INNOVATION IN ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE: A CASE STUDY EXPLORING A PROGRAM’S RESPONSE TO CHANGE

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Abstract

This case study investigated educational entrepreneurship in an intensive English as a foreign language (EFL) program at a language center affiliated with a major Thai university. The case study used Webber and Scott’s (2008) six-point educational entrepreneurship framework to structure data collection and analysis. In order to investigate the center’s educational entrepreneurship, the study included the following research questions: 1) How does one intensive EFL program in Thailand engage in educational entrepreneurship in order to meet the changing needs of its learners? 2) What outcomes do educational leaders and teachers in the program expect as a result of their entrepreneurial activity and why do they expect those outcomes? 3) What challenges does the EFL program face in pursuing educational entrepreneurship? Using a qualitative case study approach, the study drew on data collected in interviews, a focus group, and curriculum documents to answer these questions. Following data collection, the study coded the data using In Vivo then axial coding before analyzing the themes that emerged. The major findings were as follows: the perceived changes in the students’ needs were the major driver of educational entrepreneurship; educational technology facilitates educational entrepreneurship, but it can be overemphasized; internationalization is both a means and an end to educational entrepreneurship in this context; the language center does not adequately involve the community in its efforts at educational entrepreneurship; and many barriers to educational entrepreneurship can be overcome through efforts at innovation by a few highly motivated teachers.

Keywords: Educational entrepreneurship, entrepreneurship, English as a foreign language
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Chapter I: Introduction

This doctoral thesis examines educational entrepreneurship in an intensive English as a foreign language (EFL) program in Thailand. More specifically, it investigates the processes through which this program engages in educational entrepreneurship, the expected outcomes of educational entrepreneurship, and the challenges faced in undertaking educational entrepreneurship. The research takes the form of a case study. Data is drawn from qualitative interviews with administrators in the language program, a focus group of teachers, and supporting documents. The experiences and observations of the researcher, who is the director of the language program, also play an important role in the study. Entrepreneurship in this institution is understood using the six-dimensional educational entrepreneurship framework proposed by Webber and Scott (2008), which includes the following dimensions: “innovative behavior, networking, time-space communication framework, local-global perspective, educational organizations as knowledge centers, and integrated face-to-face and Internet-based learning” (p. 1). This chapter provides background information to situate the reader. It then provides a statement of the problem and its significance. Next, it introduces the theoretical framework through which the problem is examined. Finally, it states the research questions that guide the study.

Background of the Problem

The field of English language teaching in Asia is evolving rapidly. This is partially due to the increasing use of English in tertiary education worldwide (Lei & Hu, 2014); however, two additional factors contribute to changes in English teaching. The first of these factors is the growing use of English as a lingua franca for communication among nonnative speakers (Seidlhofer, 2004). This is certainly the case in Southeast Asia, where the member states of the
Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) actively promote English education as a means of enhancing regional communication (ASEAN Secretariat, 2009). The second factor is the deployment of rapidly advancing educational technology is contributing to broad change in education, including language teaching. Students and teachers now have many more tools at their disposal than in the past. These two factors — growing use of English as a lingua franca, and rapidly developing technology — have caused and will continue to cause significant change in language teaching in Asia.

Change creates opportunities for entrepreneurship. Various definitions of entrepreneurship are explored in the literature review; many of these definitions emphasize the importance of finding “new means-ends relationships” (Shane & Venkataraman, 2000, p. 220) in entrepreneurship. In the context of the changing landscape of English teaching in Asia, both the means — educational technology — and the ends — the purpose of the English being taught — are shifting. As Shane and Venkataraman (2000) explain, “An entrepreneurial discovery occurs when someone makes the conjecture that a set of resources is not put to its ‘best use’” (p. 220). The researchers illustrate by giving the example of the telephone, which created enormous opportunities for those who first put this innovation to productive use. This study seeks to investigate educational entrepreneurship in the current context of language teaching in Asia, in which the use of the English language itself and of educational technology are evolving rapidly; however, many Asian educational institutions are slow to change in response to these factors. This creates an opportunity for educational entrepreneurship on the part of institutions that are able to respond.

This study uses the definition of educational entrepreneurship provided by Webber and Scott (2008): “the strategic focus on creating short and long-term opportunities for learning that
will make a significant difference for individuals and their societies” (p. 1). Significantly, Webber and Scott’s (2008) definition of educational entrepreneurship emphasizes opportunities for learning as the core objective. This stands in contrast with other definitions of entrepreneurship, which often emphasize the creation of wealth as the major goal of entrepreneurship (Morris et al., 1994). Before further explaining the educational entrepreneurship framework, this chapter describes some of the changes that provide opportunities for educational entrepreneurship.

