใด ที่คุณใช้ในการเรียนภาษาอังกฤษ โปรดอธิบาย
2.	Is there any classroom accommodation at school/in the university? If yes, how does they relate to your ELL? ในสถานศึกษาของคุณมีการปรับเปลี่ยนห้องเรียนสำหรับผู้พิการหรือไม่ หากมี การปรับเปลี่ยนห้องเรียนดังกล่าวเกี่ยวข้องกับการเรียนภาษาอังกฤษของคุณอย่างไร
3.	During an examination, how has the accommodation been made to suit the VIS? ในการจัดสอบวิชาภาษาอังกฤษสถาบันการศึกษาของคุณ มีการปรับเปลี่ยนอย่างไรบ้าง
4.	Do you think whether the existing practices in assessment are appropriated for your visual limitation? Please explain. คุณคิดว่าการจัดสอบที่เป็นอยู่ในขณะนี้ เหมาะสมกับข้อจำกัดทางสายตาของคุณหรือไม่ โปรดอธิบาย
5.	Do you think that the services provided by schools support your ELL? Please give some examples. คุณคิดว่างานบริการสนับสนุนทางการศึกษาที่ได้รับจากสถาบันการศึกษาช่วยสนับสนุนการเรียนภาษาอังกฤษของคุณหรือไม่ อย่างไร

Ref. code: 25635921320023TIQ

C. Interview Questions Group Three

The question list in this group will be addressed to the VIS after they have been through the first and second interviews; therefore, the participants will have already connected their life history and their recent experience towards ELL. Thus, the questions used will not be as specific as the previous two interviews; however, they leave some room for the participants to describe freely on how they understand ELL, as well as, the meaning of learning English in inclusive classroom under the condition of visual impairment.

Item	Interview Questions
1.	As a VIS, how has your ELL been so far and how will English benefit you after the graduation? ในฐานะที่คุณเป็นนักเรียน/นักศึกษาที่มีความบกพร่องทางสายตา คุณคิดว่าการเรียนภาษาอังกฤษของคุณเป็นอย่างไรและหลังจากที่คุณจบการศึกษาแล้วการเรียนภาษาอังกฤษมีส่วนช่วยในการดำรงชีวิตของคุณอย่างไร
2.	What is your expectation on studying English in an inclusive classroom? คุณมีความคาดหวังใดเกี่ยวกับการเรียนภาษาอังกฤษในห้องเรียนแบบเรียนร่วม

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APPENDIX B

THEINTERVIEW GUIDE FORTHE INSTRUCTORS

A. Interview Questions Group One

Questions in this group allow the instructors to tell their background information from the past until recent time. The information includes description on general perceptions involving their life history, as well as, their life in terms of working as a teacher. Thus, the main function of the first set of interview allows the participant to express their past and how they perceive their background since they became the English teachers until recent time as an English teacher of the VIS in inclusive classroom.

Item	Interview Questions
1.	Could you please tell me about yourself? กรุณาแนะนำตัวและเล่าประวัติโดยย่อเกี่ยวกับตนเอง
2.	Have you ever attended teacher-training program about student with disabilities? Please explain. คุณเคยเข้าร่วมการอบรบเพื่อฝึกหัดครูเกี่ยวกับการสอนนักเรียนที่มีความพิการหรือไม่ โปรดอธิบาย
3.	How does it feel to be a teacher in a school/in a university? ประสบการณ์การเป็นครูในโรงเรียน/มหาวิทยาลัยที่ผ่านมาเป็นอย่างไร

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B. Interview Questions Group Two

This group of questions aims to elicit concrete details after they have recalled their background information from the previous group. More details of working experiences will be elicited to reflect how they perceive the ELL of the VIS, which is the phenomenon in this study. The questions are based on the recent living experience in terms of their teaching experience on teaching English language to the VIS, as well as, factors that affect the ELL of VIS in inclusive classroom.

Item	Interview Questions (English Language Learning of the Visually Impaired Students)
1.	How has your experience on teaching English to the VIS การสอนภาษาอังกฤษให้นักเรียนที่มีความบกพร่องทางการมองเห็นที่ผ่านมาเป็นอย่างไร
2.	In your view, how is teaching English to the VIS different from teaching the sighted students? คุณคิดว่าการสอนภาษาอังกฤษให้นักเรียนที่มีความบกพร่องทางการมองเห็นแตกต่างจากการสอนนักเรียนที่มีสายตาปกติอย่างไร
3.	What have been the difficulties in ELL of the VIS? ผู้สอนคิดว่าผู้เรียนที่พิการทางสายตามีปัญหาใดบ้างในการเรียนภาษาอังกฤษ
4.	What were the achievement in ELL of the VIS? How do you know? อะไรที่แสดงว่าการเรียนภาษาอังกฤษของผู้เรียนประสบผลสำเร็จ และผู้สอนรู้ได้อย่างไร

