

Reflections on the CEFR in Thailand: Problems and Needs of Thai EFL Teachers

Onwanya Sriwongsa

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of Requirements for
degree of Master of Education in English Language Teaching
December 2023

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ABSTRACT

The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: teaching, learning, and assessing (CEFR) is a six-point scale used to describe a language learner's ability (A1-C2). The Thai Ministry of Education (MoE, 2014) approved the framework as a guide for revamping English instruction at all levels. However, little has been undertaken to study Thai English teachers' perspectives on CEFR (Franz & Teo, 2017; Kanchai, 2019). Therefore, this study aimed to investigate Thai EFL teachers' thoughts on the CEFR: Problems and Needs. The participants were 300 Thai English teachers who teach English as a foreign language (EFL) in Northeastern Thailand's public secondary schools. All participants had at least three years of English teaching experience. Participants were selected using the approach of convenience sampling. A seven-point Likert scale questionnaire was utilized to collect quantitative data, while a semi-structured interview was employed to gain qualitative data from 10 participants. The interviewees were purposefully chosen for the semi-structured interviews based on their expressed willingness in the survey questionnaire. The quantitative data were evaluated using descriptive statistics, percentages, and standard deviation, whereas the qualitative data were coded into CEFR domains for analysis. The quantitative findings revealed that Thai EFL teachers utilize the CEFR moderately in their classrooms. In addition, the results demonstrated that adopting the CEFR in language teaching, learning, and assessment presented the challenges. The requirement for CEFR implementation in language teaching, learning, and assessment revealed a significant need for CEFR implementation in the classroom. However, qualitative studies suggested that English teachers implemented the CEFR moderately in their classrooms. In particular, the research revealed that the problems associated with implementing the CEFR in language teaching, learning, and assessment were relatively high, and the necessity for applying the CEFR in language teaching, learning, and assessment was significant. Overall, the findings indicate that stakeholders, such as teachers and curriculum authors, require CEFR training implications, and additional research is also recommended.

Keyword : implementation, challenge, need, EFL teachers, The Common European Framework of Reference for language, teaching learning and assessing (CEFR)

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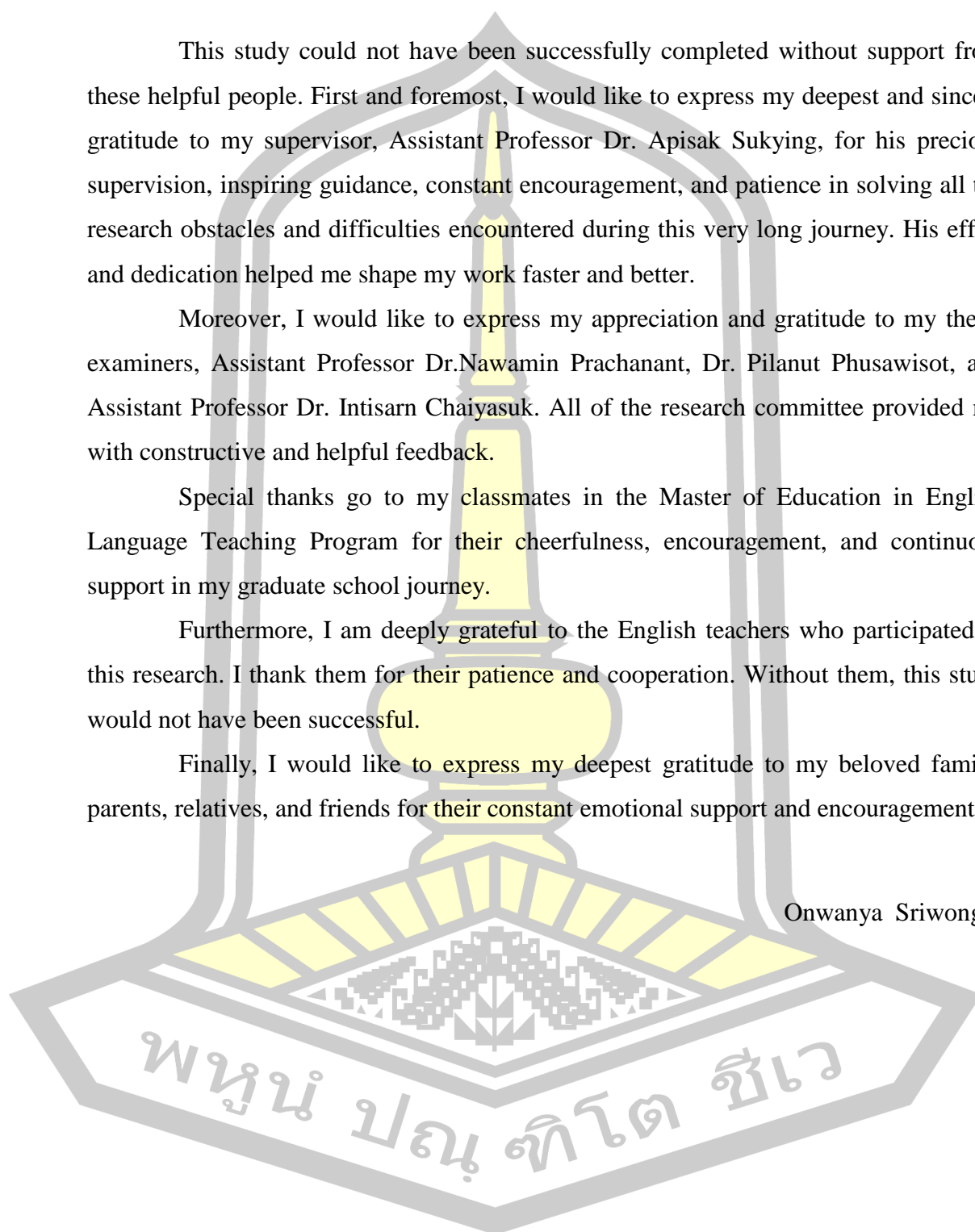
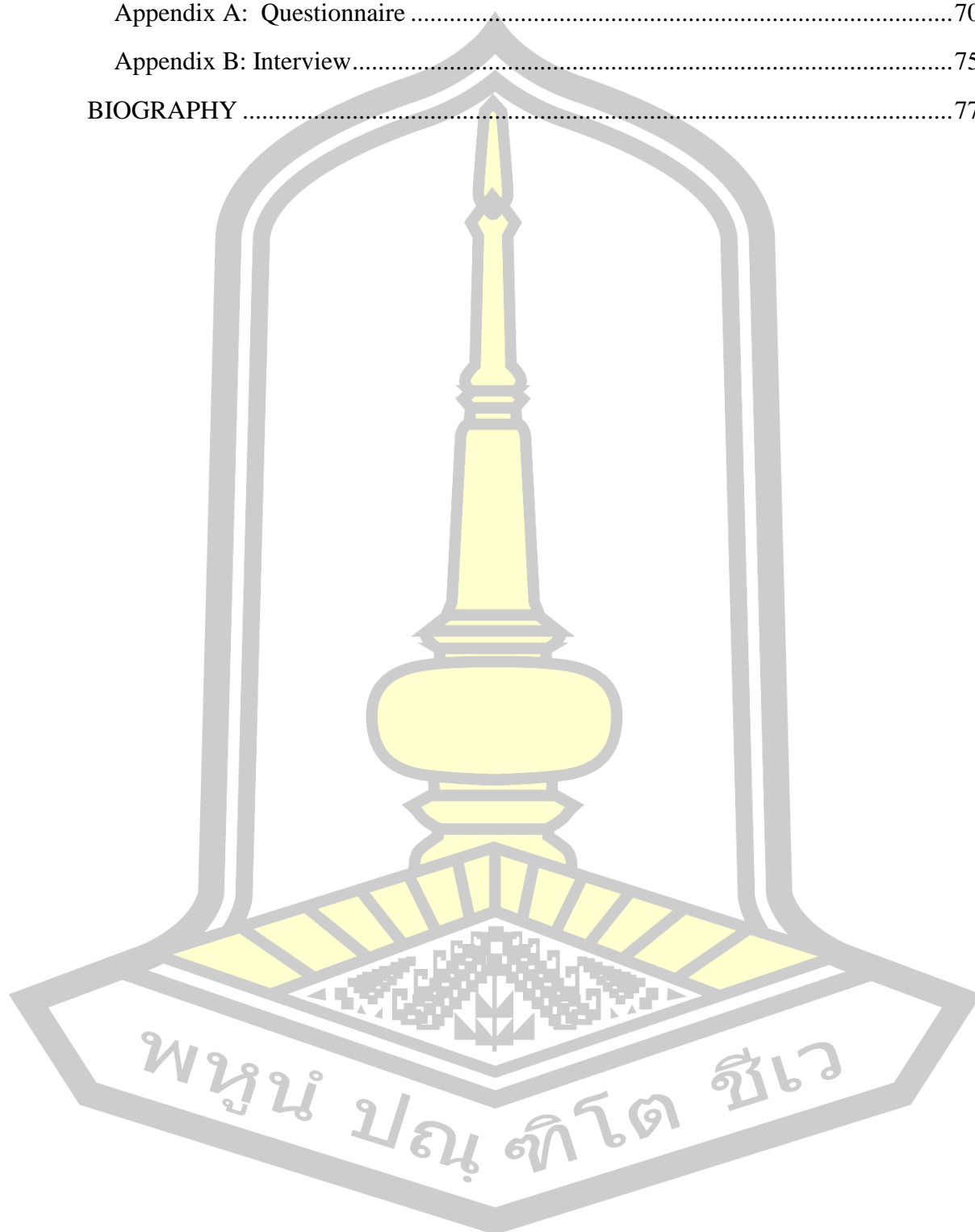


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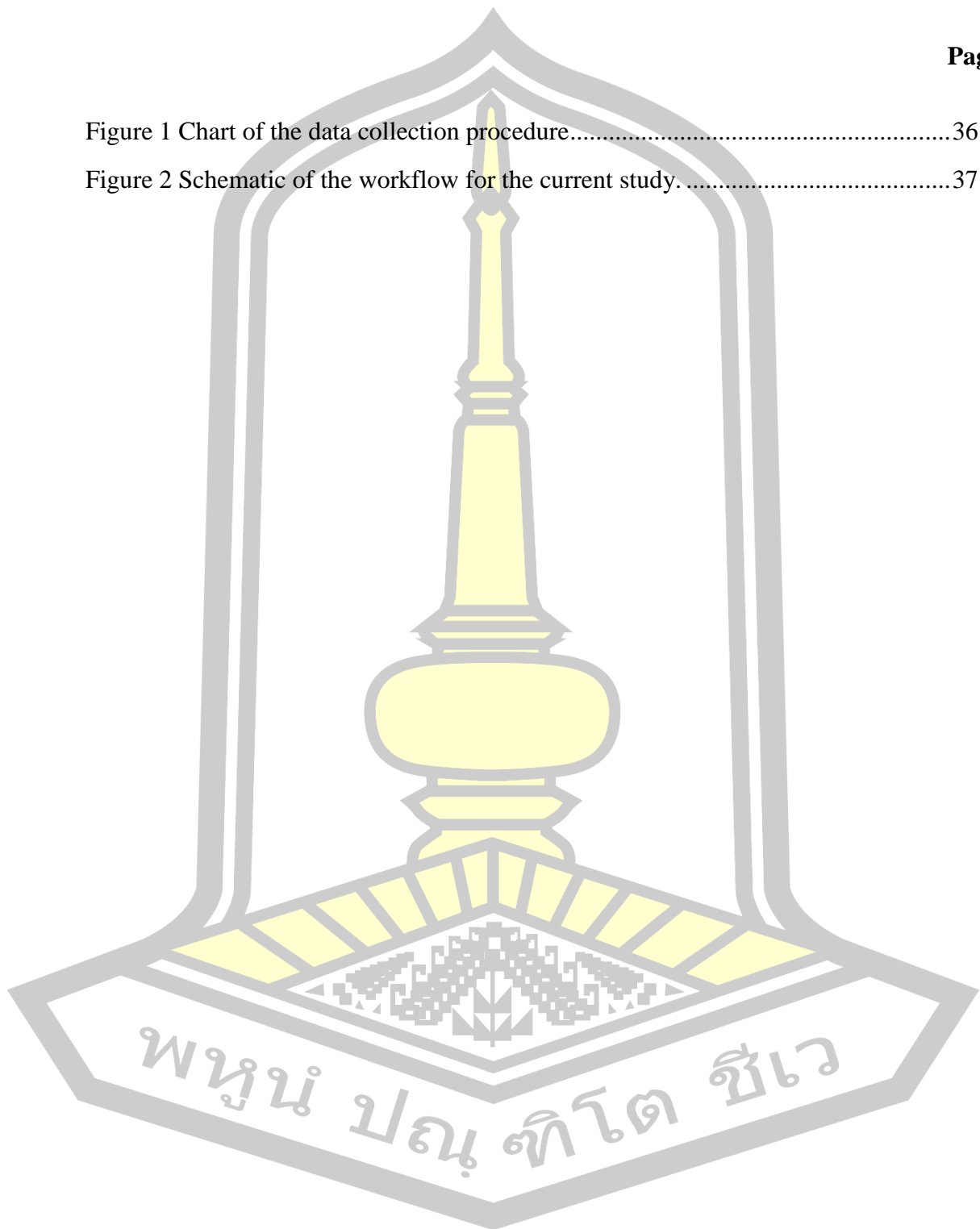


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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

English is a global language and a vital tool for communicating with the international community. English is also the language used to share information and disseminate knowledge in a variety of fields. Consequently, there is a growing need in numerous nations to improve the English language skills and understanding of the local populace. Numerous nations are concerned about setting worldwide benchmarks for English language instruction standards. The benchmarks are the global standard way for testing language competency, particularly in English, and they suggest the level a test user will attain.

The significance of English proficiency is simply too obvious to be ignored, as it is not only one of the primary goals and expected outcomes of English language teaching and learning but also serves as the foundation for the initial development of the English curriculum, which will be the basis for future enhancements. Frequently, English proficiency is also employed to some extent as a measure of the success of a language program or school, as well as a person's standard linguistic competence to carry out particular responsibilities or achieve specific objectives (e.g., studying overseas, tour guide, etc.). In the literature, the majority of research in the field of English proficiency investigates the relationships between English proficiency, which includes listening, reading, speaking, and writing, and other aspects, such as academics (e.g., Stoffelsma & Spooren, 2018), business/employment (Blake, Mcleod, Verdon, & Fuller, 2018), and health (e.g., Blake, Mcleod, Verdon, & Fuller, 2018). (e.g., Murphy, Smock, Hunter-Adams, Xuan, Cochran, Paasche-Orlow, & Geltman, 2018).

The Common European Reference Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment (CEFR), developed by the Council of Europe (CoE) in 2001, is a common reference document for language learning, teaching, and assessment of European languages (Ahn, 2015; University of Cambridge, 2001). The CEFR was proposed to establish an international standard for foreign language

education to address the needs of academics, language learners, and other related fields, including language pedagogy, learning, and assessment. The CEFR is a hands-on guideline for users to reflect on their pedagogical practice using this document as a reference across Europe. In other words, the CEFR comprises the guiding criteria for language curriculum design, course syllabus development, language testing and assessment, teaching material development, and other relevant areas of language education. More specifically, the sub-titles of the 2001 volume are concerned with the processes and goals of language teaching, learning, and assessment of the learning outcomes.

The CEFR has been generally adopted in language learning, teaching, and assessment across Europe and beyond. For example, many textbooks and language courses are targeted at a particular CEFR level, and specific CEFR levels are used as language proficiency requirements for entry into higher education and professional certification. Regarding assessment, several educational institutions, both government and non-government organizations, now label their language tests and report test results in terms of CEFR levels. In Thailand, the Ministry of Education (MoE) introduced the CEFR in 2014 to be adopted as a practical manual for teaching English in the context of Thailand. According to MoE (2014), the aim was to adjust traditional English teaching to Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) to enhance the English learners' ability to communicate effectively at all education levels in Thailand. The practitioners need to acquire a second language similar to their first language acquisition by listening, then speaking, reading, and writing. Moreover, all Thai stakeholders need to pass an English proficiency test. That is, English teachers who teach at the primary level need to reach B1 and B2 levels for secondary teachers, and non-English teachers have to gain at least the A2 level. Students must also achieve an A1 level for primary grade nine graduates and a B1 for grade 12 graduates. Therefore, understanding the CEFR framework will provide a clearer picture of the development of school curricula, syllabuses, teaching methodologies, and assessments for practitioners.

A plethora of studies have shown the global influence of the CEFR framework, including how the implementation is achieved in practice or what the systematic factors are within specific contexts. For example, Sandhakumarin & Tan

(2023) investigated ESL teachers' views on the implementation of CEFR in reading skills. Besides that, the findings of the study will be able to identify the issues or challenges currently arising in teaching reading skills. Data for this study was gathered through an online survey that was participated in by 42 primary ESL teachers from Negeri Sembilan. The findings revealed that primary ESL teachers have mixed views on the applicability of implementing CEFR in reading skills. Although the findings suggest that CEFR improves ESL learners' reading skills, the results revealed a need to adapt and modify CEFR-related reading texts to fit in the Malaysian context with a local touch. Another study by Alih & Yusof (2021) investigated the challenges encountered by English language teachers in implementing the CEFR in their classrooms. Data for this study were collected from questionnaires gathered from 117 English language teachers in primary schools in Johor Bahru district. The findings revealed the challenges were related to teachers' English language proficiency level, designing class activities, students' participation in class, the textbooks used, teachers' workload, and students' proficiency level. The challenges were interrelated and could be traced to a lack of CEFR-related training, insufficient teaching and learning materials, constraints of time, and the policy that does not allow students to be streamed based on their proficiency level. A recent study investigated teachers' Perceptions of Implementing Common European Framework Reference (CEFR) in an ESL Classroom. This study was conducted among 105 English teachers from Sibu, Sarawak. The questionnaire is used for data collection with a 6 Likert scale through Google Forms. The result shows that English teachers are responding positively to implementing CEFR. However, teachers have encountered challenges during the administration of CEFR, including lack of materials, students' familiarity, and new approach familiarity (Khair & Shah, 2021).