**Problem Statement**

The changes described above — changes to the role of English and to available technologies — are driving change in English as a foreign language (EFL) programs in Asia. New means of teaching language are becoming available, and the goals of English language teaching are evolving. Through the study of entrepreneurship, academics have long investigated the ways in which advantage can be drawn from “technological, political, social, regulatory, and other types of change” (Shane & Venkataraman, 2000, p. 221); however, applications of the theories of entrepreneurship in education are relatively limited (this is explored in the literature review). As theories of entrepreneurship provide a valuable lens through which to study how best to approach and benefit from change, this creates a relevant area of inquiry.

At this time, little is known about the processes through which educators in EFL programs engage in educational entrepreneurship in order to serve the needs of their students. Such knowledge could benefit scholar-practitioners in the field of EFL as they guide their programs through the rapidly changing environment. Therefore, the purpose of this doctoral thesis is to explore these processes and their perceived impact in one particular English program in Thailand.
For the purposes of this thesis, educational entrepreneurship is defined according to Webber and Scott’s (2008), six dimensions: “innovative behavior, networking, time-space communication framework, local-global perspective, educational organizations as knowledge centers, and integrated face-to-face and Internet-based learning” (p. 1). It is important to note that the framework focused on the processes and perceptions involved in educational entrepreneurship, not on the specific practices that result. While such practices may be innovative and effective in their particular context, they may not be equally appropriate in other contexts. As Green (2012) cautions, educational institutions must be cautious when implementing best practices from other contexts, as best practices are “a mere step from … ‘one size fits all’” (p. 2). That being said, understanding how educational entrepreneurship is carried out in various contexts may provide insights that could allow educators to adapt to changes in their context. Further explanation of the need for educational entrepreneurship in the rapidly changing field of language education in Asia is provided in the literature review.

Context of the Study

The study takes place at a language center on the campus of a major public university in Thailand. The center has existed since 1998 and has grown steadily since its inception. It now enrolls approximately 400 students. Approximately half of the students who enter one of the English-medium degree programs first study at the language center for a period of three months to a year. The primary purpose of the language center is to improve the English language skills of students who hope to matriculate to the “international” (i.e., English-medium) program at the university; secondary goals include the teaching of critical thinking skills, study skills, computer literacy, and academic content.
Only six courses are offered at the center: four English courses ranging from lower intermediate to upper intermediate and two remedial math courses. Each of these courses is supervised by a course coordinator, who also works with the director to lead the program. Coordinators are confirmed in their position for one year, after which the position can be renewed upon the agreement of the coordinator and the program director. Most of the teachers in the program have served as coordinators at one time or another.

This research has been carried out by the current program director, who has served for a period of approximately three years. During this time, significant changes to the curriculum have been implemented, including many applications of educational technology and greater use of project-based learning in all levels. The changes to the curriculum have generally been based on consensus, and the overall environment of the center is positive and conducive to collaboration.

**Theoretical Framework**

The study examines the processes through which educators in an EFL program engage in educational entrepreneurship through the lens on Webber and Scott’s (2008) six-point educational entrepreneurship framework, which includes the following: “innovative behavior, networking, time-space communication framework, local-global perspective, educational organizations as knowledge centers, and integrated face-to-face and Internet-based learning” (p. 1). This framework is appropriate for the study for several reasons. Firstly, it focuses on innovative behavior rather than on the creation of completely new companies or products. Secondly, it emphasizes the role of technology, an emphasis which resonates with the current state of EFL teaching in Asia. Finally, it focuses on the creation of effective learning rather than on the creation of wealth. Webber and Scott (2008) explicitly draw their inspiration for this framework from a variety of fields, including business and education. The derivation of their
framework is explored in the literature review, which also compares the educational entrepreneurship framework to other models of entrepreneurship.

The first element of Webber and Scott’s (2008) educational entrepreneurship framework is innovative behavior. Webber and Scott’s (2008) article does not provide an explicit definition of innovation. According to Webber and Scott (2008) not all innovations are technological. In the field of education, new approaches to teaching and new elements of the curriculum could also be considered innovation. In the context of this study, innovation takes the form of new processes, content, or applications of technology rather than new technologies or concrete products. The literature review further explores the connections between innovation and entrepreneurship.