Ref. code: 25635921320023TIQ

Item	Interview Questions (Teaching English in Inclusive Classroom)
1.	How do you understand the term ‘inclusive classroom’? คุณเข้าใจคำว่า ‘ห้องเรียนแบบเรียนร่วม’ อย่างไร
2.	From your experience, what factors or actions would enhance or inhibit inclusiveness in learning environments? จากประสบการณ์ของคุณปัจจัยหรือการกระทำใดที่ส่งเสริมหรือยับยั้งสภาพแวดล้อมการเรียนแบบเรียนร่วม
3.	What were the situations showing that the inclusiveness enhances or inhibits ELL of the VIS? คุณคิดว่าสถานการณ์ใดที่แสดงให้เห็นว่าการเรียนแบบเรียนร่วมช่วยส่งเสริมหรือยับยั้งการเรียนภาษาอังกฤษของนักเรียนที่มีความบกพร่องทางการมองเห็น
4.	What are the teaching methods / techniques / activities that you found effective for teaching English to the VIS? วิธีการสอน เทคนิคการสอนหรือกิจกรรมใดที่คุณพบว่าใช้สอนภาษาอังกฤษให้นักเรียนที่มีความบกพร่องทางการมองเห็นได้อย่างมีประสิทธิภาพ
5.	How have the VIS been assessed in the English course? นักเรียนที่มีความบกพร่องทางการมองเห็นได้รับการประเมินผลอย่างไรในวิชาภาษาอังกฤษ
6.	How has the accommodation for teaching and assessment in English course been made appropriated to learning of the VIS? การสอนและการประเมินผลในวิชาภาษาอังกฤษของนักเรียนได้ถูกปรับเปลี่ยนให้เหมาะสมกับการเรียนของผู้เรียนที่มีความบกพร่องทางการมองเห็นอย่างไร

Ref. code: 25635921320023TIQ

C. Interview Questions Group Three

The final group of interview questions for the instructors allows the teachers to restructure their experience on the ELL of the VIS and generate meaning on how they perceive such experience.

Item	Interview Questions
1.	As an English teacher, what do you expect from the VIS in terms of their performance or ability? ในฐานะที่คุณเป็นครูผู้สอนภาษาอังกฤษคุณมีความคาดหวังอะไรในความสามารถทางการเรียนภาษาอังกฤษของนักเรียนที่มีความบกพร่องทางการมองเห็น
2.	In your opinion, how is the inclusive classroom important to ELL of the VIS? คุณเห็นว่าการเรียนแบบเรียนร่วมมีความสำคัญอย่างไรต่อการเรียนภาษาอังกฤษของนักเรียนที่มีความบกพร่องทางการมองเห็น

Ref. code: 25635921320023TIQ

APPENDIX C

THE INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR SUPPORT STAFF

A. Interview Questions Group One

In this group of questions, the support staff will be asked about their experience on their life history in the past until how they have become support staff in the institutions recently.

Item	Interview Questions
1.	Could you please tell me about yourself? กรุณาแนะนำตัวและเล่าประวัติโดยย่อเกี่ยวกับตนเอง
2.	How do you feel working as supporting staff? การทำงานที่ผ่านมาเป็นอย่างไร
3.	Have you been trained on providing services to students with visual impairment? Please explain. คุณเคยเข้าร่วมการฝึกอบรมเกี่ยวกับเรื่องการศึกษาสำหรับนักศึกษาพิการทางสายตาหรือไม่ โปรดอธิบาย
4.	Please explain your current role / responsibilities. ขอให้อธิบายหน้าที่ ขอบเขตการทำงานที่เป็นอยู่ในปัจจุบัน

Ref. code: 25635921320023TIQ

B. Interview Questions Group Two

This second group of interview questions will be addressed to the support staff after they have recalled their background information. However, as their roles are not the learners or the teachers, the questions may not be focused on teaching techniques or how the VIS learn English. Instead, the questions in this set will dig deeper in their working experience in terms of their training, perceptions towards inclusive classroom, and their view particularly on working as supporter in process of ELL preparation for the VIS.