In Thailand, only a few studies have explored the enactment of the CEFR framework. For example, Phoolaikao, W., & Sukying, A. (2021) investigated preservice English teachers' perceptions of the CEFR in a Thai context. A total of 200 fourth and fifth-year preservice English teachers participated in this study. A mixed-method design was used to collect data via seven-point Likert scale questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. The quantitative findings revealed that the

participants had a high level of understanding of the CEFR, specifically in the assessment domain and the development of reference-level descriptions. By contrast, the qualitative data revealed that Thai preservice teachers have little knowledge of the CEFR, and their understanding of the CEFR was quite limited. Nevertheless, Thai preservice teachers expressed positive views regarding the implementation of the CEFR into classroom practice. Overall, these findings indicate that the preservice English teachers had a poor understanding of the CEFR conception, which suggests that Thai stakeholders must raise awareness regarding the proper implementation of the CEFR and its alignment with the national curriculum. Another study by Thebporn Kanchai (2019) investigated teachers' understanding of the CEFR and their viewpoints towards its use. This qualitative interview study aimed to investigate university instructors' viewpoints of the CEFR and their applications of this framework in their English language classrooms. Thirty-three Thai English as a Foreign Language (EFL) university lecturers (20 females and 13 males) using semi-structured interviews. The findings indicated that Thai EFL university lecturers had a reasonably good understanding of the CEFR, particularly the domains of assessment, the Common Reference Levels of language proficiency and language teaching and learning applications. However, Thai EFL lecturers have little insight into the approach underlying the CEFR, which is an action-oriented approach. The use of the CEFR in Thai EFL classrooms appeared to be associated with their understanding. Lecturers' perceptions of the influences of the CEFR on English education in Thailand were a combination of positive evaluations and concerns. Overall, these studies suggested some understanding of the CEFR from the practitioners' perspectives. However, to the best of the researcher's knowledge, there has been no attempt to examine Thai EFL high school teachers' comprehension of the CEFR and the use of the CEFR in Thai EFL classrooms, and no empirical evidence exists. This comprises Thai EFL high school teachers' difficulties and needs in implementing the CEFR in their classrooms. Therefore, the current study aimed to investigate Thai ELF teachers' implementation of the CEFR in their classroom practice and discover their challenges towards implementing CEFR in the Thai context. Such investigations would better understand practitioners' concerns and raise awareness of the CEFR amongst curriculum designers, academics, and policymakers.

1.2 Purposes of the study

The current study examined how Thai EFL teachers implemented the CEFR in Thailand. It also investigated in-service teachers' perspectives of the problems related to the CEFR. Specifically, the study aimed to address the following research questions:

1. How much do Thai EFL teachers implement the CEFR in the classroom?
2. What are the challenges in implementing the CEFR in the classroom?
3. What are Thai EFL teachers' CEFR needs for their classroom practice?

1.3 Scope of the study

This study focused on applying the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) by Thai high school English teachers in Thailand. In addition, it studied the challenges teachers had while attempting to adopt the CEFR in their classroom practice and the requirements they had for continuing their professional development. The concepts of language teaching, learning, and classroom language evaluation according to the CEFR were the primary emphasis of this study, which was conducted in government high schools in the northeastern region of Thailand.

1.4 Significance of the study

An announcement made by Thailand's Ministry of Education stated that the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) had been adopted across the country's educational institutions and was being used as a model to improve both the English language skills of students and those teaching English. This study analysed Thai English as a foreign language (EFL) high school instructors who included the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) in their teaching techniques. As a consequence of this, the findings of this study might provide diverse stakeholders with information that is useful to them. First, the current research succeeded in increasing stakeholders' awareness of the CEFR and providing a better

grasp of both this framework and its use in the context of Thai EFL. Policymakers, curriculum planners, course material designers, and test producers were all able to gain insight from this study. This study aimed to investigate how Thai EFL high school teachers applied the CEFR in their classroom practices, as well as the challenges they faced concerning language learning, teaching, and evaluation. In addition, it investigated the need for continued professional development held by Thai EFL instructors.

1.5 Definitions of key terms

Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR)

‘CEFR’ is the framework proposed by the Council of Europe as the basis for curricula related to language learning, syllabuses, qualifications, examinations, and educational materials across Europe (Council of Europe, 2001).

EFL teachers

‘EFL teachers’ were defined in this study as teachers who *taught* English as a *foreign language at the secondary level of public schools in the northeast of Thailand*.

Implementation

‘Implementation’ refers to the use, practice, or application of the CEFR.

Challenge

In this study, ‘challenge’ refers to everything associated with the CEFR that is perceived as new, difficult, and requiring substantial work and perseverance to attain.

Needs

‘Needs’ could be described as the things related to the CEFR that Thai EFL teachers who participated in this study wished to have to gain adequate knowledge of the CEFR and use it in the classroom for teaching, learning and assessment.

1.6 The organization of the thesis

The current study consists of five Chapters. Chapter 1 introduces the reader to the areas of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching and Assessment (CEFR). Chapter 1 also provides the rationale for the current study. Specifically, English teachers' implementation of the CEFR into practice, need and challenges are focused on this chapter. Moreover, the chapter summarizes the purpose and research questions of the current study. It follows with a clarification of the scope, significance, and definitions of terms of the study.

Chapter 2 reviews the theoretical frameworks of CEFR, which describes its principles, general usage, and implementation. Then, the chapter summarizes the literature and constructs related to CEFR, including definitions of CEFR, the importance of the CEFR, and criticisms of the CEFR. Besides, chapter 2 reviews the current state of the CEFR in the Thai context. Finally, Chapter 2 describes related studies on need, challenges and implementation of the CEFR in EFL and ESL contexts, including the Thai context.

Chapter 3 describes the research methodology, including the participants and setting, research method, and research instruments. Also, the chapter illustrates procedures and data analysis for both the questionnaire and interview of the study. The ethical considerations are provided in this chapter.

Chapter 4 presents the findings of the current study. The chapter reports the quantitative and qualitative data analysis of the results to respond to the research questions, how much do Thai EFL teachers implement the CEFR in the classroom, what are the challenges in implementing the CEFR in the classroom and what are Thai EFL teachers' CEFR needs for their classroom practice. Furthermore, Chapter 4 provides a preliminary discussion of the findings regarding the research, as mentioned above.

Chapter 5 illustrates a detailed discussion of the research findings and relates these results to the previous studies. Overall, the current results provide information on the need for, challenges associated with, and implementation of the CEFR in the classroom. Besides, the limitations and implications of the study and recommendations for further studies are discussed in this chapter.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter summarizes the literature about the extent to which Thai EFL teachers implement the CEFR in their classroom practice, teachers' problems, and the needs for CEFR implementation in the Thai context. The data are related to the purpose of the study. The first part begins with the CEFR. Then, it focuses on the main principles of the CEFR. Next, it describes CEFR and language teaching. Finally, part explains Problems with the CEFR. Another part is the CEFR in Thailand. The final section describes related studies on the CEFR.

2.1 Situational Reports of English Proficiency Levels

Several reports have been published on the English competence of Thais. The most recent reports were from Education First (EF) (2020), a Swedish-based education organization. Since 2011, EF has evaluated the acquisition of English skills by secondary and postsecondary students in 26 countries or regions, including 260,000 students from hundreds of partner schools and universities. However, EF's English proficiency index test measures only two English skills: reading and listening. Each proficiency band has its description.

Over the past decade, the proficiency trends for Thailand have been at the Very Low and Low Proficiency bands, indicating that 1) for Very Low Proficiency, Thai EFL students can only introduce themselves by name, age, and country of origin, understand simple signs, and provide basic directions to foreigners, and 2) for Low Proficiency, Thai EFL students can only understand simple e-mails, engage in small conversations, and enter an English-speaking country as a tourist. Based on the results, the proficiency levels of Thai EFL students have improved from very low proficiency (2011-2016) to low proficiency (2017-2019) and very low proficiency (2019-2020), as shown in Table 1; however, such progress is still insufficient to accommodate the activities of a country with a reputation for tourism and expanding international trade. Thai female EFL students did better than

their male counterparts, although their average results were still lower than those of other Asian or international nations.

Table 1 : Results of EF EPI for Thailand (2011 – 2020) compared to other countries in the world

Year	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Proficiency Band	Very low	Very low	Very low	Very low	Very low	Very low	Low	Low	Very low	Very low
Rank	42	53	55	48	62	56	53	64	74	89
Total countries	44	54	56	63	70	72	80	88	100	100

(Source: <https://www.ef.co.th/epi/regions/asia/thailand/>)

2.2 The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR)

In 2001, the Council of Europe produced the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, and Assessment (CEFR) (CoE). CEFR stands for Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (Ahn, 2015; University of Cambridge, 2001). This paradigm has rapidly assumed a preeminent position in language teaching across Europe and has had a global impact (Byram & Parmenter, 2012). Furthermore, Figueras (2012) asserted that the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) has become the world's most extensively utilized language competency framework. It has affected language policies, language instruction, and language testing globally. The evolution of the CEFR parallels fundamental shifts in language instruction, which shift away from the grammar-translation method and toward the functional and communicative approaches (Cambridge ESOL, 2011).

The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) was Europe's primary language learning method, with multiple EU languages utilized for communication (Tylor, 2014). A framework and guideline for foreign language teaching and learning, a regular test for teaching English as a foreign language, and a

global language proficiency benchmark (Cambridge English, 2016). The Council of Europe (2001) states that the CEFR should be used to standardize language teaching and learning materials and assessments. It aims to provide a transparent and complete foundation for language curricula, guidelines, teaching and learning tools, and language competence evaluations. The CEFR standardizes language courses, standards, examinations, and textbooks. Policymakers create language needs for several goals using the CEFR. Curriculum development, textbook development, and other fields use it. According to the framework, language learners need a mix of information, abilities, and competencies to communicate successfully in all circumstances.

To improve coherence and transparency in pedagogical practice, a metalanguage (or standardized pedagogical reference) was developed to build a mutual understanding of the CEFR across all European language experts (CoE, 2001). The development of this metalanguage primarily required the identification of learning objectives, which were based on the Common Reference Levels of language proficiency, and the specification of contents about the authentic communicative use of language as provided by the CEFR (North, 2014).

Another important concept was communicative language use as “language for a social purpose” (North, 2014, p. 10). Some broad teaching and learning ideas underpin the CEFR approach. This method involves chores and interaction. Language communicates meanings socially to attain learning goals. Purposeful language use improves learning (CoE, 2001). North (2014) stated that “language learning is not regarded as an academic pursuit to train brains, but as a practical skill to communicate with others” (p. 15). Thus, the CEFR encourages language action as well as language knowledge. Another term is plurilingualism:

“The ability to use languages for the purposes of communication and to take part in intercultural interaction, where a person viewed as a social agent has proficiency, of varying degrees, in several languages and experiences of several cultures” (CoE, 2001, p. 168).

Plurilingualism is the learner's ability to employ a complete language repertoire to transmit meanings in a dialogue within a specific environment, condition, culture, or set of constraints. In other words, contemporary multilingualism emphasizes the dynamic use of multiple languages in social contexts. This approach also urges students to consider their ability to transfer knowledge between languages. As a result, this notion challenges language pedagogical practices that emphasize native speaker norms to welcome linguistic variety and accuracy in language use (CoE, 2001).

The concluding notion is incomplete competence. The concept of an unequal proficiency level was explained. There are three partial competency language user profiles. First, users with solid linguistic knowledge can successfully utilize communicative language activities. The second is users who can participate in a communicative language activity but have insufficient linguistic understanding. Finally, individuals have little capacity to perform in a communicative language activity but extensive linguistic understanding (Hulstijn, 2007). Consequently, the concept of partial competencies highlights the various levels of language ability among language users.

2.3 The domains of the CEFR

The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) includes four key concepts to improve language teaching and learning. These principles were accepted by the Council of Europe. CEFR's fundamental premise is its guiding philosophy. The Common Reference Levels of language competency, which are grouped into six levels, constitute the second premise. Another principle is language instruction and acquisition. The final principle includes evaluation. The four CEFR concepts are depicted in Table 2.

Table 2 : The main domains of the CEFR (Khanchai, 2018.)

The principles of CEFR			
The underlying approach of CEFR	Common Reference Levels of Language Proficiency	Language teaching and learning	Assessment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An action-oriented approach • The Communicative language uses • Communicative language competences • Language activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reception (listening and reading) - Production (writing and speaking) - Interaction (discussion and conversation) - Mediation (interpretation and translation) • The contexts of language use <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Public domain - Personal domain - Occupational domain - Educational domain • Language strategies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The levels of language proficiency or language development: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Basic user (A1 and A2) - Proficient user (B1 and B2) - Independent user (C1 and C2) • The descriptors or can-do statements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to establish learning objectives to improve individuals' competences for communication • How to facilitate the process of language learning or acquisition. • Respective roles of framework users in facilitating language learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The main intended functions of the framework in the assessment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The specification of a test's content - Judgment criteria - Comparison among tests • Feasibility in assessment

2.3.1 The underlying approach of the CEFR

According to CoE (2001), the CEFR technique was action-oriented. A fundamental principle, an action-oriented approach, expands to another. The user employs competence to attain results in this approach to all social agents as language. Language use for skill development. The communicative language competences include linguistics, sociolinguistics, and pragmatics. Language competency requires language knowledge. Sociolinguistic competence adapts to language conventions, while pragmatic competence is social language use.

CoE (2001) classified language use contexts as public, personal, occupational, and educational. Public speech is utilized in everyday situations. The personal area is the users' practice language. The occupational area is the language used in each occupation, and the educational area is the language in training. For extras, focus on language. Reflect on reception (hearing and reading), production (spoken and written), engagement (discussion and conversation), and mediation (interpretation and translation). Language techniques are the final component—communicative language tasks and approaches.

The concluding CEFR technique is an action-oriented approach that focuses on language competences, including linguistics, sociolinguistics, and pragmatics. It categorizes language use into public, personal, occupational, and educational contexts, with extras focusing on reception, production, engagement, and mediation. The final component is communicative language tasks and approaches.

2.3.2 The Common Reference Levels of Language Proficiency

The Common Reference Levels of language proficiency are a six-level scale (A1-C2), used to explain language learning or how language learning progression is developed. CoE (2001) mentioned that these six levels were used as a reference document of language education regarding learning objectives, curriculum development, textbook selection, and tests. The Common Reference Levels of language proficiency are illustrated as six proficiency levels, ranging from *the Basic user*, *Independent user*, and *Proficiency user* (CoE, 2001). Table 2 indicates the six Levels of language proficiency descriptors.

Table 3 : The six Levels of language proficiency descriptors (Council of Europe, 2001)

Basic user	A1	Can understand and use familiar everyday expressions and very basic phrases to satisfy the needs of a concrete type. Can introduce herself and others and ask and answer questions about personal details such as where he lives, people he/she knows, and things he/she has. Can interact in a simple way provided the other person talks slowly, clearly, and is prepared to help.
	A2	Can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to most immediate relevance (e.g., very basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment). Can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters. Can describe in simple terms aspects of his/her background, immediate environment, and matters in need.
Independent user	B1	Can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. Can deal with most situations likely to arise while traveling in an area where the language is spoken. Can produce simple connected text on topics, which are familiar, or of personal interest. Can describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes & ambitions and briefly explain opinions and plans.
	B2	Can understand the main ideas of complex text on both traditional and abstract topics, including technical discussions in his/her field of specialization. Can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible without strain for either party. Can produce clear, detailed texts on a wide range of subjects and explain a viewpoint on a topic giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.
Proficient user	C1	Can understand a wide range of demanding, longer texts, and recognize implicit meaning. Can express herself fluently and spontaneously without obvious pauses when searching for expressions. Can use language flexibly and effectively for social, academic, and professional purposes. Can produce clear, well-structured, detailed texts on complex subjects, showing controlled use of organizational patterns, connectors, and cohesive devices.

Table 3 : (continued)

Proficient user	C2	Can understand with ease virtually everything heard or read. Can summarise information from different spoken and written sources, reconstructing arguments and accounts in a coherent presentation. Can express herself spontaneously, very fluently and precisely, differentiating finer shades of meaning even in more complex situations.
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The descriptors in A1 and A2 levels relate to the simple phrases and sentences about their life. In C1 and C2, descriptors conclude more complex use of language. All users, especially teachers and learners, can use this scale for their language curricula and construct learning objectives. Also, assessment was used to develop standard examinations in their language tests.

2.3.3 Language teaching and learning

The Cambridge ESOL (2011) stated that language teaching is successful when it emphasizes the beneficial outcomes of language learning. The CEFR framework allows language teaching to focus on the strengths and weaknesses of the learners and encourages them to achieve the goals. Two approaches are used to implement CEFR in the classroom, the communicative approach and a plurilingual approach. These approaches emphasize purposeful communication and the development of good language learning skills (CoE, 2016). The Council of Europe (2001) defined the communicative approach as learning a language successfully by having meaningful communication in a real context. For example, the business of everyday life, exchanging information and ideas. This approach is based on two concepts, including tasks and interaction. Language use is perceived as purposeful, involving the communication of meaning, which is essential for language users to achieve their goals. The Council of Europe (2001) also noted that language learning would be more effective when language is used purposefully. Hence, when using the CEFR in classroom practice for teaching and lesson planning, the teachers or lesson plan writers should highlight the tasks and interactions based on the needs, motivations, and characteristics of the learners' communication. Another approach of

the CEFR is plurilingualism, which has played an important role in the Council of Europe's approach to language learning. The concept of plurilingual competence is the ability to use more than one language and cultural resources to communicate with people from different contexts. The plurilingual perspective emphasizes centers upon language learners and the development of their individual repertoire, not each specific language to be learned (CoE, 2001). As such, lesson plans based on the plurilingual approach need to emphasize learners' language experiences in their cultural context. Teachers should, therefore, provide the learners with more opportunities to improve plurilingual competence.