The second element of the educational entrepreneurship framework is networking. Webber and Scott (2008) describe networking as the collection of information and adaptation based on this information. This is highly relevant to the program that is included in this study. As mentioned above, the field of EFL in Asia is changing rapidly. For this reason, staying informed about changes to the field is challenging. Information about the changing state of the field can be collected through sources such as professional networks, academic publications, and visits to other programs. Particular sources contribute differently to successful educational entrepreneurship in particular contexts. The study investigates the ways in which an EFL program in Thailand gathers information about its changing environment. Adapting based on information about the changing field presents a further set of challenges. Many factors, such as cultural beliefs or financial limitations, can limit the extent to which an organization acts on information that it has gathered. The challenges faced in engaging in educational entrepreneurship are explored in the study.
The third element of the framework, the “time-space communication framework” (Webber & Scott, 2008, p. 4) is based on the work of Van Geenhuisen (2004), who described the various advantages and disadvantages of four modes of communication: local synchronous, local asynchronous, distributed synchronous, and distributed asynchronous. Recent technologies have enabled a shift towards distributed asynchronous communication, which has a cost advantage (Van Geenhuisen, 2004). Shifting activities to new modes of communication has the potential to radically change education; however, this shift has of yet had relatively little impact on EFL in Thailand. This creates opportunities for educational entrepreneurship on the part of institutions that are willing to shift some of their activities to more efficient means of communication. The ways in which a particular program has engaged in this shift in modes of communication are explored in this research.

The fourth element is local-global perspective, which Webber and Scott (2008) note is in part facilitated by the shifts in communication described above. Educational entrepreneurs can use the Internet to make connections between their home institutions and the wider world. Using online instruction, faculty can redefine their role. They can develop various skills, change their pedagogical approach, implement new objectives for education, and greatly increase the availability and accessibility of information (Adams & Sperling, 2003). The authors note corresponding benefits for students, and claiming that digital technologies are key in the development of students into global citizens (Adams & Sperling, 2003). The extent to which the institution in question makes connections to the wider world in order to benefit its faculty and students is explored in the study.

The fifth element is “educational organizations as knowledge centers” (Webber & Scott, 2008, p. 4), meaning that the organizations are able to expand the role that they have traditionally
played. As well as forming learning communities that include faculty, students, and support staff, educational organizations can respond to community needs. This component of the framework recognizes the need for educational entrepreneurs to be aware of community issues and social justice in their efforts to improve education. Thailand has a recent history of conflict (Terwiel, 2011), which heightens the importance of educational organizations in responding to community needs. The study investigates whether the organization in question responds to such needs while engaging in educational entrepreneurship.

The final element of the framework is “integrated face-to-face and Internet-based learning” (Webber & Scott, 2008, p. 4). This element emphasizes the growing role of e-learning in educational entrepreneurship. E-learning is international, and it provides a competitive market, which encourages competition (Webber & Scott, 2008). This creates many opportunities for educational organizations, but it also exposes them to a much larger group of competitors. E-learning has yet to have a major impact on EFL in Thailand. The study investigates the ways in which the EFL program that is the focus of the case study uses the Internet as it engages in educational entrepreneurship.

All in all, Webber and Scott’s (2008) framework for educational entrepreneurship aligns well with the other elements of the study. It provides a lens through which to interpret and analyze the data collected in the case study of a language program in Thailand. Using this framework, the ways that the program engages in educational entrepreneurship, the expected outcomes, and the challenges that the program faces can be better understood.
Table 1

*Dimensions of Webber and Scott’s (2008) Educational Entrepreneurship Framework*

- Innovative behavior
- Networking
- Time-space communication framework
- Local-global perspective
- Educational organizations as knowledge centers
- Integrated face-to-face and Internet-based learning

**Research Questions**

Three research questions guide this thesis. They are as follows:

1. How does one intensive EFL program in Thailand engage in educational entrepreneurship in order to meet the changing needs of its learners?

2. What outcomes do educational leaders and teachers in the program expect as a result of their entrepreneurial activity and why do they expect those outcomes?

3. What challenges does the EFL program face in pursuing educational entrepreneurship?

Investigating these three questions provides insight into the phenomenon of educational entrepreneurship in this context.