Item	Interview Questions (English Language Learning of the Visually Impaired Students)
1.	Have you ever been a part of the training that provided information about students with visual impairment in school or university? Please describe. คุณเคยมีส่วนร่วมในการจัดฝึกอบรมเพื่อให้ข้อมูลเกี่ยวกับนักเรียน/นักศึกษาที่มีความบกพร่องทางการมองเห็นในระดับโรงเรียน หรือ มหาวิทยาลัยหรือไม่ โปรดอธิบาย
2.	Have you ever attended training or acquired knowledge particularly about ELL of the VIS? Please describe. คุณเคยเข้าร่วมการฝึกอบรมหรือได้รับความรู้เกี่ยวกับการเรียนภาษาอังกฤษของนักเรียนที่มีความบกพร่องทางการมองเห็น หรือไม่ โปรดอธิบาย
3.	From your experience, what were the situations that show success or difficulties on ELL of the VIS? จากประสบการณ์ของคุณ คุณรู้ได้อย่างไรว่านักเรียน/นักศึกษาที่มีความบกพร่องทางการมองเห็นประสบความสำเร็จ หรือ มีปัญหาในการเรียนภาษาอังกฤษ

Ref. code: 25635921320023TIQ

Item	Interview Questions (Inclusive Classroom)
1.	What do you understand the term ‘inclusive classroom’? คุณเข้าใจคำว่า ‘ห้องเรียนแบบเรียนร่วม’ อย่างไร
2.	From your experience, what factors and practices would enhance or inhibit inclusiveness in learning environments? จากประสบการณ์ของคุณ ปัจจัยหรือ การกระทำใด ที่สนับสนุน หรือยับยั้งสภาพแวดล้อมแบบเรียนร่วม
3.	What were the situations showing that the inclusiveness enhances or inhibits ELL of the VIS? คุณคิดว่าสถานการณ์ใดที่แสดงให้เห็นว่าการเรียนแบบเรียนร่วมช่วยส่งเสริมหรือยับยั้งการเรียนภาษาอังกฤษของนักเรียน / นักศึกษาที่มีความบกพร่องทางการมองเห็น

Ref. code: 25635921320023TIQ

Item	Interview Questions (Support Services)
1.	Could you please describe your experience in terms of accommodation for classroom environment, learning materials, and assessment for the VIS? กรุณาเล่าประสบการณ์ของคุณเกี่ยวกับการปรับเปลี่ยนสภาพแวดล้อมในห้องเรียน สื่อการเรียนการสอน และ การปรับเปลี่ยนการประเมินผล สำหรับนักเรียน / นักศึกษาที่มีความบกพร่องทางการมองเห็น
2.	From your view, how do you think support services provided by the school or university can improve ELL of the VIS? คุณคิดว่าบริการสนับสนุนทางการศึกษาที่สถานศึกษาจัดให้นั้นสามารถพัฒนาให้การเรียนภาษาอังกฤษของนักเรียน / นักศึกษาที่มีความบกพร่องทางการมองเห็นให้เป็นไปในทางที่ดีขึ้นอย่างไร
3.	Have you ever received complaints or complement from the VIS? Please explain. คุณเคยได้รับการร้องเรียน หรือความเห็นเชิงพึงพอใจจากนักเรียน/นักศึกษาผู้พิการทางสายตาหรือไม่ อย่างไร

Ref. code: 25635921320023TIQ

C. Interview Questions Group Three

The final group of interview questions are developed to ask how the support staff reflect meaning of their experience after they have reconstructed their life history and revealed their details on their working experience involving the ELL of the VIS.

Item	Interview Questions
1.	As a support staff, what is your expectation on support services provided to ELL of the VIS? For example, what kind of support services to the VIS do you expect? ในฐานะที่คุณเป็นเจ้าหน้าที่ประจำศูนย์ให้บริการทางการศึกษา คุณมีความคาดหวังอะไรเกี่ยวกับการให้บริการทางการเรียนภาษาอังกฤษของนักเรียน/นักศึกษาที่มีความบกพร่องทางการมองเห็น
2.	How much do you think the inclusive classroom mean to ELL of the VIS? Please describe. คุณคิดว่าการเรียนแบบเรียนร่วมมีความสำคัญต่อการเรียนภาษาอังกฤษของนักเรียน /นักศึกษาที่มีความบกพร่องทางการมองเห็นมากน้อยเพียงใด โปรดอธิบาย

Ref. code: 25635921320023TIQ

APPENDIX D

OBSERVATION GUIDE

Observation Date**:** _____ Observation Duration: _____

Class/Course: _____

Number of Students in Class**:** _____ Number of the VIS**:** _____

Level of Visual Impairment: _____

Aspects of Observation	**Areas of Observation**
Interaction	**Students –Students** 1. The VIS interact, either passively or actively, with their peers in class or activities. 2. The VIS ask their peer to check for understanding of lesson or instructions. **Students – Teachers** 3. The VIS ask teachers to check for understanding of lesson or instructions. 4. The teacher provides feedback to students to guide their learning. 5. The teacher encourages the student with VIS to answer questions. 6. The teacher assigns other students to support VIS to do class activities.