2.3.4 Assessment

These principles involved assessment and practice. In assessment, the CEFR supports three main goals. The first section specify test content. Links language, techniques, and tasks. The second is using the framework to state assessment learning objectives. Teachers embrace descriptor-based assessment. Last is summarizing learning outcomes and comparing assessments utilizing the framework. This framework describes test proficiency levels and comparisons among competence systems.

CoE (2001) noted that the CEFR prioritizes assessment development feasibility. A social context practice exam and an acceptable evaluation criterion simplify the feasible assessment. Teacher performance evaluations, assessment style, and curriculum requirements must be critical. Combining and reducing the CEFR into assessment criteria relevant to learners and culture is necessary.

2.4 The CEFR and Language Teaching

The Council of Europe (2001) explained the significance of the CEFR as eliminating the different educational systems in Europe, providing the means for academic administrators, teachers, and course designs, providing a comprehensive description of what skills and knowledge language learners have to develop to communicate effectively, and enhancing the transparency of syllabuses and course by providing an everyday basis for the explicit description of objectives, method, and contents. The CEFR introduced a general model of language use based on an action-

oriented approach. Communicative language activities, such as reception, production, interaction, and mediation, replace the four traditional skills. The Council of Europe (2001) mentioned that the CEFR offers detailed descriptors for the four language skills.

2.4.1 CEFR and the teaching of listening

Learners need English listening abilities to understand and master messages. Daily listening can be improved by casual and focused listening. This is how we interpret people's messages. Teachers could consider scenarios or contexts when choosing content and constructing engaging listening activities by considering two things: Situational listening: Real listening situations in the classroom, such as teacher commands, lesson conversation, and radio and TV shows, should be used. Pre-listening, while-listening, and post-listening are listening actions. The teacher may use a picture or picture answers to help students acquire contextual comprehension before listening to a message. Learners practice while listening to a message. It practices listening comprehension. After practicing listening exercises like writing, post-listening encourages pupils to use the language. Now is the time to explain Table 4's listening ranks.

Table 4 : Bank of descriptors – as listening level

A 1	Can remember familiar words and very basic phrases
A 2	Can understand frequency vocabulary related to personal information, Can catch the main idea in messages
B 1	Can understand the keywords of clear standard speech Can understand the main point of the TV program
B 2	Can understand extended speech Can understand the great number of films in standard dialect
C 1	Can understand extended even when it is not structured Can understand television program without too much effort
C 2	Have no difficulty in understanding kind of spoken language

2.4.2 CEFR and the teaching of reading

Reading is communicating knowledge through the author and the reader, with the reader's understanding of symbols, marks, pictures, sentences, texts, letters, words, and written text with observation and consideration. It is a process of interaction and interpretation between learners and readers.

Reading can be divided into two types;

- Oral reading is reading to practice accuracy and fluency.
- Silent reading is reading to recognize and understand what is read, which is a purposeful reading such as skimming, scanning, surveying, and intensive reading.

Designing activities to promote reading skills are divided into three activities;

1. Pre-reading activities to construct interesting and provide a foundation of reading knowledge. There are two steps personalization and predicting.

While reading activities; to construct an understanding of the structure and content. This activity practices in terms of reading comprehension, such as questioning, predicting, clarifying, and summarizing.

2. Post-reading activities: activities' goals required students to practice using language in a relational skill. Additionally, reading, listening, speaking, and writing. Ask students to ask questions about the story and work together to find answers. Students should be trained to express their opinions and summary of information gained from reading. Teaching methods should focus on meaningful communication.

Techniques of the activities consist of information gap, problem-solving, and information transfer. At this point, it is suitable to explain the rankings of reading in Table 5.

Table 5 : Bank of descriptors – as reading level

A 1	Can understand close to words and very simple sentences
A 2	Can read simple texts Can find specific information
B 1	Can understand the text of job-related language Can understand the description of events
B 2	Can read articles and reports concerning problems Can understand contemporary literary prose
C 1	Can understand long and complex literary texts Can understand specialized articles
C 2	Can read with ease virtually all forms of the written language

2.4.3 CEFR and the teaching of speaking

Speaking involves conveying perspectives, experiences, and needs to the listener using tone, vocabulary, and gestures. Speaking is essential for everyday communication and teaching other languages. Speaking involves face-to-face interaction.

To structure spoken English instruction, it should be appropriate. The programs increased pupils' speaking skills from manageable too difficult to minimize anxiety. Teaching English speaking involves telling, showing, practicing, and transferring language. Examples: role-play, presentation, and demonstration. Now is the time to explain Table 6's speaking rankings.

Table 6 : Bank of descriptors – as speaking level

A 1	Can interact simply to repeat Can ask and answer simple questions. Can use simple phrases to describe yourself
A 2	Can communicate direct exchange of information on familiar topics Can handle short social exchanges. Can use a series of sentences to explain in simple terms
B 1	Can deal with situations Can enter unprepared into conversation on points that are familiar Can commonly connect phrases to explain experiences

Table 7 : (continued)

B 2	Can interact with native speakers
	Can take an active part in a discussion
	Can present detailed descriptions
	Can explain a viewpoint on a topical issue
C 1	Can express me fluently through expressions
	Can use language flexibly and effectively for social
	Can present clear, detailed descriptions of complex topics
C 2	Can participate effortlessly in any conversation or discussion
	Can present a clear style proper to the text

2.4.4 CEFR and the teaching of writing

Writing uses symbolic characters to express the writer's thoughts. To communicate effectively, the writer must organize thoughts using structure and syntax. Content, layout, writing style, and mechanics should be considered when teaching. Writing teaching has four traits. Mechanical copying involves copying words, sentences, or messages. Students will practice spelling, sentence structure, and mental reading while copying. Controlled writing practice emphasizes pattern accuracy. Writing exercises include copying, gap filling, reordering words, modifying word forms, and replacement tables. Less-controlled writing gives pupils more freedom to write. The teacher outlined a framework or pattern and had pupils finish the missing element. Conjoining sentences, describing persons, writing questions and answers, parallel writing, and dictation are examples. Free writing is uncontrolled writing. In this technique, the teacher simply defines the subject or setting, and students compose stories based on their ideas. Student writing skills are fully developed with this strategy. These include writing about yourself, family, and friends, and table 7's daily activities.

Table 8 : Bank of descriptors – as of writing level

A 1	Can write a simple postcard Can fill in forms with personal details
A 2	Can write short messages relating to needs Can write a very simple personal letter
B 1	Can write simple connected text on topics Can write personal letters describing experiences
B 2	Can write clear details related to my interests Can write an essay or report
C 1	Can expressing points of view at some length Can write about complex topics in the letter Can select style proper to the reader
C 2	Can write letters Can summarize and review of literary works

2.5 Problems with the CEFR

The CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages) is a set of guidelines that describes the levels of language proficiency for learners of foreign languages. It is widely used in Europe and other parts of the world as a standard for teaching, learning, and assessing languages. The CEFR has been criticized for implementation issues. First, each Common Reference Level stage's descriptions lack theoretical validity (Fulcher, 2004; Little, 2007; North, 2007, 2014). SLA theory is not used to create CEFR descriptors. During descriptor development, European language teachers chose which ones were supposed to simplify proficiency. These are "scaled teacher descriptors." Another issue with descriptors is readability. Complex, abstract, and convoluted, the CEFR may mislead non-Europeans (Byrnes, 2007). The CEFR's illustrative descriptors are excessively general, making interpretation and application difficult (Green, 2012). After more investigation, descriptors may explain a complicated, dynamic process when learners participate in conversations. Users find descriptors unfriendly (Figueras, 2012; Komorowska, 2004; North, 2009).

Illustrative descriptors are challenging for assessments (North, 2014). Since CEFR descriptors are challenging, implementing them for assessment depends on assessor consideration and biased interpretations, making them ineffective. Likewise, criticism helps. Since the CEFR has been implemented in many nations, it may have had a political effect. Fulcher (2010) remarked that the CEFR promotes language instruction politically rather than merely referencing it. A more extreme critique is that the CEFR is a power weapon, and people always want to utilize it (McNamara & Roever, 2006; McNamara, 2011; Fulcher, 2010).

However, the CEFR implementation is not without problems. Some of the challenges and criticisms that have been raised. Firstly, the CEFR is too vague and general, and does not provide clear criteria or descriptors for each level of proficiency. This can lead to inconsistency and subjectivity in the evaluation of learners' performance and progress. Next, the CEFR is too Eurocentric and does not reflect the linguistic and cultural diversity of the world. It assumes that all languages have similar structures and functions, and that learners have similar goals and needs. This can result in a lack of relevance and validity for learners of different languages and contexts. Then, the CEFR is too rigid and prescriptive, and does not allow for flexibility and adaptation to different situations and purposes. It imposes a fixed and linear model of language learning, and does not account for the dynamic and complex nature of language use and development and the CEFR is too influential and dominant, and does not encourage critical reflection and innovation in language education. It has become a powerful tool for policy-making and standardization, and has reduced the autonomy and creativity of teachers and learners.

2.6 The CEFR in Thailand

The CEFR entered Thai education in 2014 and advanced in 2015. Table 8 shows Thai students' English language competency goals from the Ministry of Education.

Table 9 : English language proficiency targets for students in Thailand

Pratom 6 (Grade 6)	should have reached A1 proficiency
Mathayom 3 (Grade 9)	should have reached A2 proficiency
Mathayom 6 (Grade 12)	should have reached B1 proficiency

CEFR implementation is a step forward with several hurdles. Thailand's poor record of implementing educational change raises concerns that it could follow other well-known but poorly implemented educational innovations, such as student-centered learning in 1999. Some teachers and schools don't know what the CEFR is. Teachers in this effort will fail to adopt the CEFR without ongoing support. Some have used the Common European Framework to assess English instructors' competence in government schools.

The Thai MoE established communicative language skills evaluations if it adopted a framework. The MoE uses O-NETs to assess students' language skills. However, these multiple-choice tests only assessed grammar, vocabulary, and reading comprehension. The CEFR criteria state that B1 learners can compose letters and notes using information, vocally communicate using a comprehensive level of language to handle most circumstances and understand the basic idea of common topics in job, study, and leisure. Multiple-choice tests cannot evaluate such talents. New national exams to examine reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills are needed to quantify pupils' CEFR progress effectively. Any new evaluation must be flexible enough for kids to exhibit independent communication. The test must resemble IELTS, TOEIC, or Cambridge English. If the Thai MoE created a new language assessment, it would change language learning in Thailand.

Thailand's high-stakes tests focus on grammar and syntax multiple-choice. Students spend hours studying these things instead of mastering communication. Communication tests will motivate schools, teachers, and students to focus on these practical skills. Thai MoE is new to CEFR. Despite being conceived and applied in Europe for a long time, it was first brought to Thai education in 2014. When the AEC's current issue affects all Thai educational development sectors, the government and Thai MoE are just learning about a new English teaching and learning method.

Implementing the CEFR starts major changes. Minister Chaturon Chaisaeng remarked, "If schools put the CEFR into practice properly, I believe Thai students' English skills will be modified, and pupils may compete with foreign students in other countries." He also noted that many students were illiterate and had inadequate English abilities (Intathep, 2014). The ministerial declaration on English learning and teaching reform in 2014 became a clear framework for the growth of national English-language education because of public concern about education quality and students' low English proficiency in Thailand (MoE, 2014).

Since 2014, Thailand has used the CEFR to conceptualize English teaching and learning at any level and purpose (Anantapol, Keeratikorntanayod & Chobphon, 2018). The Framework guides curriculum, proficiency tests, evaluation, and teacher development. The CEFR helps schools and universities assess students' English proficiency. The CEFR encourages further innovations, such as emphasis on Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), which replaced grammar and informational technology. To help struggling students improve their English, schools and institutions should offer extra-English activities. Since the Thai MoE introduced the CEFR, schools must quickly integrate its Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) elements. CLT has taught English in Thailand for years (Saengboon, 2002, cited in Teng & Sinwongsuwat, 2015). The Thai Ministry of Education (2014) presents CEFR in English teaching reform guidelines to improve Thai students' English proficiency and education quality:

1. Implement CEFR in teaching and learning English to designate the curriculum, tests, evaluation, and teacher development.
2. Enhancing Communicative Language Teaching is more crucial than outdated, grammatically based teaching and learning methods.
3. Encouraging Teaching English based on benchmarks of the CEFR, although schools can employ different teaching techniques and styles.
4. Boosting up English proficiency in schools by implementing these essential solutions.

- Offering different programs responding to the needs of different kinds of learners: English Program (EP), Mini English Program (MEP), International

Program (IP), English Bilingual Education (EBE), and English for Integrated Studies (EIS) must be set up.

- Designing language classes based on certain characteristics with learning skills, social skills, academic skills, and communicative skills.

- Providing the atmosphere and activities that encourage using English, such as joining a camp and launching campaigns on English learning environments such as English Literacy Day, English Zone, English Corner, etc.

- Including conversation courses in English in the general curriculum.

5. Focusing on CLT and teacher development, improving the quality of managing, teaching, and learning.

6. Utilizing Information Technology as a significant tool to develop the quality of both teachers and students.

For students, in the wake of low English proficiency, the implementation of the CEFR is divided into six levels and implemented in the system of Thai education (The Ministry of Education, 2014) followed by Table 9 :

Table 10 : Six levels implemented to the system of Thai education (Ministry of Education, 2014)

A1	equal to the proficiency of primary school students.
A2	equal to the proficiency of junior high school students.
B1	equal to the proficiency of senior high school students.
B2	equal to the proficiency of university students.
C1	equal to the proficiency of English speakers.
C2	equal to the proficiency of English speakers.

For teachers intending to reform the quality of education and the English teachers, The Thai Ministry of Education has also set up the following guidelines for the schools and the Office of Educational Service Area in every region as the next major steps:

- To survey and assess levels of teacher's English proficiency,
- To develop, follow up, and assist teachers in increasing the quality of teaching and learning,
- To construct a mechanism for increasing the effectiveness of teaching and learning,
- To give channels for testing teacher's English proficiency.

These processes ensure that English teachers meet the requirements and improve their English. Under government policy, the Office of Basic Education Commission (MoE, 2014) has categorized English competency into six tiers for English teachers based on CEFR benchmarks. Ms. Watanaporn Rangubtook, director of the Office of the Basic Education Commission, insists that all English teachers in the basic educational system take the CEFR assessment test to measure their English competence (Intatthep, 2014). English teachers must be at least one level above their students. The minimal level of primary school English teachers is A2, whereas senior high school English teachers must be B2.

2.7 Studies on the CEFR

Researchers and educational institutions have been continuously conducting several research and studies on English language proficiency tests, mainly for the development of teaching, learning, and assessing levels of English language proficiency. Implementing the research outcomes as guidelines and suggestions for developing curriculum and managing education systems, also play prominent roles.

2.7.1 Global context

Sandhakumarin & Tan (2023) examined ESL instructors' CEFR reading skill implementation opinions. Additionally, the study will highlight present reading skill teaching concerns and challenges. This study used an online poll of 42 Negeri

Sembilan primary ESL teachers. The results showed that elementary ESL teachers have conflicting opinions on CEFR's application to reading. The results showed that CEFR enhances ESL learners' reading skills, but they also showed that CEFR-related reading texts need to be localized to Malaysia.

Alih & Yusof (2021) examined English language instructors' CEFR implementation issues. This study included questionnaires from 117 Johor Bahru primary school English language instructors. The hurdles were teachers' English language competency, class activity design, student involvement, textbooks, workload, and proficiency level. Lack of CEFR-related training, insufficient teaching and learning resources, time constraints, and the policy that does not allow students to be streamed by competency level were shown to be interrelated.

Khair & Shah (2021) examined ESL teachers' CEFR implementation perceptions. This survey included 105 Sibuloh, Sarawak English teachers. Google Forms collects data using a 6-point Likert scale questionnaire. English teachers respond well to CEFR adoption. Teachers face issues administering CEFR, including lack of materials, student familiarity, and new approach familiarity.

Wanna, Tilahun, & Pawlos (2018) assessed Dilla University first-year students' English proficiency. The study evaluated Dilla University first-year students' English proficiency. The statistics covered all 2014–2015 Dilla University freshmen. Three hundred sixty-eight subjects were chosen. They all took a proficiency test. Scores ranked subjects into three proficiency levels. Nine participants representing skill levels were chosen for an oral competency test. The subjects' EnLa 1011 scores were also used to calculate proficiency score correlations. Data analysis uses percentages, correlation coefficients, and determination coefficients. Most subjects (81.5%) had low proficiency. Some (16%) had average proficiency, while 1.6 percent had exceptional proficiency. Most (81%) were frustrated with their reading skills. Some (3%) were independent readers, whereas 16% were instructive readers. Recommendations advised that the Ministry of Education and Dilla University collaborate to solve the situation.

Uri & Abd Aziz (2018) examined Malaysian English teachers and Ministry of Education officials' CEFR implementation viewpoints. It also investigated stakeholder problems related to CEFR adoption in Form 5 English syllabus and

evaluation. This study used surveys from 331 English secondary school teachers and in-depth interviews with two senior ministry officials. The data showed that most teachers had little CEFR knowledge, exposure, or awareness. However, they were positive and believed the framework was necessary to boost Malaysian English competence. Despite hurdles, ministry officials liked the execution strategy. This study found that instructors' resistance, lack of training, and negative perception that CEFR would be difficult to implement are major problems. In conclusion, Malaysia must embrace CEFR, but the ministry should give stakeholders enough time to prepare and become familiar with the framework before implementing it widely.

Franz and Teo (2017) conducted a social experiment on state secondary school ESL instructors' attitudes toward ESL reform. Research methods included grounded theory, semi-structured interviews, questionnaires, in-depth interviews, and document analysis. The CEFR is an English test for language teachers but not in classrooms or assessments. Survey results reflect teachers' "indifference and ignorance of the policy" about its knowledge and appreciation. Nguyen (2016) explored the issues of applying national competence standards with ethnic minority students at Tay Bac University. The minority of students had difficulties due to their tri-language barrier, low English background level, negative attitudes, lack of learning motivations, poor and inflexible learning strategies, inactiveness, and over-anxiety in English learning, challenging curriculum and strange textbook, teacher performance, and scant time, according to placement test, questionnaire, and interview data.