**Research Design**

This case study uses general qualitative methods to investigate the processes through which an intensive EFL program in Thailand engages in educational entrepreneurship in response to a rapidly changing environment and to the needs of learners. Data collected through semi-structured interviews, a focus group, and documents were analyzed through the lens of the educational entrepreneurship framework proposed by Webber and Scott (2008). The data collection phase of this study spanned 6 months, and the analysis spanned another 6 months. Research began once IRB approval had been granted.
Positionality

Reflecting on my positionality is necessary to minimize bias in this research. This reflection is particularly important because I have significant privilege in this context. Firstly, I am the director of the language center at which the research was conducted. This means that I interviewed colleagues who were technically answerable to me in the hierarchy of the organization. Although our center has a relatively horizontal organizational structure with relatively little formal power on the part of the director or the course coordinators, my status could still introduce bias to the research. That being said, recognizing the potential for bias is the first step towards controlling it. While conducting this research, I remained mindful of the potential biases.

An additional source of potential bias is my perspective on the theoretical framework, educational entrepreneurship. I am a proponent of innovation in education and of educational technology. I do my best to stay abreast of current theory in language education by attending conferences and reading academic articles and to apply current theory to the curriculum of the program. Furthermore, I have committed a significant amount of time to training in various educational technologies, and I have arranged several workshops for the teachers at the center to develop their technology skills. Finally, as a former exchange student to England, France, and Thailand, I have a potential bias in favor of internationalization and sensitivity of the local-global perspective as described by Webber and Scott (2008). In short, I have a potential bias in favor of educational entrepreneurship, and I attempted to remain mindful of this bias while conducting this research.

Further factors also grant me significant privilege. I am white, male, and a native speaker of English. Furthermore, I hold two university degrees from the United States. I am employed by
a university that is well known within Thailand, and I hold a minor administrative position at that university. In addition to being mindful of my privilege in this situation, I must also be mindful that I am an outsider. I teach in the Thai educational system, but I was not educated in this system. Although I have lived and worked in Thailand since 2005, I still have not internalized many aspects of the culture. As I undertook this research, I was mindful that these factors influence my perception.

Possessing a Western-education and speaking English as a first language also convey privilege. English is regarded as the highest-status foreign language in Thailand (Buripakdi, 2011). The number of “international” (i.e., English-medium) schools in Thailand is increasing rapidly, and many middle- and upper-class Thai families send their children to study abroad in Western countries. Several universities, including the university at which this research was conducted, offer English-medium programs in addition to Thai-medium programs. The English-medium program at the university where this research has been conducted is explicitly modeled on the Western liberal arts model.

Being an employee of a well-known government university conveys privilege. Power distance, which measures the extent to which individuals in a culture accept unequal distribution of power (Hofstede Center, 2014a), is high in Thai culture (Hofstede Center, 2014b). This means that Thais are more likely than members of cultures that have low power distance to accept rigid hierarchies. As I hold an administrative position at the university, I benefit from this characteristic of Thai culture.

I have conducted this research in the Thai educational system, a system to which I am still an outsider. Apart from the year that I spent completing an M.Ed. in Rhode Island, I have lived and worked in Thailand for the past decade. I have studied Thai language both formally
and informally, and I have achieved a moderate proficiency. I have also studied Thai culture; however, I have not internalized many of the Thai cultural values. This is consistent with Parsons’ (2008) observation that internalized culture is highly resistant to change. I was raised in a much more individualistic culture that has much lower power distance, and I still find some aspects of Thai culture difficult to accept. For example, individuals are often hesitant to speak their mind due to the high value that individuals place on social harmony.

All of this being said, I am still able to conduct meaningful research in this context if I am sufficiently mindful of my positionality. Briscoe (2005) recommends caution when studying social groups as an outsider; however, she argues that conducting such research is still possible. In order to conduct this research, I need to be careful to avoid stereotyping Thais as members of the developing world. There is significant diversity among developing countries, rendering stereotypes about developing nations counterproductive (Fennell & Arnot, 2008). Instead of relying on stereotypes, researchers must develop an understanding of their particular context (Fennell & Arnot, 2008). Forming a deficit understanding of Thai culture would also be counterproductive. Such “common sense” (Jupp & Slattery, 2010, p. 203) understandings compare a new culture to the norms established by the researcher’s own culture. In this case, I must avoid judging Thai culture by the standards of American culture. While conducting this research in the Thai educational system does pose certain challenges, I am able to minimize bias by remaining mindful of my positionality.
Chapter II: Literature Review