Ref. code: 25635921320023TIQ

Aspects of Observation	Elements of Observation
	The VIS
	7. The VIS are encouraged to use assistive technology in class.
	8. Facilities are accessible to the VIS
	Instructors
	9. The teacher makes clear the structure and objectives of the lesson
Support	10. The teacher follows up the involvement of the student with VIS in the group discussion.
	11. The teacher verbalizes the instructions from textbook or instructional materials while teaching.
	12. The teacher pre-teaches vocabulary and key concepts which relate to the lesson through verbal explanations and concrete examples.
	13. The teacher uses multi-sensory approach while teaching

Ref. code: 25635921320023TIQ

Aspects of Observation	Elements of Observation
Adaptation / Accommodations	**Instructional methods** 14. A variety of grouping patterns are used. Circle any/all that apply: Pairs /Small Groups/ Whole Class Independent Learning 15. The teacher gives time for questions and answers to individual children during the session? **Classroom Adjustment** 16. Student(s) with (low) visual impairments sit in front of the class 17. There is sufficient space in class for independent movement. **Instructional / Learning materials** 18. A variety of instructional materials appropriate to learner's diversity are used to engage and motivate learners. 19. Textbooks are produced in braille or with magnified text to use as learning materials

Ref. code: 25635921320023TIQ

APPENDIX E

DATA COLLECTION LETTERS



ที่ อว 67.47/ 82

สถาบันภาษา มหาวิทยาลัยธรรมศาสตร์
ถ.พระจันทร์ เขตพระนคร
กรุงเทพฯ 10200

30 สิงหาคม 2562

เรื่อง ขออนุญาตให้นักศึกษาปริญญาเอกเก็บข้อมูลวิจัยเพื่อประกอบการทำวิทยานิพนธ์

เรียน

สิ่งที่ส่งมาด้วย ข้อมูลงานวิจัย

ด้วย นางสาว บัวรัตนา อัตชู เลขทะเบียน 5921320023 นักศึกษาปริญญาเอก ชั้นปีที่ 4 หลักสูตรปรัชญาดุษฎีบัณฑิต สาขาวิชาการสอนภาษาอังกฤษ (หลักสูตรนานาชาติ) สถาบันภาษา มหาวิทยาลัยธรรมศาสตร์ อยู่ระหว่างการทำวิทยานิพนธ์เรื่อง A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY ON ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING OF VISUALLY IMPAIRED STUDENTS IN THAILAND โดยมีอาจารย์ที่ปรึกษา คือ ผู้ช่วยศาสตราจารย์ ดร. ประกาศิต สิทธิ์ธิติกุล มีความประสงค์ขออนุญาตเก็บข้อมูลวิจัยเพื่อประกอบการทำวิทยานิพนธ์ โดยวิธีการดังต่อไปนี้

1. สัมภาษณ์บุคลากรในหน่วยงานของท่าน ดังนี้
   - นักศึกษาผู้มีความบกพร่องทางการเห็น จำนวน 1 คน
   - อาจารย์ผู้สอนวิชาภาษาอังกฤษในรายวิชาเดียวกับนักศึกษาผู้ให้สัมภาษณ์ จำนวน 1 คน
   - เจ้าหน้าที่งานบริการสนับสนุนนักศึกษาพิการ (DSS) จำนวน 1 คน
2. สังเกตการเรียนการสอนวิชาภาษาอังกฤษ เพื่อให้ทราบถึงพฤติกรรมการเรียนภาษาอังกฤษในห้องเรียนแบบเรียนร่วมเป็นประเด็นหลัก โดยมิได้มุ่งเน้นการสังเกตเนื้อหาในรายวิชาที่เข้าสังเกตการเรียนการสอน

สถาบันภาษา มหาวิทยาลัยธรรมศาสตร์ พิจารณาแล้วเห็นว่าข้อมูลที่ได้รับจะเป็นประโยชน์อย่างยิ่งต่อการเรียนการสอนวิชาภาษาอังกฤษของนักเรียน/นักศึกษาผู้มีความบกพร่องทางการเห็น และขอรับรองว่าการเก็บข้อมูลดังกล่าวจะไม่มีความเกี่ยวข้องต่อข้อกฎหมายใด ๆ และผู้วิจัยจะเก็บข้อมูลไว้เป็นความลับ ทั้งนี้ หากขัดข้องประการใด กรุณาแจ้ง นางสาว บัวรัตนา อัตชู (ผู้วิจัย) หมายเลขโทรศัพท์ 085-113-5746