Nguyen (2015) examined educational policy, borrowing in a globalized society, a Vietnamese university CEFR case study, qualitative policy document analysis, classroom observation, and in-depth interviews. The findings suggested that adopting the CEFR could be a "quick fix" to the complex and time-consuming problem. It could improve English language education, which failed to address crucial foreign language teaching and learning concerns in Vietnam.

Chen, Mohammadi, and Benigno (2013) used the CEFR to create a vocabulary list of 8,000–9,000 words for reading and 5,000–7,000 for speaking. The association between CEFR and vocabulary was shown through language test statistics (Chen et al., 2013). Does the English language teacher education curriculum raise prospective EFL teachers' CEFR awareness? "Examined 72 prospective EFL teachers'

general teacher qualities from CEFR-specific surveys. The results showed that most participants understood and could adjust CEFR content for teaching. They could now construct learning environments for the courses, especially language skills courses. The results also suggested a foreign language curriculum for education faculties.

Michael Corrigan (2013) found that CEFR levels can be used with other tests if the findings are interpreted similarly. In some cases, they were identical. Michael Corrigan (2013) showed dependability by comparing Cambridge English First (FCE) results to an Italian exam. Kir and Sülü (2014) surveyed language teachers about CEFR. The study found that foreign language teachers needed CEFR training. Teacher training programs should focus on the CEFR to produce materials, identify objectives, improve teaching abilities, and better measure student progress. The studies also suggested training pre-service instructors.

Denies and Janssen (2011) examined the CEFR "Can-Do Statements as a Means of Self-Assessment" in light of gender and education. Over 40000 students were asked to evaluate their skill competency using the four can-do statements for the research. The study found that gender and education affected "Can-Do Statements." Thus, the interpretation of "Can-Do Statements" might become a personal or national benchmark, not established criteria. In addition, Nagai and O'Dwyer (2011) explored how the CEFR affected Japanese language learning. They said CEFR implementation has pros and cons. The CEFR effectively interpreted scores, improving foreign language proficiency through curriculum and course creation. Due to native language validity and distraction, the CEFR was suited for a specific situation. At the Universität Leipzig conference, Nick Saville (2010), University of Cambridge ESOL Examinations, presents "The CEFR: an expanding framework of reference". He said the CEFR has helped users apply for their needs. The CEFR does not represent users' performance, and its use in multiple languages and settings ensures quality.

A comprehensive review of the literature shows that most English teachers know the CEFR and have positive attitudes towards implementing CEFR in English language classrooms. However, they had limited knowledge of the CEFR conception, which affected the application of the framework in real contexts, especially implement the CEFR in learning and teaching. Therefore, to encourage English teachers to adapt the CEFR in natural settings, providing more guidance on

implementing the document in teaching instructions, designing test assessments, and language curriculum is essential

2.7.2 In the Thai context

Thai educational institutions have used the CEFR for curriculum design and assessment. Nevertheless, research on the CEFR in this area in Thailand is rarely found. Vanijdee (2009) created a CEFR-based online English reading exam to assess readers' skills and offer suggestions before the Ministry of Education announcement. To verify the test's quality and identify common faults, 31 scholars and postgraduates provided data. The average test taker was B1. The Thailand Library Integrated System (ThaiLIS) (2017) reported only two research studies.

Phoolaikao and Sukying (2021) examined preservice English instructors' CEFR attitudes in Thailand. In this study, 200 fourth- and fifth-year preservice English instructors participated. Multi-method data collection included seven-point Likert scale questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. According to the quantitative results, participants understood the CEFR well, especially in the evaluation domain and reference level description development. In contrast, qualitative evidence showed that Thai preservice teachers had inadequate knowledge and understanding of CEFR. Nevertheless, Thai preservice teachers praised CEFR usage in the classroom. These results showed that preservice English teachers had a poor comprehension of the CEFR, suggesting that Thai stakeholders should enhance awareness of its appropriate application and alignment with the national curriculum.

Similarly, Kanchai (2019) examined teachers' CEFR knowledge and attitudes. This qualitative interview study examined university instructors' CEFR views and use in English language classrooms. Semi-structured interviews with 33 Thai EFL university lecturers (20 females, 13 males). Thai EFL university professors understood the CEFR, notably the assessment domains, Common Reference Levels of language proficiency, and language teaching and learning applications. Thai EFL teachers know nothing about the CEFR's action-oriented approach. In Thai EFL classrooms, the CEFR seems to improve understanding. Lecturers' views on the CEFR's impact on English education in Thailand were mixed.

Waluyo (2019) examined Thai first-year university students' CEFR English competency at Walailak University. This study examines Thai EFL learners' CEFR English proficiency. In July 2018, Walailak University – Test of English Competency (WU-TEP), a comprehensive university pattern test based on the Classical Test Theory (CTT) and the CEFR, tested 2248 Thai EFL learners' English proficiency. The results showed that 77.3 percent of pupils were CEFR A1 and A2 users. In Thailand, each level matches primary and junior high school pupils' abilities. This study advises revising a school-level curriculum for future improvements. Similarly, Sinlapachai, Surasin, and Augkanurakbun (2016) examined the Cambridge English Placement Test and Oxford Online Placement Test's CEFR comparable validity. Three tests correlated positively, with the Oxford Online Placement Test having the strongest correlation. The samples were 336 Chonkanyanukoon School English Program (EP) senior high school students. The average proficiency was A2.

Promduang (2016) developed an Intensive English course at Didyasarin International College (DRIC) to improve students' B1 competence and identify language skills. According to the survey, A2 students dominated the sampling group, and writing was their poorest talent. A few students moved from B1 to B2, and Everest scores rose marginally. B1 was beyond their reach. Promduang (2016) found that it improved course design to help students reach B1, which supported the MoE's announcement. According to the MoE, senior high school graduates should speak B1 English. The CEFR alignment test was acknowledged before the MoE announcement. Since there were no tangible remedies, the Frameworks measured English proficiency. Other assessment studies should be done since the strategy was proposed in 2014, which may be an embryonic stage. Public sector efforts should be increased to apply the Framework to educational institutions.

In 2016, Thitiphong Ketamon assessed southern Thai senior high school pupils' English competence using the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). Student proficiency was assessed in listening, vocabulary, grammar, and reading. Data was collected using four CEFR Assessment Test multiple-choice sets with 80 items. Five hundred kids in grades 4-6 from seven provinces were sampled, and 222 were randomly selected using the Yamane table of sampling ($\pm 5\%$). Data was created using descriptive statistics from SPSS: frequency,

percentage, mean, maximum, minimum, and standard derivation. The study found that "A2" was the international norm for English competence but was considered low. Scores averaged 42.71 (53.38 percent) from 80, with a standard deviation 13.72. Minimal and maximum were 17 and 73. Females performed slightly better than males, averaging 42.94 (53.67 percent) and 42.11. (52.63 percent).

Chongdarakul (2015) assessed the listening skills of 42,712 Basic Education Commission-supervised English instructors. Most Thai teachers (56.53 percent) had A2 levels. A total of 0.58 percent was achieved by B1 teachers who met Office of the Basic Education Commission (2014) standards. She suggested educating A1 and A2 instructors according to their competency level and doing English language consultant activities.

Overall, these studies have examined the perceptions of stakeholders, particularly teachers, regarding the CEFR framework in the education system. The findings reveal that most teachers have read the framework and adopted some domains to their classroom practice, especially the assessment domain. They also express positive attitudes towards the CEFR document. However, no study has explored the perspectives of different practitioners, particularly Thai EFL teachers in secondary schools. Accordingly, the current study aimed to investigate Thai ELF teachers' implementation of the CEFR in their classroom practice and discover their challenges towards implementing CEFR in the Thai context. This study could better understand practitioners' concerns and raise awareness of the CEFR amongst language curriculum designers and policymakers.

2.8 Summary of the Chapter

Since it promotes language teaching and learning, the CEFR has garnered global attention. The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) and its four main uses in language instruction are covered in this chapter. The chapter also analyzes CEFR literature and understudied topics that need more research. The next chapter will cover the study methodology, participants, setting, instruments, methods, data collecting, analysis, and other research designs.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODES

This chapter presents the study's research methodology, including the participants and setting, research instruments, research procedures, and data analysis. This study aims to identify Thai EFL teachers who implement the CEFR in their classroom practice, problems and needs of the CEFR application in Thailand by implementing CEFR in the Thai context and applying CEFR frameworks to English language teaching, learning, and assessment.

3.1 Participants and setting

The participants in this study included 300 Thai English teachers in the northeast of Thailand. Participants were Thai teachers who teach English as a foreign language (EFL) at secondary public schools. All participants, including 94 males and 206 females, Participants were selected using the convenience sampling technique. Convenience sampling is where the first accessible primary data source was used for the investigation without additional requirements. In other words, this sampling technique involved obtaining participants wherever the researcher could find them (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2012). The interviewees were purposively selected for the semi-structured interviews based on their willingness proposed in the survey questionnaire. The interview was conducted in native Thai to avoid the language barrier and make it comfortable for the interviewees, and the interview took about 15 minutes for each participant. They were responsible for implementing CEFR into their teaching, learning, and assessment process. All participants had at least three years of experience in English teaching.

3.2 Research instruments/techniques

3.2.1 Questionnaire

The questionnaire was constructed for this study to examine Thai EFL teachers' implementation of the CEFR in their classroom practice. To address the research questions, the researcher developed a questionnaire based on the CEFR

document in Thai and English. There are two parts of the questionnaire. The first part consisted of six questions about participant demographics, including teacher gender, age, qualification, English language teaching experiences, and experience with the CEFR. The second part included 25 seven-point Likert scale (see Table 10) items in a closed format. The 25 items focused on Thai EFL teachers' implementation of the CEFR in their classroom practice associated with the problems and needs of the CEFR application. The questions related to CEFR in English language teaching, learning, and assessment. According to Sukkamonsan (2010), the data was collected using a questionnaire. The seven-point Likert scale is shown in Table 10.

Table 10 : The seven-point Likert scale was used in the current study

Scale	Level of Agreement
7	The most strongly
6	The most
5	Slightly the most
4	Moderate
3	Slightly the least
2	The least
1	The least strong

Before the main study, the questionnaire was validated by seven experts in English language teaching, particularly in the use of CEFR in Thailand. The reliability coefficient of the questionnaire items rated below 0.7 was revised before collecting the data. The reliability of the questionnaire was also checked, indicating an acceptable degree of internal consistency (Dornyei, 2007). After that, the questionnaire was analyzed by IBM SPSS statistics 25, the reliability statistic of which was 0.948.

3.2.2 Semi-structured interviews

Semi-structured interviews were used to collect data from 10 participants after they completed the questionnaire. The first part of the interview consisted of demographic questions, and the second part related to Thai EFL teachers' implementation of the CEFR in their English language teaching, learning, and

assessment process, as well as the problems and needs associated with CEFR application. The conversation was 15-20 minutes long and was conducted after they completed the questionnaire. The interviews were audiotaped and transcribed. After the interviews, the researcher checked the transcripts by members checking, including the interviewees, peer teachers, and the researcher. Then, the researcher categorized the transcripts into three themes of the CEFR, including implementing the CEFR in their classroom practice and the problems and needs of the CEFR application in Thailand. The semi-structured interviews followed the sample questions below:

1. What do you know about the CEFR?
2. Do you think the CEFR should have a place in Thai Education?

How?

3. How do you apply the CEFR in your language teaching?
4. How does the CEFR influence English language teaching in your classroom practices?
5. What are the benefits of CEFR?
6. What are the challenges of using CEFR in Thai EFL contexts?
7. What else do you wish the government of those involved to help you with CEFR implementation in Thailand?

3.3 Data collection procedure

Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected in this study. First, a questionnaire was provided to 300 Thai English teachers in the northeast of Thailand. The questionnaire was then collected and analyzed. The semi-structured interviews were then conducted and were audio-recorded. Interviews were conducted face-to-face and lasted approximately 20 minutes per interview. After the interview, the audio recording was transcribed and analyzed. The data collection procedure is illustrated in Figure 1.

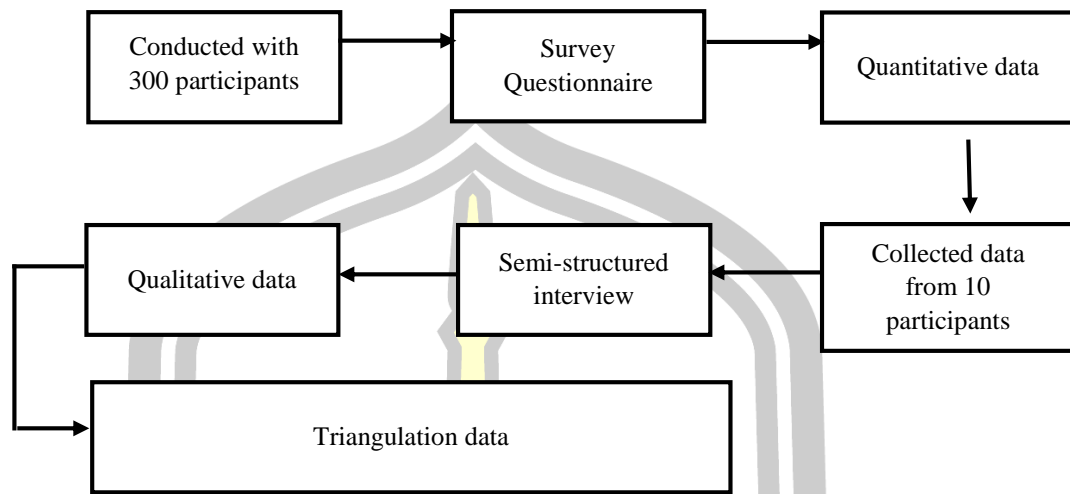


Figure 1 Chart of the data collection procedure

3.4 Data Analysis

The questionnaire and semi-structured interview data were analyzed using quantitative and qualitative methods. Specifically, quantitative data from the questionnaire was analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The quantitative data was presented with statistics, including mean, percentage and standard deviation. According to Sukkamonsan (2010), the mean range for interpreting data from a seven-point Likert scale was the following:

Scale	Mean Score	Interpretation of scale
1	0.00 – 1.50	Strongly disagree
2	1.51 – 2.50	Disagree
3	2.51 – 3.50	More or less disagree
4	3.51 – 4.50	Neutral
5	4.51 – 5.50	More or less agree
6	5.51 – 6.50	Agree
7	6.51 - 7.00	Strongly agree

The content analysis was categorized using the audio transcription into three themes. The qualitative data obtained from the semi-structured interview were emailed to the interviewees to confirm their transcribed information to validate the findings.

They were also checked by a peer teacher with background knowledge of the CEFR. Qualitative analyses allowed one to better understand the target phenomenon (Creswell 2013); in this case, the participants implemented the CEFR in their practices. The quantitative findings were collected from the 300 English teachers. They were triangulated with the qualitative interview findings to answer the research questions and provide a more in-depth understanding (Creswell, 2013).

3.5 Ethical considerations

This study was conducted according to the ethical considerations outlined by the Graduate School of Mahasarakham University, and approval was obtained from the university before data collection began. In addition, permission was requested from the school. Once ethics was obtained, the researcher introduced the study and gave an open invitation to participate in the study. A certified English-Thai translator translated the consent form into Thai and distributed it to potential participants. Finally, the participants were informed of their rights and privacy before participating in this study.

3.6 Summary of the current study

The workflow of the present study is illustrated in Figure 2.

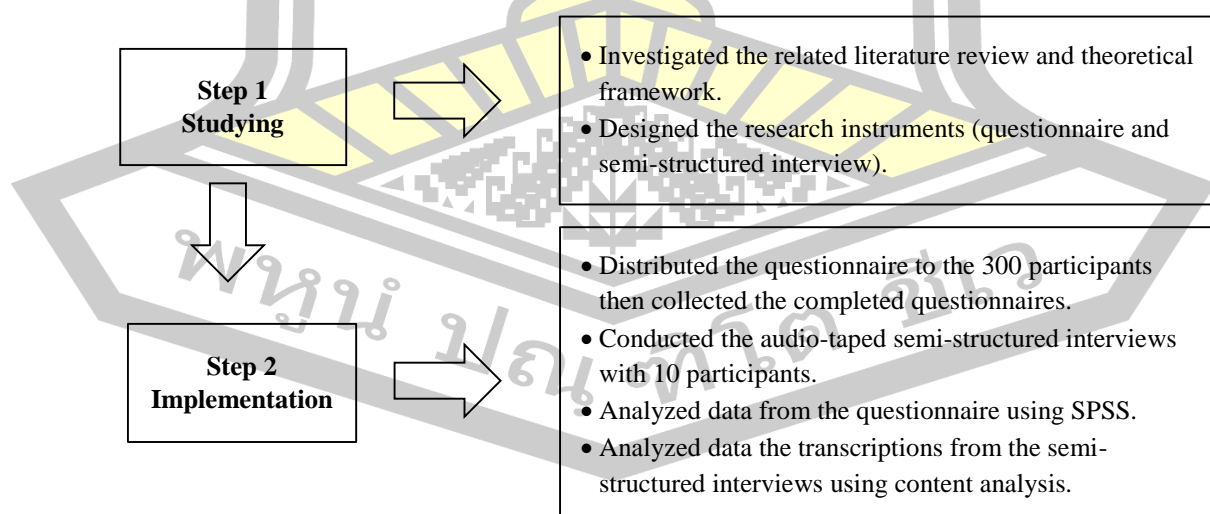


Figure 2 Schematic of the workflow for the current study.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

This chapter presents the study's findings from the questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. The questionnaire was divided into three sections. The first section presented the demographic information of the participants. The second part included seven-point Likert scale items in a closed format. The 25 items focused on Thai EFL teachers' implementation of the CEFR in their classroom practice associated with the problems and needs of the CEFR application and the questions related to CEFR in English language teaching, learning, and assessment. The third section included an open-ended question. Semi-structured interviews were used to collect data on Thai EFL teachers' implementation of the CEFR in their English language teaching, learning, and assessment process, as well as the problems and needs associated with the CEFR application.