This literature review has two main aims. First, it describes the history and current state of English teaching in Asia, highlighting aspects of the situation that create opportunities for educational entrepreneurship. Second, it investigates entrepreneurship and educational entrepreneurship with an eye to the application of these theories in understanding educational entrepreneurship of an English as a foreign language (EFL) program in Asia. The review traces the development of the definition of entrepreneurship from the seminal authors to the present day. It evaluates the available definitions and selects a definition appropriate for use in further research. Next, this review evaluates the multiple approaches to creating an entrepreneurial orientation construct, seeking a construct appropriate for use in research on EFL programs in the Asian context. Then the review explores the literature on educational entrepreneurship itself. This literature review draws heavily on theoretical works on entrepreneurship, entrepreneurial orientation, and educational entrepreneurship. Seminal works in all areas are included, whereas quantitative research has been excluded. The objective of this literature review is to provide theoretical frameworks for future qualitative research, and many of the available quantitative studies on entrepreneurship are only tangentially related to this goal.

The State of English Education

In recent years, many Asian countries have implemented curricular reforms, moving their educational systems away from the traditional mode of teacher-centered, rote learning and toward more student-centered modes of learning. Although not all of these reforms have been successful, they have influenced all areas of the curriculum in some way. In many cases, changes at the administrative level have not successfully reached the classroom level. This pattern has been observed in Thailand in recent decades (Hallinger & Bryant, 2013).
The most recent round of reform attempts in the Thai educational system began in 1999 with the National Education Act. This act included among other changes such as decentralization of the educational system a wholesale transition from teacher-centered to student-centered learning (de Segovia & Hardison, 2009). Initially, many academics were optimistic about the act’s potential to reform education in Thailand (Fry, 2002a; Kirtikara, 2001; Sangnapaboworn, 2003); however, it soon became clear that the act had little real impact (Kantamara, Hallinger, & Jatiket, 2006). While the reforms envisioned by the drafters of the National Education Act were ambitious, these reforms were never enacted in many of the country’s classrooms (de Segovia & Hardison, 2009). Despite the promised changes, the traditional teacher-centered methods of education continued. The same is true of language education in other Asian countries. For example, Uysal and Bardakci (2014) report a similar situation in Turkey, where teachers continue to use “transmission-based grammar-oriented” (p. 1) methods, ignoring developments in curriculum that have been adopted in many other countries worldwide. The tension between curricular reform efforts and the traditional modes of education creates a space for entrepreneurship in language education. At the highest administrative levels, the shift to new methods of education is encouraged; however, relatively few institutions have managed to effect meaningful change.

The dominant paradigm of language teaching has changed significantly in tandem with the shift from teacher-centered to student-centered learning. In the 1940s, the audiolingual method of language teaching was developed (Brown, 2007). This method was strongly influenced by behaviorism and emphasized oral grammar drills, and grammar is prioritized over meaningful content. Audiolingual teaching is by nature teacher-centered, as the teacher sets drills and other exercises for the students to complete.
In the past few decades, communicative language teaching has become the dominant paradigm in many contexts worldwide (Brown, 2007). This approach to language teaching values the transmission of meaning over grammar. Grammatical mistakes are considered significant to the extent that they interfere with communication. All of this being said, the communicative approach to language teaching is much less dogmatic than previous approaches, and teachers are likely to suit their methods to their specific context. Brown (2007) comments that today’s language teaching is marked by an “absence of proclaimed ‘orthodoxies’ and ‘best’ methods” (p. 18). Regardless of the specific methods being used, the communicative approach tends to be much more student-centered than the audiolingual method. Students are encouraged to interact meaningfully with each other and to engage with content that interests them. Whereas the audiolingual method relied heavily on scripts, the communicative approach tends to encourage improvisation and free dialogue. These changes in the approach to teaching language have also been accompanied by changing views of the English language itself in international contexts.

**World Englishes and English as a lingua franca.** There is a growing acceptance of world Englishes and of English as a lingua franca. Until recently, varieties of English were commonly classified according to Kachru’s (1986) categories of inner circle, outer circle, and expanding circle countries (Canagarajah, 2006; Jenkins, Cogo, & Dewey, 2011). In this classification system of “three concentric circles of world Englishes” (Kachru, 2006, p. 242), countries in the inner circle include countries where English has long been spoken as the primary language, e.g., England, the United States, Canada, and Australia. Countries in the outer circle mainly include those that were colonized by inner-circle countries in past centuries, e.g., India and Nigeria. The varieties of English spoken in these countries originated in the context of
colonialism, but have since become a part of the legal, governmental, or educational institutions of those countries (Kachru, 2006). Countries in the expanding circle include those that have never been colonized by inner-circle countries, but in which English is used as a means of communication. China, Russia and Brazil are prime examples of countries in the expanding circle.