จึงเรียนมาเพื่อโปรดพิจารณาอนุญาตให้ดำเนินการเก็บข้อมูลวิจัยด้วย จักขอบคุณยิ่ง

ขอแสดงความนับถือ

(รองศาสตราจารย์ ดร. สุพงศ์ ตั้งเคียงศิริสิน)
ผู้อำนวยการสถาบันภาษา

โครงการปริญญาเอก สาขาวิชาการสอนภาษาอังกฤษ (หลักสูตรนานาชาติ)
โทร. 02-6133108 email: phd.elt@litu.tu.ac.th

Ref. code: 25635921320023TIQ



ที่ อว 67.47/ 84

สถาบันภาษา มหาวิทยาลัยธรรมศาสตร์
ถ.พระจันทร์ เขตพระนคร
กรุงเทพฯ 10200

30 สิงหาคม 2562

เรื่อง ขออนุญาตให้นักศึกษาปริญญาเอกเก็บข้อมูลวิจัยเพื่อประกอบการทำวิทยานิพนธ์

เรียน

สิ่งที่ส่งมาด้วย ข้อมูลงานวิจัย

ด้วย นางสาว บัวรัตนา อัตชู เลขทะเบียน 5921320023 นักศึกษาปริญญาเอก ชั้นปีที่ 4 หลักสูตรปรัชญาดุษฎีบัณฑิต สาขาวิชาการสอนภาษาอังกฤษ (หลักสูตรนานาชาติ) สถาบันภาษา มหาวิทยาลัยธรรมศาสตร์ อยู่ระหว่างการทำวิทยานิพนธ์เรื่อง A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY ON ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING OF VISUALLY IMPAIRED STUDENTS IN THAILAND โดยมีอาจารย์ที่ปรึกษา คือ ผู้ช่วยศาสตราจารย์ ดร. ประกาศิต สิทธิ์ธิติกุล มีความประสงค์ขออนุญาตเก็บข้อมูลวิจัยเพื่อประกอบการทำวิทยานิพนธ์ โดยวิธีการดังต่อไปนี้

1. สัมภาษณ์บุคลากรในหน่วยงานของท่าน ดังนี้
   - ครูผู้สอนวิชาภาษาอังกฤษ จำนวน 1 คน
   - ครู หรือ บุคลากรผู้ติดตามนักเรียนผู้มีความบกพร่องทางการเห็น จำนวน 1 คน
   - นักเรียนผู้มีความบกพร่องทางการเห็นในระดับชั้นมัธยมศึกษาตอนปลาย จำนวน 1 คน
2. สังเกตการเรียนการสอนวิชาภาษาอังกฤษ รวมถึงขอข้อมูลที่เกี่ยวข้อง เพื่อให้ทราบถึงพฤติกรรมการเรียนภาษาอังกฤษในห้องเรียนแบบเรียนร่วมเป็นประเด็นหลัก โดยมิได้มุ่งเน้นการสังเกตเนื้อหาในรายวิชาที่เข้าสังเกตการเรียนการสอน

สถาบันภาษา มหาวิทยาลัยธรรมศาสตร์ พิจารณาแล้วเห็นว่าข้อมูลที่ได้รับจะเป็นประโยชน์อย่างยิ่งต่อการเรียนการสอนวิชาภาษาอังกฤษของนักเรียน/นักศึกษาผู้มีความบกพร่องทางการเห็น และขอรับรองว่าการเก็บข้อมูลดังกล่าวจะไม่มีความเกี่ยวข้องต่อข้อกฎหมายใด ๆ และผู้วิจัยจะเก็บข้อมูลไว้เป็นความลับ ทั้งนี้ หากขัดข้องประการใด กรุณาแจ้ง นางสาว บัวรัตนา อัตชู (ผู้วิจัย) หมายเลขโทรศัพท์ 085-113-5746

จึงเรียนมาเพื่อโปรดพิจารณาอนุญาตให้ดำเนินการเก็บข้อมูลวิจัยด้วย จักขอบคุณยิ่ง

ขอแสดงความนับถือ

(รองศาสตราจารย์ ดร. สุพงศ์ ตั้งเคียงศิริสิน)
ผู้อำนวยการสถาบันภาษา

โครงการปริญญาเอก สาขาวิชการสอนภาษาอังกฤษ (หลักสูตรนานาชาติ)
โทร. 02-6133108 email: phd.elt@litu.tu.ac.th

Ref. code: 25635921320023TIQ

APPENDIX F
CONSENT FORM

หนังสือแสดงความยินยอมเข้าร่วมการวิจัย

ในหนังสือแสดงความยินยอมฉบับนี้

"**ผู้วิจัย**" หมายถึง นางสาว บัวรัตนา อัตชู ผู้ดำเนินการในการทำวิจัยและวิทยานิพนธ์