4.1 Quantitative results: Thai ELF teacher's perspectives of the CEFR in practice

In response to determining the extent to which Thai EFL teachers implement the CEFR framework in their classroom practices, the quantitative 300 Thai EFL teachers. The data analysis indicated that Thai EFL teachers had varied perspectives of the CEFR and applied it to their classroom practices differently. The data analysis was coded and categorized into three main aspects: implementation, challenges and needs. The implementation involves the practices of the CEFR in the classroom. Such practices include language activities and language learning assessments. Challenges include difficulties and problems that teachers encountered with implementing the CEFR. Needs are related to things or issues that teachers lack and further require assistance from other stakeholders.

Table 11 : A perspectives of the CEFR in Thailand: implementation, challenges and Needs of Thai EFL Teachers. (n=300)

Items	Aspects of CEFR	Mean	%	S.D.
1	Levels of CEFR implementation in the classroom	3.82	54.51	0.85
2	Challenges of the CEFR implementation in the classroom	5.70	81.40	1.01
3	Needs for the CEFR implementation in the classroom	6.02	86.01	0.82

Table 10 summarizes the holistic picture of implementing the CEFR in Thailand from the perspective of Thai EFL teachers. The result for each of the three points is that Thai EFL teachers implement the CEFR in their teaching. The participants indicated that the Thai EFL teachers moderately implement the CEFR in their teaching practice, with an average score of 3.82 or 54.51% (S.D. 0.85). In addition, the results also showed that the challenges in implementing the CEFR in language teaching, learning, and assessment were relatively high, with a mean score of 5.70 or 81.40% (S.D. 1.01). The need to implement the CEFR in language teaching, learning, and assessment showed a high demand for implementing the CEFR in the classroom, with a mean of 6.02 or 86.01% (S.D. 0.82).

Table 12 : The CEFR in Thai EFL teachers' classroom practices (n=300)

Items	Statements	Mean	%	S.D.
1	I understand the concept of CEFR as appropriate in classroom practices	3.03	43.22	0.86
2	I focus on using the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach in your language teaching and learning.	3.18	45.46	0.90
3	I understand how to design language activities for your teaching and learning.	3.35	47.86	0.85
4	I design a curriculum and course syllabus to develop students' English skills.	3.49	49.79	0.82
5	I design lessons and materials to develop students' English skills.	3.57	50.94	0.83

Table 11 : (continued)

Items	Statements	Mean	%	S.D.
6	I design listening activities according to the CEFR concept for teaching listening in the classroom.	3.73	53.23	0.80
7	I design speaking activities according to the CEFR concept for teaching speaking in the classroom.	3.84	54.80	0.83
8	I create an atmosphere that allows students to participate in speaking activities.	3.99	56.99	0.84
9	I design reading activities according to the CEFR concept for teaching reading in the classroom.	3.97	56.78	0.84
10	I design writing activities according to the CEFR concept for teaching writing in the classroom.	4.07	58.13	0.88
11	I use pre-writing activities to practice writing skills.	4.16	59.38	0.91
12	I apply language activities to support students in reflecting on their competencies.	4.23	60.43	0.85
13	I choose a variety of activities to appropriately develop each skill.	4.34	61.94	0.83
14	I apply the concept of reference level and descriptors according to CEFR to assess students' competency.	4.49	64.18	0.81
Total		3.82	54.51	0.85

Table 11 shows the practices of the CEFR in the classroom. The analysis of the findings revealed that the practices of the CEFR at the school were considered to be somewhat moderate among Thai EFL teachers. Indeed, the results showed that Thai EFL teachers practiced the CEFR in the classroom, with an average score of 3.82 or 54.51% (S.D. 0.85). Notably, the highest score mean (4.49 or 64.18%) was observed for the statement, "Thai EFL teachers can apply the concept of reference level and descriptors according to CEFR to assess student's competency". This indicates that many Thai EFL teachers can apply the concept of reference level and descriptors according to CEFR to assess their student's abilities. The results also showed that Thai EFL teachers could choose various activities to develop each skill appropriately to their students' competency, with a mean value of 4.34 or 61.94%.

However, Thai EFL teachers do not fully understand the concept of CEFR in classroom practice, with a mean of 3.03 or 43.22%.

Table 12 shows the challenges of the CEFR implementation in language teaching, learning, and assessment. Overall, Thai EFL teachers showed relatively high challenges in implementing CEFR in the classroom, with a mean score of 5.70 or 81.40% (S.D. 1.01). In particular, Thai EFL teachers cannot design tests equivalent to the CEFR level (Mean=6.27). The results also showed that 83.52% of Thai EFL teachers cannot describe what students know and can do at each CEFR level. The lowest rated statement, with a mean of 5.12, referred to Thai EFL teachers not understanding the concept of CEFR in English language teaching and learning. This indicates that many participants better understand the concept of CEFR concerning English language teaching and learning.

Table 13 : The challenges of the CEFR implementation (n=300)

Items	Statements	mean	%	S.D.
15	I have difficulty understanding detailed descriptions of the CEFR.	5.12	73.10	1.14
16	I have difficulty understanding the CEFR concept regarding English grades.	5.72	81.65	1.02
17	I'm quite not sure how to design my English teaching activities according to the CEFR concept.	5.57	79.61	1.03
18	I have difficulty selecting the appropriate communication task relevant to my student's competency.	5.66	80.92	1.01
19	I have difficulty describing what students know and can do at each CEFR level.	5.85	83.52	0.94
20	I have difficulty designing the tests corresponding to the CEFR level.	6.27	89.57	0.90
Total		5.70	81.40	1.01

Table 13 shows the needs for CEFR implementation in language teaching, learning, and assessment. The Thai EFL teachers showed high demand for implementing CEFR in the classroom, with a mean score of 6.02 or 86.01% (S.D. 0.82). Thai EFL teachers, in particular, must provide objective and clearly defined criteria and more straightforward and consistent descriptors (mean=6.49). Participants need to develop best practices related to CEFR that are appropriate to the student's context (mean=5.97 or 85.35%). Participants must also align text materials with the CEFR learning outcomes and clearly describe each level of the CEFR descriptors for better understanding and effective implementation (mean=5.72 and 5.62).

Table 14 : The needs for the CEFR implementation (n=300) How much?

Items	Statements	mean	%	S.D.
21	I need a clear description of each level of CEFR descriptors for a better understanding and effective implementation.	5.62	80.29	1.04
22	I need to develop the text materials to align with CEFR learning outcomes.	5.72	81.70	0.96
23	I need a guideline for selecting and designing the task assessment.	5.97	85.35	0.78
24	I need to create CEFR-related good practices to suit the student's context	6.30	89.94	0.71
25	I must provide objective, well-defined criteria and more straightforward descriptors.	6.49	92.75	0.61
Total		6.02	86.01	0.82

4.2 The practices of the CEFR in the classroom

This section presents the qualitative findings from the ten participants' semi-structured interviews. The data were coded, analyzed and classified into themes focusing on the CEFR domains: language activities and assessments. The language

activities implemented by Thai EFL participants were classified into language skills: reading, listening, speaking and writing.

The analysis of the results indicated that all teacher participants, to some extent, implemented the CEFR in their classroom practices. All participants used the CEFR to design speaking activities and classroom language assessments. However, the practice of the CEFR was least used in writing tasks by Thai EFL participants. Other related information is illustrated in Table 14. These results suggest that Thai EFL participants implement the CEFR in their classroom practices but do not apply to all language activities. Indeed, the Thai EFL participants noted that they moderately used the CEFR to design and integrate it into some language tasks and activities.

Table 15 : The practices of the CEFR in the classroom

Participants	Language activities				Assessment
	Reception		Production		
	Listening	Reading	Speaking	Writing	
Arden	/	-	/	-	/
Alex	-	/	/	-	/
Alice	/	-	/	/	/
Brooke	/	/	/	-	/
Bowie	-	/	/	-	/
Charles	/	-	/	-	/
Daniel	-	/	/	/	/
Ellie	/	-	/	-	/
Frank	-	/	/	/	/
Harry	/	-	/	-	/
Total	6	5	10	3	10

As shown in Table 14, the participants reported their practices of the CEFR in language activities and assessments in the classroom. The following are statements derived from the interviews:

“The CEFR gives me an idea of how to create speaking tasks/activities. I designed a speaking task based on communicative tasks. I apply some techniques of the CEFR in my classes, especially listening and speaking skills. It can guide how to teach and help learners improve their English more effectively.” (Arden)

“I have used the CEFR for creating examinations aligned with the CEFR standard and created a language examination based on the suggested vocabulary lists at the beginning level. Indeed, I do not know whether the classroom grades can inform the student’s language performance in speaking and listening.” (Alex)

“I apply it as a standard for measuring and evaluating results in teaching and learning English subjects. I also used the CEFR to design the classroom learning management to suit the learners’ level.” (Alice)

“I have used CEFR for learning activities. I created several actions to give students more language skills.” (Brooke)

“I have used materials and texts based on the CEFR framework. The book we use is based on the CEFR framework, so sometimes teachers need to follow the book, which does not fit the context of learning.” (Bowie)

“I applied to organize a variety of teaching and learning activities to improve English speaking and listening skills.” (Charles)

“I apply it to divide students into A1-C2 and teach them at each level. It helps me know the basic knowledge of my students.” (Daniel)

“I used CEFR in my lesson plan and learning language activities. It’s a bit more challenging in the classroom because some language features cannot be adapted into my school context.” (Ellie)

“I use it as the standard, which helps me to classify my students at the language level. It depends on the student levels, which are upper or lower level. I’m teaching in high school and the grades of the students. I teach grade 11. Therefore, the contents of the language are quite advanced. I apply the CEFR for my class by using it to be the standard of the language level for any grade I have to teach.” (Frank)

“I apply the CEFR framework for use in teaching and learning. Especially in terms of vocabulary at different levels, listening, speaking, and writing can be applied. Demonstrates a clear step in implementing teaching and learning to meet the goals of the CEFR level.” (Harry)

Table 16 : English language activities implemented by Thai EFL teachers.

Listening activities	Speaking activities	Reading activities	Writing activities
-Listen and repeat words, phrases and sentences with correct stress and intonation	- Oral question and answer sessions during lessons	-Read and match	-Read and match
-Listen and sing songs with actions	-Read aloud sentences with correct pronunciation, stress and intonation	-Read and fill in the blank	-Read and fill in the blank
- Listen to a talk/ passage and answer some questions / fill in the blanks	-Read and answer short structured questions	-Read and write a short response	-Read and answer short structured questions
- Listen to texts and provide oral and written responses	-Read and retell stories using own words		-Read and write a short response
	-Reading aloud paragraphs from reading text		
	-Talk about a topic of interest/topic		
	- Group discussions		
	- Roleplay		

The statements from the participant interviews proved that Thai EFL teachers often integrated the CEFR into their classroom practices. The Thai teacher participants usually implemented it in designing the language learning activities or tasks. They also reported the practices of the CEFR in creating the tests to assess students' overall language learning achievements.

4.3 Challenges in implementing the CEFR: Reflections from Thai EFL teachers

This section presents the challenges reported by the voluntarily interviewed Thai EFL teachers. The data were again analyzed using the CEFR domains: language activities and assessments. The results showed that all Thai participatory teachers reported that they were, to some extent, encountering the challenges of implementing the CEFR in the classroom and pedagogical practices. Notably, all participants reported their challenges in using it to develop language activities. The participants voiced that they had challenges or difficulties in using the CEFR to assess students' language proficiency. These findings are illustrated in Table 16.

Table 17 : The challenges of the CEFR in the classroom

Participants	Language activities				Assessment
	Reception		Production		
	Listening	Reading	Speaking	Writing	
Arden	/	/	/	/	/
Alex	/	/	/	/	/
Alice	/	/	/	/	/
Brooke	/	/	/	/	/
Bowie	/	/	/	/	/
Charles	/	/	/	/	/
Daniel	/	/	/	/	/
Ellie	/	/	/	/	/
Frank	/	/	/	/	/
Harry	/	/	/	/	/
Total	10	10	10	10	10

Notably, all participants reported their challenges in using it to develop language activities. Indeed, they said they had little idea how CEFR could be integrated into language tasks to improve different skills. Such challenges in integrating the CEFR into their classroom practices are noted as follows:

“Lack of effective training and professional development on CEFR to teachers. They needed more training and continuous professional development to enhance their implementation efforts.” (Arden)

“The challenging factor impeding effective implementation in the classroom was a large class. This was made even more challenging as the classroom comprised students with mixed abilities in terms of language ability and proficiency.” (Alex)

“Environment and learner readiness are not the same. Each student has a different level of competence, knowledge and understanding of the CEFR in teaching and learning design.” (Alice)

“Heavy workload as one of my challenges. Having to teach at least four ESL classes and the other administrative duties demanded a lot of work and documentation, leaving little time for effective teaching and implementation.” (Brooke)

“The pupils’ proficiency level is the most challenging. As they come from different family backgrounds, their English level is different. So, pupils will have different paces to cope with the lesson and understand the learning content delivered by the teacher.” (Bowie)

“All skills are challenging. It’s quite difficult to teach the English language to students who do not like the English language.” (Charles)

“I don't understand CEFR very well, but everyone is talking about it, but no one has shown me how to do it yet. How can I fit into my English class? I don't understand these performance standards well.”
(Daniel)

“Lack of clear guidelines to teachers according to CEFR.” (Ellie)

“Lack of technological resources. I felt that school could be better implemented with more technologically enhanced English classrooms.”
(Frank)

“Lack of teaching and learning materials and facilities are supporting the teacher, and teachers still need to develop a lot.” (Harry)

Table 18 : Challenges faced by teachers in implementing CEFR in Thai EFL context

Teacher workload	Time constraints	Class enrollment	Other challenges
-Minimum teaching load: many classes to teach	-Need to complete EFL syllabus before final exams	-Large class size	-Lack of effective training on CEFR
-Administrative duties at school	-Too many assessments to conduct	-Varied language ability and proficiency	-Lack of support from school administrators
-Co-curriculum responsibilities	-Numerous school events and activities	-Classroom management	-Lack of teaching and learning materials and facilities
-a lot of teaching hours and assigned special works.	-Public holidays		-Lack of clear guidelines

The statements mentioned above evinced that Thai EFL teachers had challenges in using the CEFR in their classroom practices. These findings suggest that Thai EFL teachers need assistance from those involved in the CEFR. Such challenges need to be taken into action.

4.4 Thai EFL teachers' needs for implementing the CEFR

This section shows the needs for implementing the CEFR in the classroom among Thai EFL teachers. Table 18 illustrates that all Thai EFL participants wish to increase their understanding of the CEFR. Overall, the results showed that the participants needed assistance to better understand the applications of the CEFR. Indeed, these participants reported needing further help using the CEFR to improve language learning activities and tasks in the classroom.

Table 19 : The needs for CEFR practices in the classroom

Participants	Language activities				Assessment
	Reception		Production		
	Listening	Reading	Speaking	Writing	
Arden	/	/	/	/	/
Alex	/	/	/	/	/
Alice	/	/	/	/	/
Brooke	/	/	/	/	/
Bowie	/	/	/	/	/
Charles	/	/	/	/	/
Daniel	/	/	/	/	/
Ellie	/	/	/	/	/
Frank	/	/	/	/	/
Harry	/	/	/	/	/
Total	10	10	10	10	10

According to Table 19, the interview was further used to better understand the participants' needs for the CEFR. The 10 participants' responses are presented as follows:

“The CEFR should be used in the entire Thai education system. The government and relevant authorities should be guidance how to integrate activities according to CEFR in English class.” (Arden)

Now, students studying in formal systems cannot communicate in English according to the CEFR framework. English language communication skills should be required or established at school.” (Alex)

“The government and relevant authorities should have policy for English language teaching to promote their language skills to design, measurement, evaluation and teaching management. It also includes encouraging the development of domestic communication skills and teaching to acquire the understanding and ability to apply English to educational levels successfully.” (Alice)

“The government and relevant authorities should emphasize practical application rather than language structure, grammatical or testing.” (Brooke)

“The government and relevant authorities should improve and educate the English language teachers according to CEFR.” (Bowie)

“Today we are talking about the 21st century classroom, but my school is not well equipped with technology. If we had a few more computer labs for students, I think English teaching would be better.” (Charles)

“School principals should increase the number of teachers to set a good example for English users.” (Daniel)

“The government and relevant authorities should be please advocate for us in providing the materials, media and facilities for teaching.” (Ellie)

“The government and relevant authorities should reskill the English teachers create teaching activities according to the CEFR framework.”
(Frank)

“I do not have the time to chart the development and improvement for each student, therefore, reduce teaching hours and assigned special works could be considered.” (Harry)