"**ผู้เข้าร่วมการวิจัย**" หมายถึง สมาชิกของกลุ่มประชากรที่ผู้วิจัยเป็นผู้เลือกเพื่อเก็บข้อมูลในการวิจัย

โดย ข้าพเจ้า _____ผู้เข้าร่วมการวิจัยได้รับทราบรายละเอียดเกี่ยวกับที่มาและวัตถุประสงค์ในการทำวิจัย รายละเอียดขั้นตอนต่าง ๆ ที่จะต้องปฏิบัติ ความเสี่ยง และประโยชน์ซึ่งจะเกิดขึ้นจากการวิจัยเรื่องนี้ และได้รับคำอธิบายจากผู้วิจัย จนเข้าใจเป็นอย่างดีแล้ว

ทั้งนี้ ข้าพเจ้ายินยอมเข้าร่วมในการวิจัยตามรายละเอียด ดังนี้

รายละเอียดงานวิจัย

1. หัวข้องานวิจัย คือ A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY ON ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING OF VISUALLY IMPAIRED STUDENTS IN THAILAND
   เป็นส่วนหนึ่งของหลักสูตรปรัชญาดุษฎีบัณฑิต
   สาขาวิชาการสอนภาษาอังกฤษ มหาวิทยาลัยธรรมศาสตร์
2. วัตถุประสงค์ของงานวิจัย คือ เพื่อศึกษาประสบการณ์ในการเรียนภาษาอังกฤษในห้องเรียนแบบเรียนร่วมจากมุมมองของนักเรียน/นักศึกษาผู้มีความบกพร่องทางสายตา
3. ผู้วิจัยประสงค์ให้ผู้เข้าร่วมการวิจัยมีส่วนร่วมโดยเป็นผู้ให้ข้อมูลในการสัมภาษณ์ตามแบบสัมภาษณ์สำหรับนักเรียน/นักศึกษาผู้มีความบกพร่องทางสายตา โดยจะใช้เวลาสัมภาษณ์ 1-2 ชั่วโมงต่อครั้ง และจะทำการสัมภาษณ์จำนวน 2-3 ครั้ง หรือจนกว่าผู้วิจัยจะได้ข้อมูลครบถ้วน

การรักษาข้อมูลของผู้เข้าร่วม

ผู้วิจัยให้คำมั่นสัญญาว่าข้อมูลที่เกี่ยวข้องกับผู้เข้าร่วมการวิจัย หรือข้อมูลใดๆ ที่จะนำไปสู่การระบุถึงตัวผู้เข้าร่วมการวิจัยจะถูกเก็บไว้เป็นความลับ และผู้วิจัยจะใช้ชื่อสมมติแทนชื่อจริง โดยชื่อจริงของผู้เข้าร่วมการวิจัยจะไม่ถูกเปิดเผยแต่อย่างใด

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สิทธิของผู้เข้าร่วมการวิจัย

การเข้าร่วมในการทำวิจัยนี้เป็นไปโดยความสมัครใจของผู้เข้าร่วมการวิจัย ทั้งนี้ ผู้เข้าร่วมการวิจัยจะไม่ได้รับค่าตอบแทนหรือสิ่งสมนาคุณใดๆ

ผู้เข้าร่วมการวิจัยมีสิทธิในการขอยุติหรือยกเลิกการเข้าร่วมในการทำวิจัยได้ทุกเวลา และจะไม่มีผลกระทบหรือมีข้อผูกพันใดๆและสามารถปฏิเสธการเข้าร่วมวิจัยโดยการแจ้งผู้วิจัยว่าท่านไม่ประสงค์จะให้ข้อมูลอีกต่อไป

ข้อมูลติดต่อผู้วิจัย

หากผู้เข้าร่วมการวิจัยพบข้อสงสัย หรือ ต้องการสอบถามเพิ่มเติมเกี่ยวกับรายละเอียดของการวิจัย ท่านสามารถติดต่อผู้วิจัยได้ตลอดการทำวิจัย รวมถึงหลังจากการให้ข้อมูลแล้ว โดยติดต่อได้ที่หมายเลขโทรศัพท์ 085-113-5746 หรือ อีเมลล์ 3ua.attana@gmail.com

การแสดงความยินยอม

ผู้เข้าร่วมการวิจัยได้อ่านรายละเอียดในหนังสือแสดงความยินยอมเรียบร้อยแล้วจึงได้ลงนามยินยอมเข้าร่วมในการทำวิจัยนี้และผู้วิจัยได้มอบสำเนาหนังสือยินยอมให้แก่ผู้เข้าร่วมการวิจัยเก็บไว้หนึ่งฉบับ

ลงนาม ผู้เข้าร่วมการวิจัย _____ วันที่_____

( )

ลงนาม ผู้วิจัย _____ วันที่_____

( )

ลงนาม พยาน _____ วันที่_____

( )

ลงนาม พยาน _____ วันที่_____

( )

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APPENDIX G

INVITATION LETTERS FOR THE EXPERTS



MESI 67.47/29

Language Institute
Thammasat University
Prachan Road
Bangkok 10200

June 24, 2019

Subject: Invitation as an expert reviewer

Dear Assist ıst

We are pleased to invite you to be an expert reviewer to evaluate the suitability of the item-objective congruence (IOC) of the research instruments conducted by Miss Buarattana Attachoo, a Ph.D. student on the Doctor of Philosophy Program in English Language Teaching at The Language Institute, Thammasat University.

The title of the thesis is "A Phenomenological Study on English Language Learning of the Visually Impaired Students in Thailand". The focus of the study is to explore the lived experiences on English language learning of the students with visual impairment in inclusive classroom through the in-depth information revealed by the students concerning their perceptions towards physical and mental experiences on their English language learning, as well as, the supporting information expressed by the instructors and support staff.

Enclosed herewith are the research instruments and the IOC form for your evaluation. Please complete the form and send it back to the Ph.D. student in due course.

We appreciate your kind assistance.

Yours sincerely,

Associate Professor Supong Tangkiengsirisin, Ph.D.
Director

PhD in ELT Program
Tel. 02-613-3108 E-mail: phd.elt@litu.tu.ac.th

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APPENDIX H

IOC VALUE OF THE INTERVIREW QUESTIONS

To find out the validity of the content, the interview questions were sent to the experts and rated for the IOC value. The evaluation form consists of three sets of Interview Guides created for three groups of participants, which are

1. The Interview Guide for the VIS;
2. The Interview Guide for the Instructors; and
3. The Interview Guide for the Support Staff.

All items have the IOC values which means all items can be reserved.

IOC Value of the Interview Guide for the VIS

Interview Questions Group One

The questions in this group allow the students with visual impairment to describe how their background information has become from the past until recent time. The information includes description on their lives under the different levels and conditions of visual impairment.

Item	Experts			Total score	The IOC Index	Interpretation
	1	2	3			
1.	1	1	1	3	1.00	Reserved
2.	1	1	1	3	1.00	Reserved
3.	1	0	1	2	0.67	Reserved
4.	1	1	1	3	1.00	Reserved

Interview Questions Group Two

The questions in this group were developed to elicit concrete details of experience regarding the areas in this study from the broad perspectives on general education experience to the more specific areas regarding their lived experience towards experience on English language learning; their learning experience in inclusive classroom; and factors that affect their ELL such as accommodations and support services provided by the schools or universities.

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Educational aspect

Item	Experts			Total score	The IOC Index	Interpretation
	1	2	3			
1.	1	1	1	3	1.00	Reserved
2.	0	1	-1	0	0.00	Adjusted
3.	1	1	0	2	0.67	Reserved
4.	1	1	0	2	0.67	Reserved
5.	1	1	0	2	0.67	Reserved

English Language Learning (ELL)

Item	Experts			Total score	The IOC Index	Interpretation
	1	2	3			
1.	1	1	1	3	1.00	Reserved
2.	0	1	0	1	0.33	Adjusted
3.	1	1	0	2	0.67	Reserved
4.	1	1	1	3	1.00	Reserved
5.	1	1	1	3	1.00	Reserved
6.	1	1	1	3	1.00	Reserved

Inclusive Classroom

Item	Experts			Total score	The IOC Index	Interpretation
	1	2	3			
1.	1	1	1	3	1.00	Reserved
2.	1	1	1	3	1.00	Reserved
3.	1	1	1	3	1.00	Reserved
4.	1	1	1	3	1.00	Reserved

Effects of Inclusive Classroom on English Language Learning

Item	Experts			Total score	The IOC Index	Interpretation
	1	2	3			
1.	1	1	1	3	1.00	Reserved
2.	1	1	1	3	1.00	Reserved
3.	1	1	1	3	1.00	Reserved
4.	1	1	1	3	1.00	Reserved
5.	1	1	1	3	1.00	Reserved

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Interview Questions Group Three

The question list in this group will be addressed to the VIS after they have been through the first and second interviews; therefore, the participants will have already connected their life history and their recent experience towards ELL. Thus, the questions used will not be as specific as the previous two interviews; however, they leave some room for the participants to describe freely on how they understand ELL, as well as, the meaning of learning English in inclusive classroom under the condition of visual impairment.