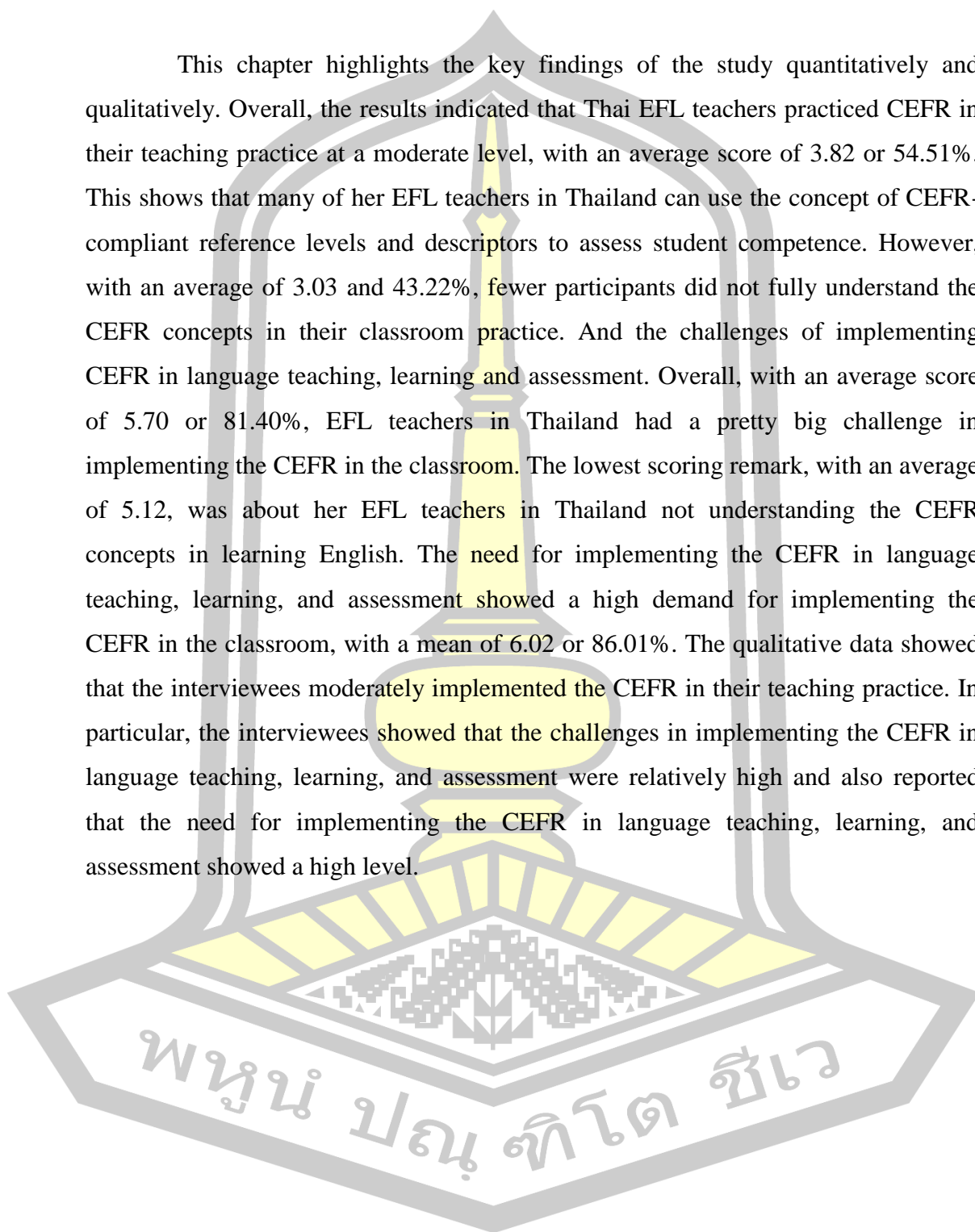
Table 20 : Thai EFL teachers’ needs for the CEFR classroom practice.

Training on CEFR	Needs from government	Other needs
- Training on CEFR in listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills is needed.	-Providing the materials, media and facilities for teaching.	- Encouraging the development of domestic communication skills and teaching.
- Training is needed on CEFR implementation, measurement, evaluation, and teaching management in the classroom.	- Increase teachers as good role models for English users.	- Reduce teaching hours and special works.
-Need training to design lesson plans and activities according to the CEFR framework	- Emphasis on practical application rather than language structure	- need more support from school administrators

Based on the above statements, the participants emphasized the needs for a better understanding of the CEFR. The results also suggest that participants’ needs for the CEFR knowledge are critical. In addition, the results indicate that Thai EFL teachers need both explicit and implicit knowledge of the CEFR. Indeed, the ELF teachers call for extensive, thorough training of the CEFR.

4.5 Conclusion of the chapter

This chapter highlights the key findings of the study quantitatively and qualitatively. Overall, the results indicated that Thai EFL teachers practiced CEFR in their teaching practice at a moderate level, with an average score of 3.82 or 54.51%. This shows that many of her EFL teachers in Thailand can use the concept of CEFR-compliant reference levels and descriptors to assess student competence. However, with an average of 3.03 and 43.22%, fewer participants did not fully understand the CEFR concepts in their classroom practice. And the challenges of implementing CEFR in language teaching, learning and assessment. Overall, with an average score of 5.70 or 81.40%, EFL teachers in Thailand had a pretty big challenge in implementing the CEFR in the classroom. The lowest scoring remark, with an average of 5.12, was about her EFL teachers in Thailand not understanding the CEFR concepts in learning English. The need for implementing the CEFR in language teaching, learning, and assessment showed a high demand for implementing the CEFR in the classroom, with a mean of 6.02 or 86.01%. The qualitative data showed that the interviewees moderately implemented the CEFR in their teaching practice. In particular, the interviewees showed that the challenges in implementing the CEFR in language teaching, learning, and assessment were relatively high and also reported that the need for implementing the CEFR in language teaching, learning, and assessment showed a high level.



CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This chapter will discuss the research findings in relation to the theoretical framework and previous studies. Overall, the results of this study related to Thai EFL teachers' implementation of the CEFR in their English language teaching, learning, and assessment process, as well as the challenges and needs associated with CEFR application. Limitations of the present study and suggestions for future research will also be discussed in this chapter.

5.1 The implementation of the CEFR: Reflections from Thai EFL teachers

This study sought to investigate Thai EFL teachers' conceptualization of the CEFR. Specifically, it examined the extent to which Thai EFL teachers applied the CEFR to their English language classroom practices. The data were collected from 300 EFL teachers using the questionnaire and semi-structured interview. The analysis of the quantitative results showed that Thai EFL teachers moderately implemented CEFR in their classroom practices. The qualitative findings also supported the quantitative results, indicating that all Thai teacher participants, at least to some extent, used the CEFR in the classroom. The findings also showed that Thai EFL teachers had an incomplete understanding of the CEFR, leading to limited use in instructed classrooms.

Some explanations could be given to elaborate on the moderate CEFR implementation in the classroom. First, although the CEFR has been essential in designing the syllabuses and curricula in Thailand, English teachers in Thailand utilized the teaching principles to a lesser extent. In practice, these teachers reported that the CEFR provided an easy-to-use tool for enhancing their teaching. However, many participants found the CEFR challenging to comprehend and apply without thorough supervision. These findings align with previous studies that said Thai EFL teachers have little comprehensive knowledge of the CEFR (Kanchai, 2019; Phoolaikao & Sukying, 2021; Sukying, Supanya, & Phusawisot, 2023).

Regarding using the CEFR in constructing syllabi and curricula, the participants acknowledged that the CEFR is the framework of reference that must be altered and related to the unique characteristics of their learning context. However, not every aspect of the CEFR would apply to their situation. In addition, there could be vital aspects of their setting that the CEFR does not cover. The qualitative information gleaned from the interviews could provide weight to the account:

“I have used materials and texts based on the CEFR framework. The book we use is based on the CEFR framework, so sometimes teachers need to follow the book, which does not fit the context of learning.”
(Bowie)

“I used CEFR in my lesson plan and learning language activities. It’s a bit more challenging in the classroom because some language features cannot be adapted into my school context.” (Ellie)

Another possible explanation may be integrating the CEFR into classroom instruction and lesson planning. The most effective language instruction should emphasize the practical outcomes of language learning. For instance, the significance of exam grades should inform the student’s specific language abilities (what they can do) instead of the grades themselves. Linking instruction to the CEFR is a highly successful method for attaining this goal. A lucid proficiency framework could provide a context for learning that might assist students in orienting themselves and establishing objectives. This would enable teachers to concentrate on the strengths and flaws that benefit or impede students. It might offer a shared understanding of levels, supporting the formulation of realistic learning objectives for a group and tying outcomes to what students can do next - successfully perform a particular job or continue advanced language study. The following excerpt could support the explanation presented above:

“I have used the CEFR for creating examinations aligned with the CEFR standard and created a language examination based on the suggested vocabulary lists at the beginning level. Indeed, I do not know

whether the classroom grades can inform the student's language performance in speaking and listening.” (Alex)

The communicative language teaching approach could be another explanation for the moderate CEFR implementation among Thai EFL participants. The CEFR encourages teachers to be open about their opinions regarding the learning process and their preferred teaching methods. These views also pertain to the duties and responsibilities of instructors and students. However, the CEFR approach is grounded in many general teaching principles. The CEFR highlights the communicative demands of language learners, particularly the ability to deal with day-to-day responsibilities. This is the CEFR's communicative, action-oriented methodology. Specifically, this approach is comprehensive and should be consistent with most school-based language learning goals. It is also founded on language use and language learning, including tasks and interaction. It is believed that language use is purposeful, involving the negotiation of significant meanings to learners to accomplish objectives. The essential assumption is that language learning would be more effective when used meaningfully. The CEFR is wholly devoted to task-based language instruction. Given the goal of teaching students to read online newspapers and discuss current events, a variety of tasks involving reading, discussing, explaining, or comparing news stories, as well as selecting, altering, or composing content for a school newspaper, can be envisioned. These tasks also provide opportunities for working independently and in groups and constructively critiquing one another's work. The following excerpts may support the above explanation:

“Lack of clear guidelines to teachers according to CEFR.” (Ellie)

“Lack of technological resources. I felt that school could be better implemented with more technologically enhanced English classrooms.” (Frank)

“Lack of teaching and learning materials and facilities are supporting the teacher, and teachers still need to develop a lot.” (Harry)

The CEFR levels are described in terms of what students can do and how well they can do it. Focusing on activities and interaction enables teachers to determine a student's performance level at which they can complete tasks with reasonable success at an appropriate level of difficulty. This may not be the same as displaying flawless command of some part of the language; a student could perform a task well but still commit mistakes. Consequently, speaking or writing performance samples at various CEFR levels would be valuable for instruction.

Regarding assessment principles, all Thai EFL teachers who participated in the study reported using CEFR assessments in their practices, albeit not for all language skills. Although these participants employed the CEFR for language evaluations in the classroom, they questioned their use of the CEFR assessment concepts. A few examples could be provided to expand on their inquiries. First, the CEFR was created to be useful in many scenarios. It does not, however, provide information specific to any particular setting. Teachers may need to elaborate on the CEFR's contents for it to be utilized effectively. This may involve determining which vocabulary and linguistic structures are present at a specified proficiency level in a given language, producing and verifying additional Can-Do statements for a specific purpose, or developing a set of Reference Level Descriptions. In fact, Thai teachers who participated in the study indicated that in order to adapt the CEFR to their needs, they needed to comprehend the context and exam objectives. In addition, they acknowledged that there were several settings and purposes for testing and evaluation in practice, which increased their burden. It was also reported that defining the target language usage and contexts was impossible. The following extracts may support the claim as mentioned above.

“I apply it as a standard for measuring and evaluating results in teaching and learning English subjects. I also used the CEFR to design the classroom learning management to suit the learners' level.” (Alice)

“The CEFR exam is not as comprehensive as it should be.”
(Brooke)

The government and relevant authorities should be more aware of the importance of foreign language education in Thailand. Due to the nature of the Center Test's measurement of student knowledge, the emphasis is on language structure rather than practical application. Therefore, teaching and learning in schools will focus on linguistic structures to meet the needs of national knowledge measurement. As a result, students studying in formal systems cannot communicate in English according to the CEFR framework.” (Alex)

According to the excerpts mentioned above, although these teachers applied the CEFR principles for language testing and evaluation in their activities, it was evident that they lacked a comprehensive comprehension of the document. Specifically, these participatory educators were unable to establish their learning settings and test objectives. The CEFR, for instance, separates language use into four distinct, broad domains: personal, public, occupational, and educational. In addition, the CEFR offers examples for each category inside each domain. The CEFR's explanations of these categories and domains are extensive. However, the responses of these participating instructors to the interview questions revealed that they had a limited grasp of the CEFR principles for language testing and assessment, raising the question of whether they could link the test to the CEFR.

Regarding the requirements for adopting the CEFR in the Thai EFL context, Thai EFL teachers identified a number of difficulties for those responsible for drafting the language policy and establishing the syllabi and curricula. The qualitative data analysis from the interview revealed that the Thai teachers who participated in the study identified two urgent challenges. Specifically, the analysis of the findings underlined the urgent need for in-depth training for language tasks designed for specific goals and learner requirements. In addition to principles for constructing and using reference-level descriptions of the CEFR in teaching and assessment, Thai participatory teachers had a need for these principles. The production of Reference Level Descriptions is guided by two guiding principles: using Reference Level Description resources in teaching and assessment and applying the CEFR in

constructing Reference Level Descriptions. These excerpts provide support for this assertion:

“The government and relevant authorities should train and educate the English language teachers according to CEFR.” (Bowie)

“Lack of technological resources. I felt that school could be better implemented with more technologically enhanced English classrooms.” (Frank)

“Lack of teaching and learning materials and facilities are supporting the teacher, and teachers still need to develop a lot.” (Harry)

Overall, the qualitative findings suggested that Thai EFL participation teachers would prefer to have partial knowledge of the CEFR, particularly the principles for teaching and learning and assessment concepts. Take this as an example: Daniel claimed, “I don’t understand CEFR very well, but everyone is talking about it, but no one has shown me how to use it yet. How can I be successful in my English class? I do not fully comprehend these performance standards.” This extract demonstrated that the participating teacher had some understanding of the CEFR but was unable to comprehend the application method. This investigation also confirms the earlier findings that practitioners, such as instructors, material authors, and curriculum planners, have an inadequate grasp of the CEFR document (Kanchai, 2019; Minh Ngo, 2017; Phoolaikao & Sukying, 2021; Sukying, Supanya, & Phusawisot, 2023). In addition, the current findings supported the literature that the CEFR assessment descriptors remain challenging and elusive (Fulcher, 2010; Kanchai, 2019; McNamara, 2011; North, 2014). In conclusion, although Thai participating teachers are aware of the significance of the CEFR, they lack a comprehensive knowledge of this document and require additional detailed guidance and intensive training for daily practices in authentic scenarios.

5.2 Implications from the study

The current findings could increase the awareness of numerous practitioners, including teachers, policymakers, curriculum designers and planners, and test writers. The CEFR training programs would provide teachers with a comprehensive understanding of the CEFR document and its practical classroom applications. Such classroom practice training programs would cover language assessment, teaching and learning approach, course design, and course planning. The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) domains could be better understood with the aid of suggested training programs.

5.3 Limitations of the study

Teachers at government schools in Thailand's Northeastern region were the only participants in this study. Consequently, it may not be possible to generalize these participant associations to other contexts. Also recommended are several data collection methods. The triangulation of data may validate findings. For example, qualitative data could be gathered from a variety of sources, such as lesson planning and classroom observation. A questionnaire may be necessary to collect information from a large number of responders. These various strategies will yield transparent results for the investigation. As Thai ELF teachers, the participants had limited opportunity to apply the CEFR framework in reality.

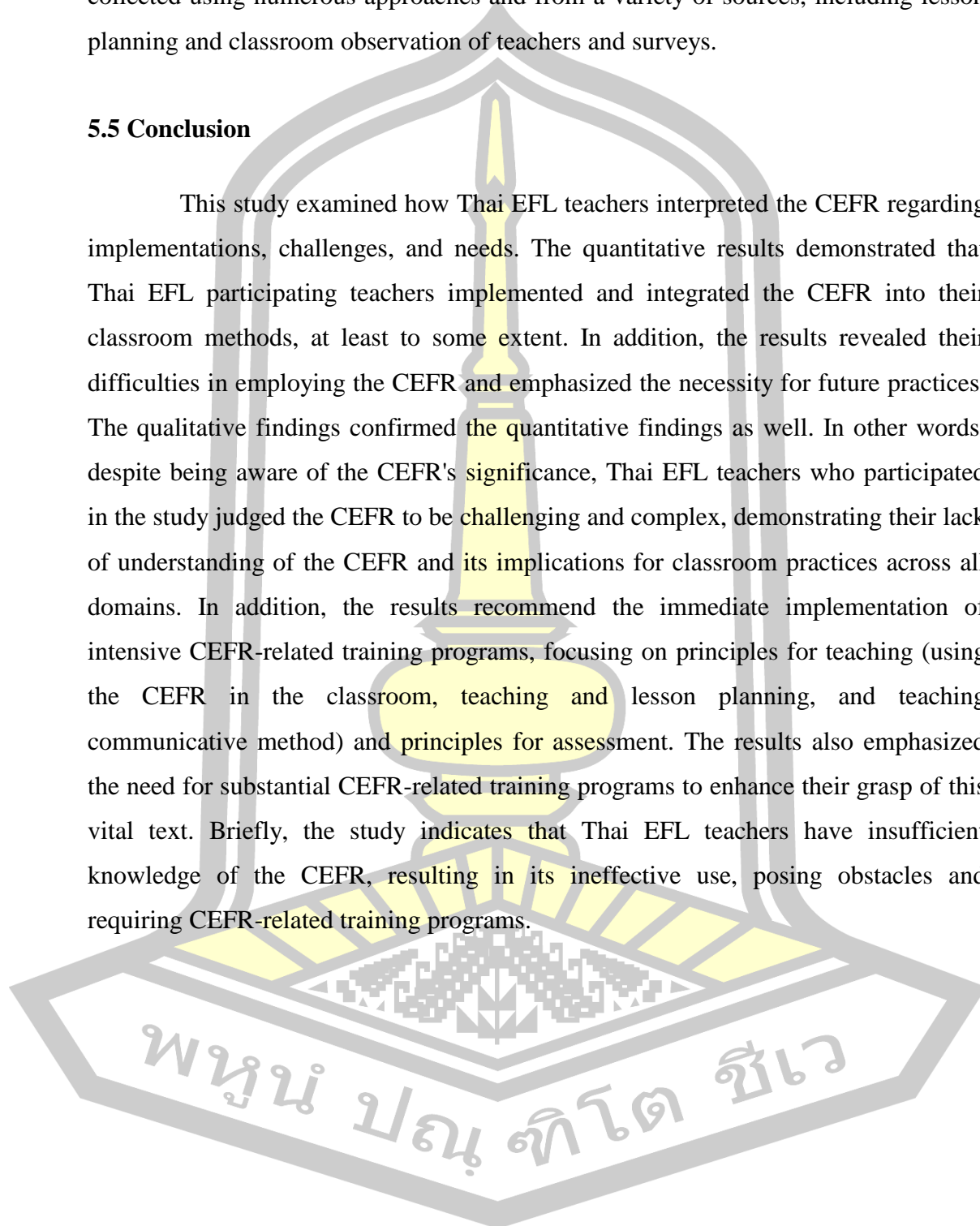
5.4 Suggestions for future studies

Future research should involve a variety of practitioners, such as directors, policymakers, and locations, such as elementary and secondary schools and universities. Investigating the influence of aligned learning and teaching, with an emphasis on English teachers, is another intriguing area of study. In other words, the impact of the learning and teaching strategies could be mirrored in how English teachers alter the CEFR in the classroom. Future research may also study teachers before and after formal CEFR training sessions to determine what they gain and how they utilize the CEFR in practice. Future studies may employ additional

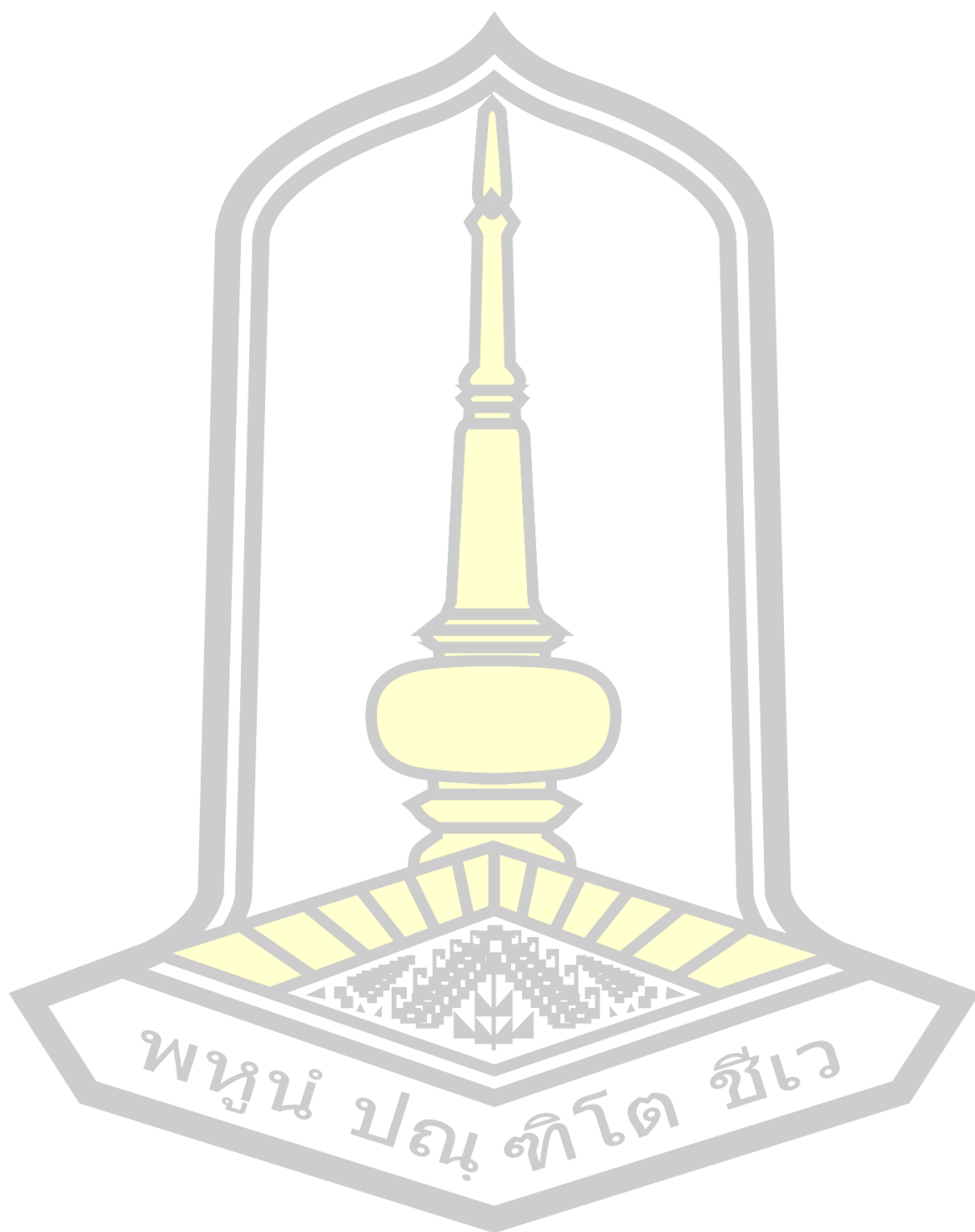
methodologies to better validate the findings. For instance, qualitative data could be collected using numerous approaches and from a variety of sources, including lesson planning and classroom observation of teachers and surveys.

5.5 Conclusion

This study examined how Thai EFL teachers interpreted the CEFR regarding implementations, challenges, and needs. The quantitative results demonstrated that Thai EFL participating teachers implemented and integrated the CEFR into their classroom methods, at least to some extent. In addition, the results revealed their difficulties in employing the CEFR and emphasized the necessity for future practices. The qualitative findings confirmed the quantitative findings as well. In other words, despite being aware of the CEFR's significance, Thai EFL teachers who participated in the study judged the CEFR to be challenging and complex, demonstrating their lack of understanding of the CEFR and its implications for classroom practices across all domains. In addition, the results recommend the immediate implementation of intensive CEFR-related training programs, focusing on principles for teaching (using the CEFR in the classroom, teaching and lesson planning, and teaching communicative method) and principles for assessment. The results also emphasized the need for substantial CEFR-related training programs to enhance their grasp of this vital text. Briefly, the study indicates that Thai EFL teachers have insufficient knowledge of the CEFR, resulting in its ineffective use, posing obstacles and requiring CEFR-related training programs.



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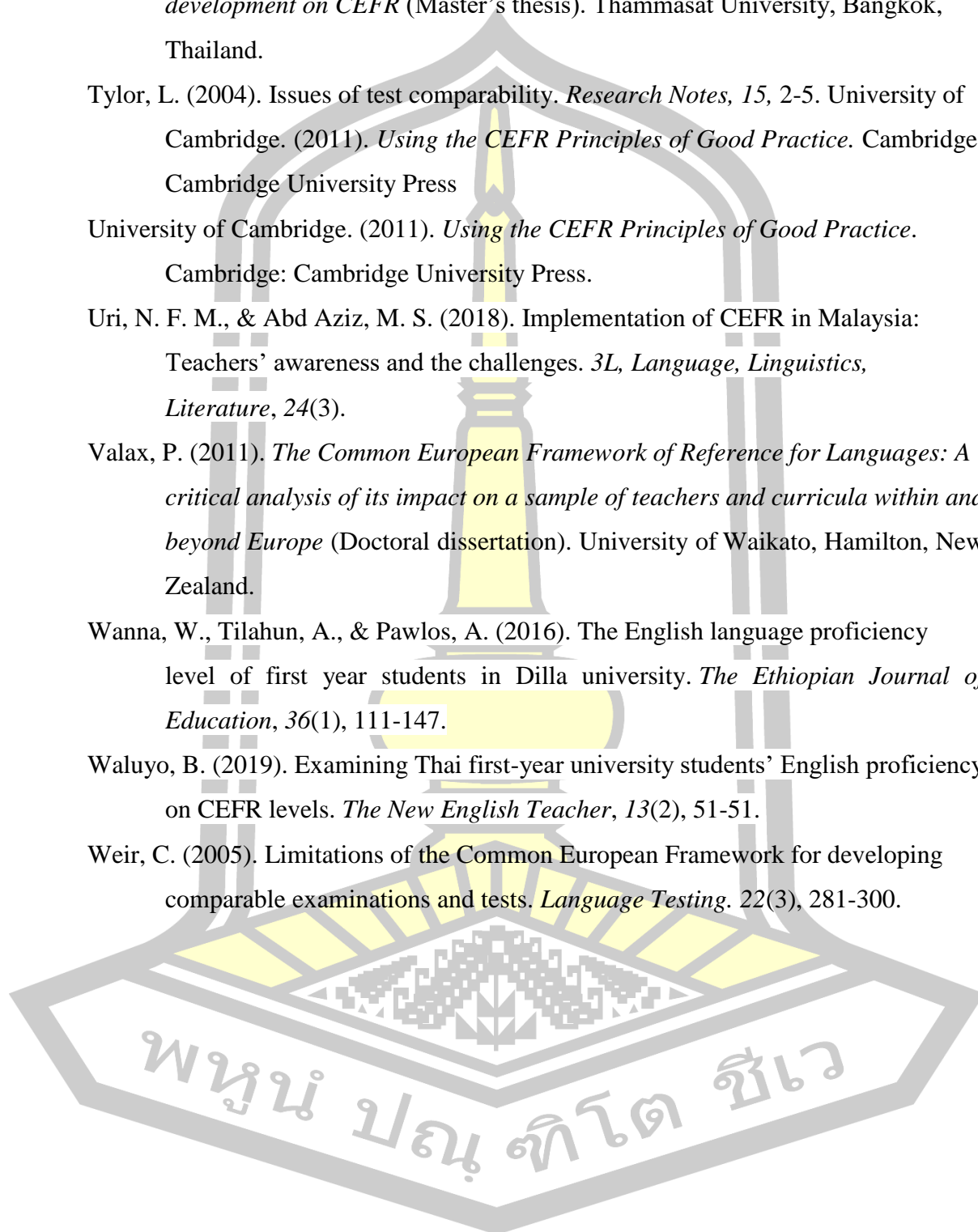
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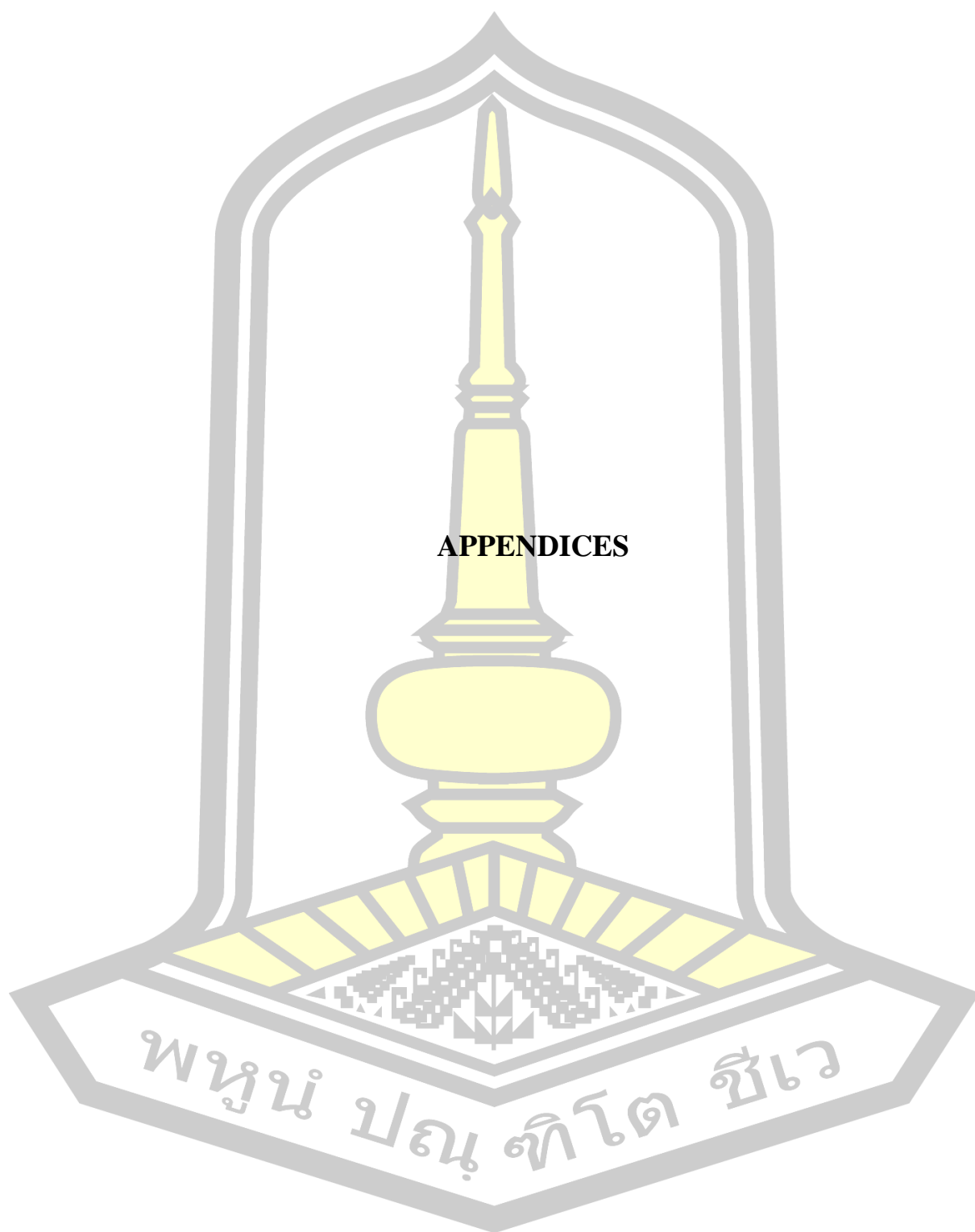
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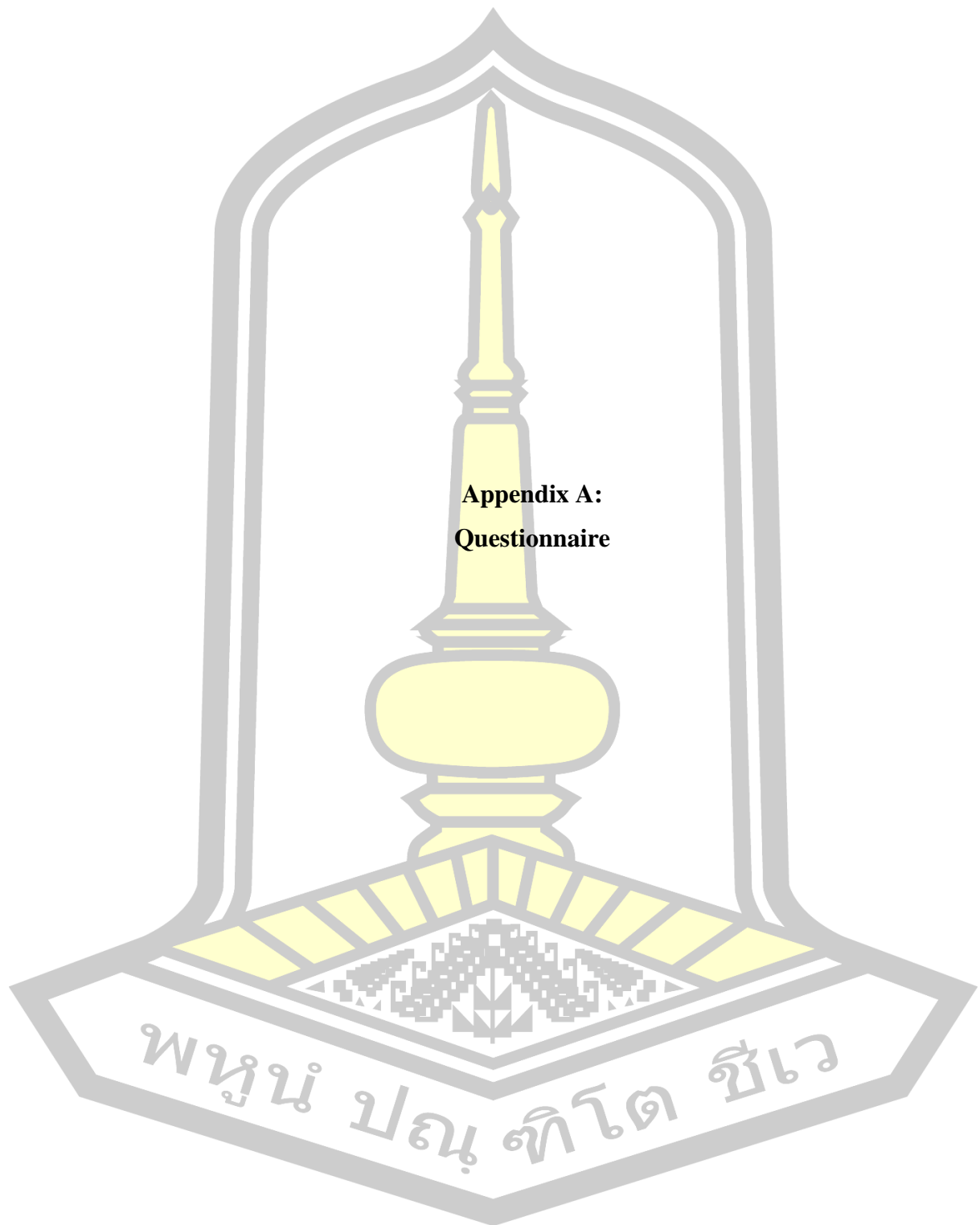
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**Appendix A:
Questionnaire**



Questionnaire

Reflections on the CEFR in Thailand: Problems and Needs Thai EFL Teachers

This questionnaire is separated into two sections:

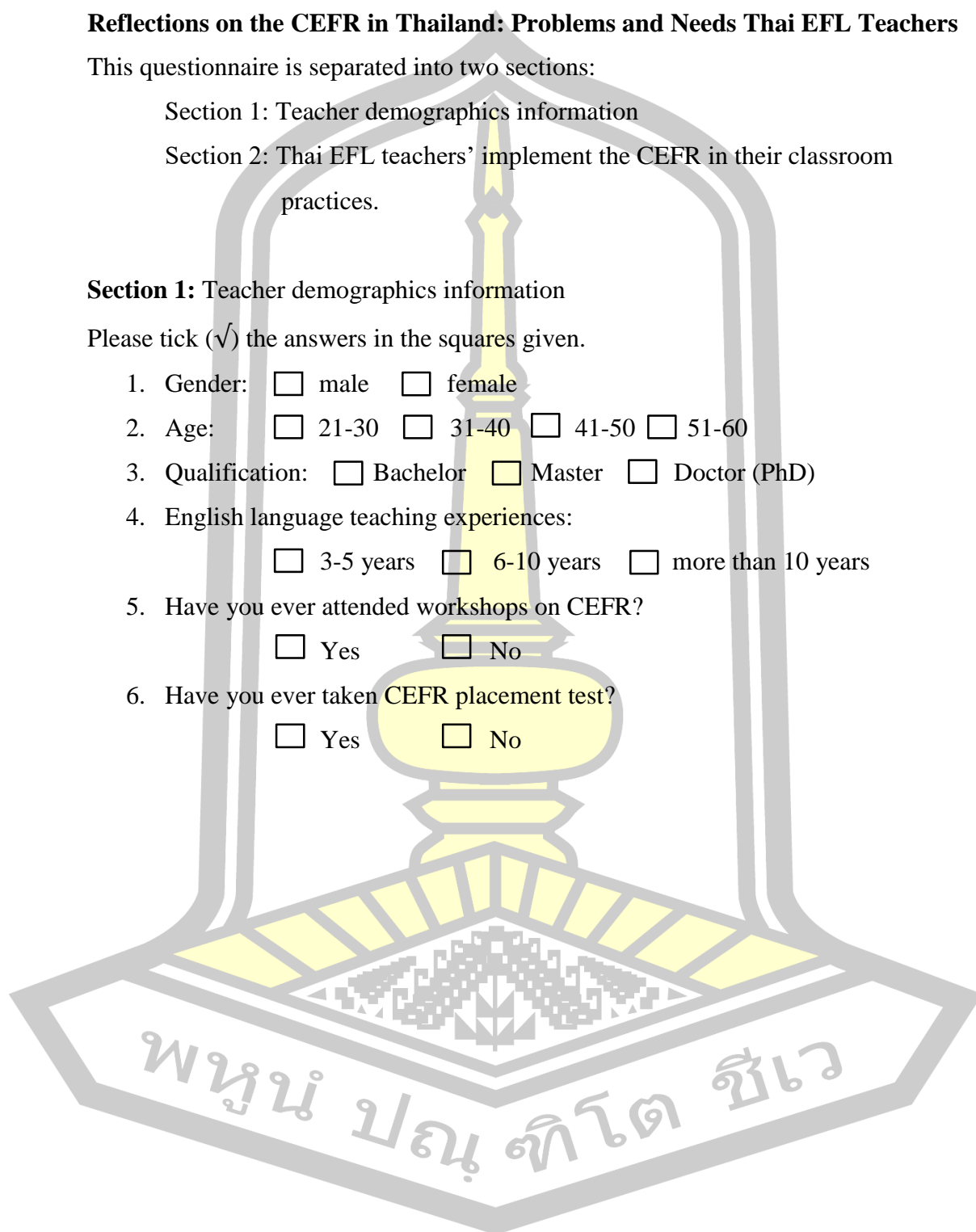
Section 1: Teacher demographics information

Section 2: Thai EFL teachers' implement the CEFR in their classroom practices.

Section 1: Teacher demographics information

Please tick (✓) the answers in the squares given.

1. Gender: ☐ male ☐ female
2. Age: ☐ 21-30 ☐ 31-40 ☐ 41-50 ☐ 51-60
3. Qualification: ☐ Bachelor ☐ Master ☐ Doctor (PhD)
4. English language teaching experiences:
☐ 3-5 years ☐ 6-10 years ☐ more than 10 years
5. Have you ever attended workshops on CEFR?
☐ Yes ☐ No
6. Have you ever taken CEFR placement test?
☐ Yes ☐ No



Section 2. Thai EFL teachers implement the CEFR in their classroom practices associated with the problems and needs of the CEFR application in three issues:

a) Thai EFL teachers' implement the CEFR in their classroom practices, b) Problems of the CEFR implementation in language teaching, learning, and assessment, c) Needs of the CEFR implementation in language teaching, learning, and assessment

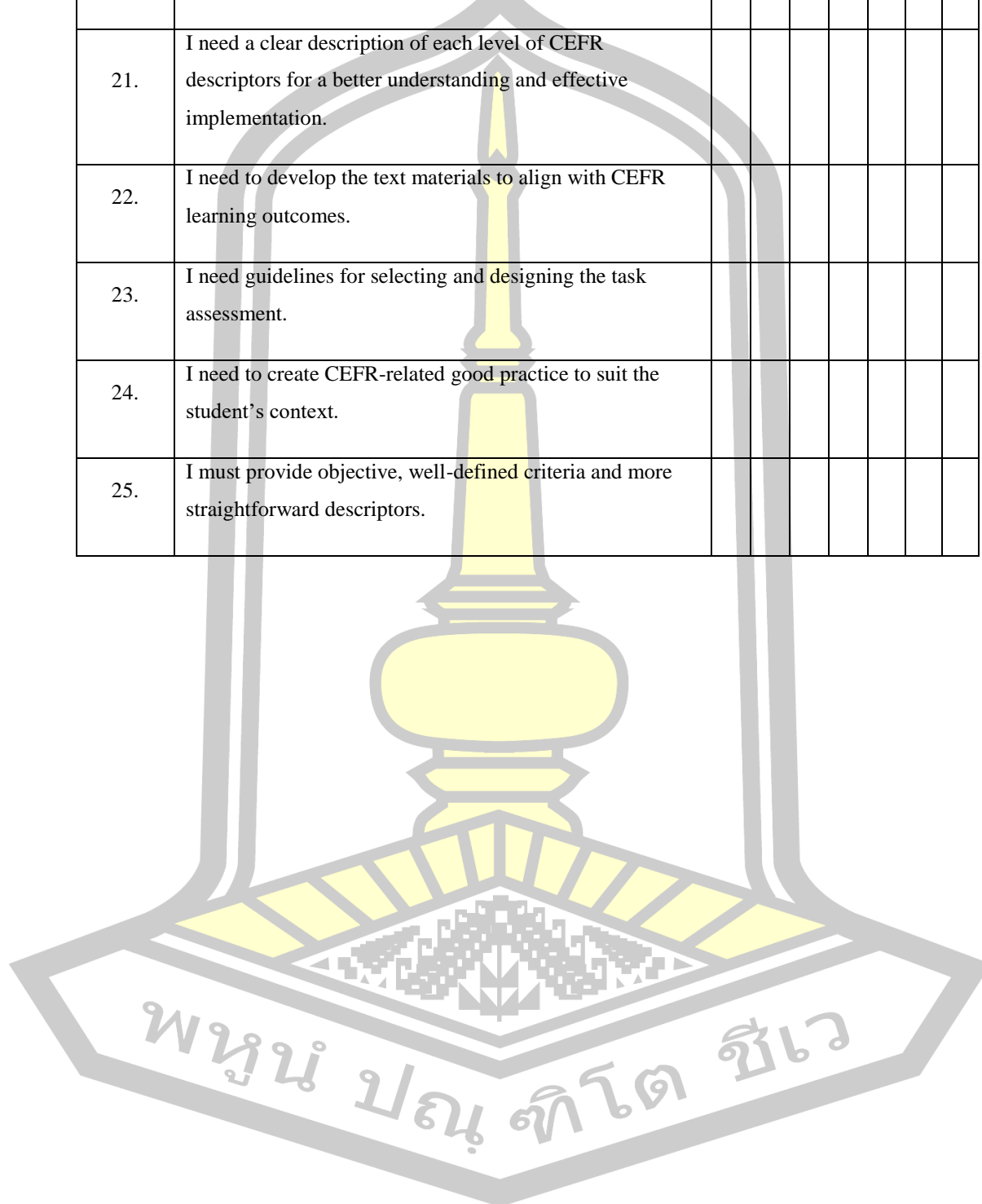
Directions: Please read each statement and tick (✓) the levels that suit you.

7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Strongly agree	Agree	Slightly agree	Neutral	Slightly disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

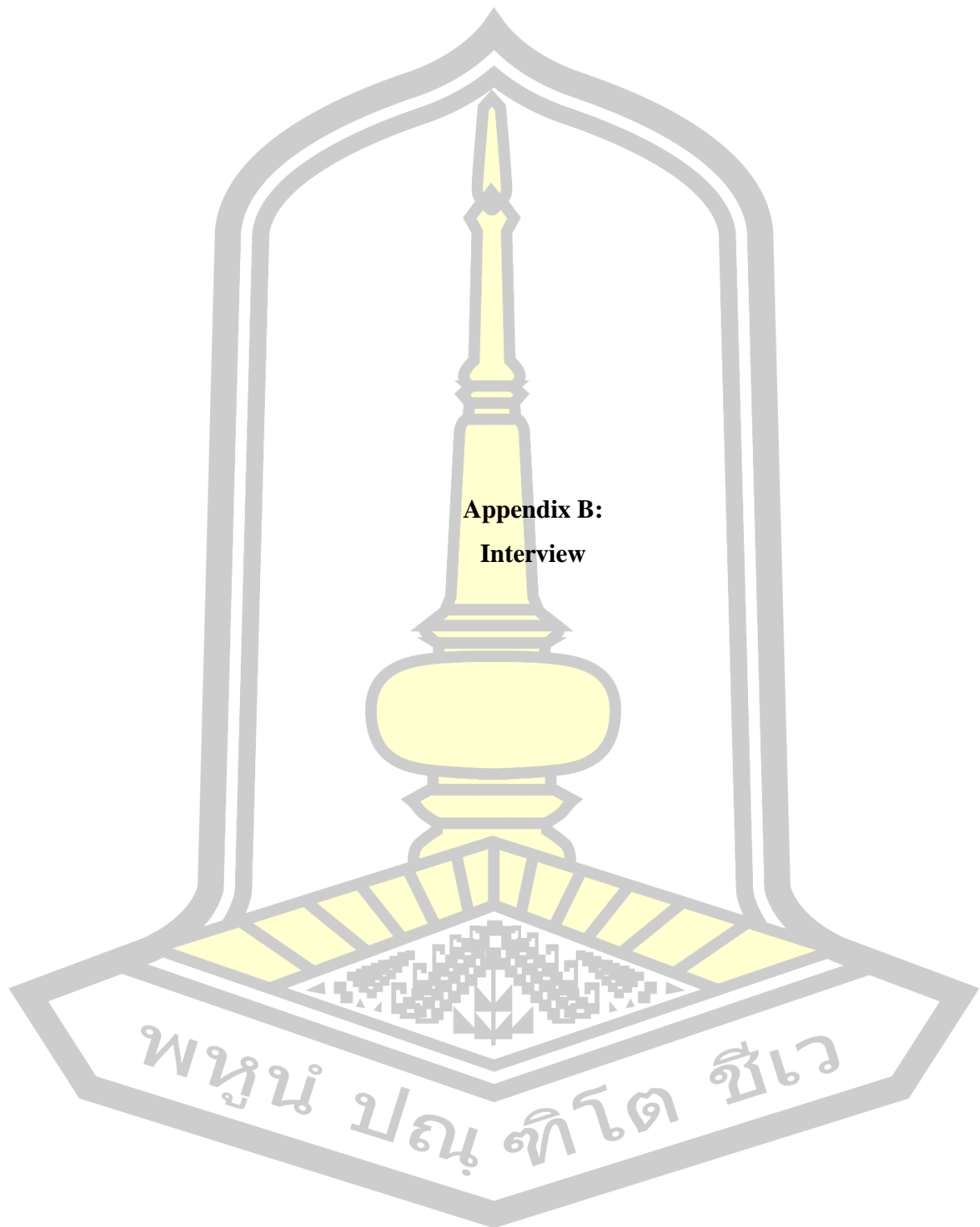
Item	Statements	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
a) Thai EFL teachers' implement the CEFR in their classroom practices								
1.	I understand the concept of CEFR as appropriate in classroom practices							
2.	I focus on using the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach in your language teaching and learning							
3.	I understand how to design language activities for your teaching and learning.							
4.	I design a curriculum and course syllabus to develop students' English skills.							
5.	I design lessons and materials to develop students' English skills.							
6.	I design listening activities according to the CEFR concept for teaching listening in the classroom.							
7.	I design speaking activities according to the CEFR concept for teaching speaking in the classroom.							

Item	Statements	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
8.	I create an atmosphere that allows students to participate in speaking activities.							
9.	I design reading activities according to the CEFR concept for teaching reading in the classroom.							
10.	I design writing activities according to the CEFR concept for teaching writing in the classroom.							
11.	I use pre-writing activities to practice writing skills.							
12.	I apply language activities to support students in reflecting on their competencies.							
13.	I choose a variety of activities to develop each skill appropriately.							
14.	I apply the concept of reference level and descriptors according to CEFR to assess students' competency.							
b) Problems of the CEFR implementation in language teaching, learning, and assessment								
Item	Statements	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
15.	I have difficulty understanding detailed descriptions of the CEFR.							
16.	I have difficulty understanding the CEFR concept regarding English grades.							
17.	I'm unsure how to design my English teaching activities according to the CEFR concept.							
18.	I have difficulty selecting the appropriate communication task relevant to my student's competency.							
19.	I have difficulty describing what students know and can do at each CEFR level.							
20.	I have difficulty designing the tests corresponding to the CEFR level.							

c) Needs of the CEFR implementation in language teaching, learning, and assessment								
Item	Statements	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
21.	I need a clear description of each level of CEFR descriptors for a better understanding and effective implementation.							
22.	I need to develop the text materials to align with CEFR learning outcomes.							
23.	I need guidelines for selecting and designing the task assessment.							
24.	I need to create CEFR-related good practice to suit the student's context.							
25.	I must provide objective, well-defined criteria and more straightforward descriptors.							



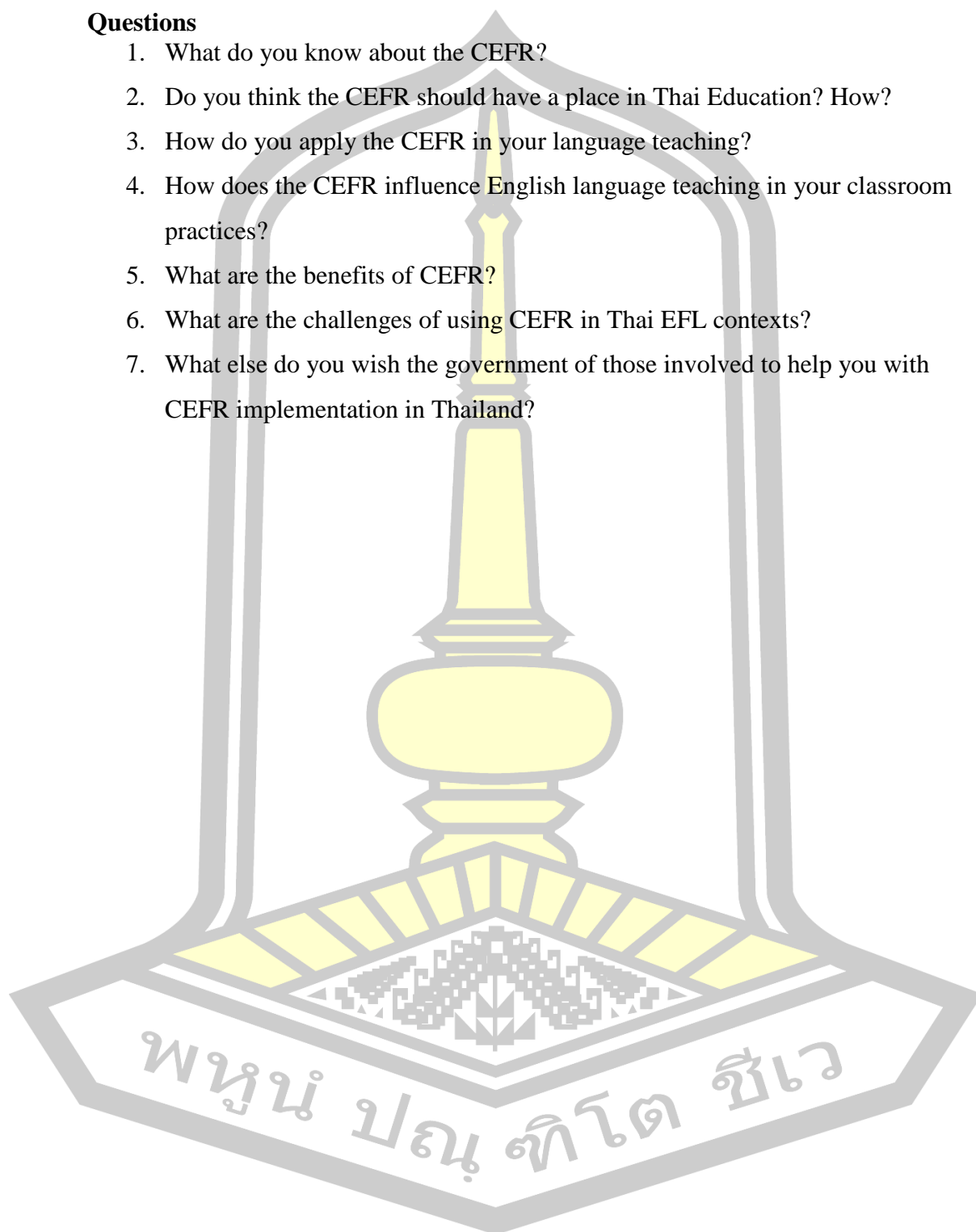
Appendix B:
Interview



Interview

Questions

1. What do you know about the CEFR?
2. Do you think the CEFR should have a place in Thai Education? How?
3. How do you apply the CEFR in your language teaching?
4. How does the CEFR influence English language teaching in your classroom practices?
5. What are the benefits of CEFR?
6. What are the challenges of using CEFR in Thai EFL contexts?
7. What else do you wish the government of those involved to help you with CEFR implementation in Thailand?



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