Item	Experts			Total score	The IOC Index	Interpretation
	1	2	3			
1.	1	1	0	2	0.67	Reserved
2.	1	1	1	3	1.00	Reserved

IOC Value of The Interview Guide for the Instructors

Interview Questions Group One

Questions in this group allow the instructors to tell their background information from the past until recent time. The information includes description on general perceptions involving their life history, as well as, their life in terms of working as a teacher. Thus, the main function of the first set of interview allows the participant to express their past and how they perceive their background since they became the English teachers until recent time as an English teacher of the VIS in inclusive classroom.

Item	Experts			Total score	The IOC Index	Interpretation
	1	2	3			
1.	1	1	1	3	1.00	Reserved
2.	1	0	1	2	0.67	Reserved
3.	1	1	1	3	1.00	Reserved

Interview Questions Group Two

This group of questions aims to elicit concrete details after they have recalled their background information from the previous group. More details of working experiences will be elicited to reflect how they perceive the ELL of the VIS, which is the phenomenon in this study. The questions are based on the recent living experience

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in terms of their teaching experience on teaching English language to the VIS, as well as, factors that affect the ELL of VIS in inclusive classroom.

English Language Learning of the Visually Impaired Students

Item	Experts			Total score	The IOC Index	Interpretation
	1	2	3			
1.	1	1	1	3	1.00	Reserved
2.	1	1	0	2	0.67	Reserved
3.	1	1	1	3	1.00	Reserved

Teaching English in Inclusive Classroom

Item	Experts			Total score	The IOC Index	Interpretation
	1	2	3			
1.	1	1	1	3	1.00	Reserved
2.	1	1	1	3	1.00	Reserved
3.	1	1	1	3	1.00	Reserved
4.	1	1	1	3	1.00	Reserved
5.	1	1	1	3	1.00	Reserved
6.	1	1	0	2	0.67	Reserved

Interview Questions Group Three

The final group of interview questions for the instructors allows the teachers to restructure their experience on the ELL of the VIS and generate meaning on how they perceive such experience.

Item	Experts			Total score	The IOC Index	Interpretation
	1	2	3			
1.	1	1	1	3	1.00	Reserved
2.	0	1	1	2	0.67	Reserved

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IOC Value of the Interview Guide for the Support Staff

Interview Questions Group One

In this group of questions, the support staff will be asked about their experience on their life history in the past until how they have become support staff in the institutions recently.

Item	Experts			Total score	The IOC Index	Interpretation
	1	2	3			
1.	1	1	1	3	1.00	Reserved
2.	0	1	0	1	0.33	Adjusted
3.	0	1	1	2	0.67	Reserved

Interview Questions Group Two

This second group of interview questions will be addressed to the support staff after they have recalled their background information. However, as their roles are not the learners or the teachers, the questions may not be focused on teaching techniques or how the VIS learn English. Instead, the questions in this set will dig deeper in their working experience in terms of their training, perceptions towards inclusive classroom, and their view particularly on working as supporter in process of ELL preparation for the VIS.

English Language Learning of the Visually Impaired Students

Item	Experts			Total score	The IOC Index	Interpretation
	1	2	3			
1.	1	1	1	1	1.00	Reserved
2.	0	1	1	2	0.67	Reserved
3.	1	1	0	2	0.67	Reserved

Inclusive Classroom

Item	Experts			Total score	The IOC Index	Interpretation
	1	2	3			
1.	1	1	1	3	1.00	Reserved
2.	-1	1	1	1	0.33	Adjusted
3.	-1	1	1	1	0.33	Adjusted

Support Services

Item	Experts			Total score	The IOC Index	Interpretation
	1	2	3			
1.	1	1	1	3	1.00	Reserved
2.	1	1	0	2	0.67	Reserved

Ref. code: 25635921320023TIQ

Interview Questions Group Three

The final group of interview questions is developed to ask how the support staff reflects meaning of their experience after they have reconstructed their life history and revealed their details on their working experience involving the ELL of the VIS.

Item	Experts			Total score	The IOC Index	Interpretation
	1	2	3			
1.	0	1	1	2	0.67	Reserved
2.	1	1	0	2	0.67	Reserved

Ref. code: 25635921320023TIQ

BIOGRAPHY

Name	Miss Buarattana Attachoo
Date of Birth	December 4, 1985
Educational Attainment	2013-2015: Master of Arts Program in Teaching English as a Foreign Language (English Program), Language Institute, Thammasat University 2009-2010: Master of Law (LL.M) International Laws, University of Leeds 2003-2006: Bachelor of Laws (LL.B.), Thammasat University
Work Position	English Instructor at Language School
Work Experiences	2016-Present: English Instructor TFU Language School 2013-2016: English Teacher Kasetsart University Laboratory School, Center for Education Research and Development

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