Table 2

*Kachru’s (1986) Three Circles of English*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Circle Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inner circle</td>
<td>Norm providing (e.g., the United Kingdom, the United States, Australia)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outer circle</td>
<td>Norm developing (e.g., India, the Philippines)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expanding circle</td>
<td>Norm dependent (e.g., Russia, Japan, Indonesia)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Understanding world Englishes in this way has consequences for language teaching. The inner-circle, outer-circle, and expanding-circle countries can also be understood in terms of their role relative to the “norm” of English use (Canagarajah, 2006). In this view, the inner-circle countries can be considered the “owners” of English, and outer-circle and especially expanding-circle countries must comply with the norms created by the inner circle. Furthermore, in many cases the teaching of the culture of inner-circle countries has been intertwined with the teaching of the English language. Many textbooks contain chapters that focus on various social situations that one would encounter in the U.S. or the U.K, for example. Typically Anglophone names are used throughout these textbooks, and many of the examples involve locations in English-speaking countries. It is often thought that the ethnocentrism of these textbooks causes tension in the classroom, as it undervalues students’ home culture (Prodromou, 1988).

Currently, many scholars find fault with this understanding of the ownership of English. For example, Seidlhofer (2004) criticized Kachru’s classification of Indian English as “nonnative” despite its widespread and official use. Indeed, English has been in regular use in
India since the time of the British Empire, long enough for a specifically Indian variety of English to develop. According to Seidlhofer (2004), this Indian variety of English is not an imperfect version of the British variety English; it is a legitimate variety of English in its own right. Seidlhofer (2004) implies that the earlier classification system is simplistic and calls for reconceptualization of world Englishes in order to escape narrow views on “native” (Seidlhofer, 2004, p. 212) English.

Consequently, Seidlhofer (2004), Firth (1996), and House (2003) propose the reconceptualization of English as a lingua franca. This acknowledges that English is often used as a means of communication in situations that do not involve any native speakers, i.e., in situations in which all of the participants have learned English as a second or additional language, and that these individuals share neither a common first language nor common culture. The distinction between English as a lingua franca and other understandings of world Englishes can be further understood by two guiding principles (House, 2003). First of all, a deficit understanding that compares EFL to “native” English must be avoided. That is, speakers of English as a lingua franca cannot be judged in relation to a norm created by “native speakers” (House, 2003, p. 557). Secondly, fluent English as a lingua franca is a goal unto itself, not a waypoint in the development of “native” English. That is, English as a lingua franca speakers are not working to become like native speakers. They are speaking an equally valid variety of English, and they are not users of an “in-between system” (House, 2003, p. 557-558).

Accordingly, teachers who espouse English as a lingua franca strive to prepare their students for such interactions with multilingual, multicultural individuals. Because no native English speakers are involved, teaching students about English or American culture has little benefit for the learners. Likewise, native-like pronunciation of English is unimportant in these
situations. Rather than sounding like native speakers of English, the participants in these interactions “naturally sound like multilinguals” (Kirkpatrick, 2012, p. 40).

English as a lingua franca legitimizes world Englishes. Whereas earlier views of English include a hierarchy that gives greater status to countries such as England and the United States, English as a lingua franca includes no such hierarchy. Whereas earlier theorists such as Kachru (1986) stated the norms were set by the “native speakers” in the inner-circle countries, English as a lingua franca theorists present a much more “fluid and egalitarian” (Canagarajah, 2006, p. 199) view, acknowledging the validity of diverse language communities. This view of English removes the inner-circle countries from their place of authority at the center of the Anglosphere.

This reconceptualization of global Englishes has implications for the teaching of English in many contexts worldwide. Whereas traditional approaches to teaching English focused on achieving a native-like accent and proficiency, English as a lingua franca focuses on achieving communicative ability in real-world situations (MacKenzie, 2014). The goals of English as a lingua franca teaching are enumerated clearly by Kirkpatrick (2014), who explains several principles of teaching English in Asia according to the principles of English as a lingua franca. Firstly, such teaching aims for mutual intelligibility, not native-like proficiency. Secondly, it aims to cultivate knowledge of contextually relevant cultures, not of inner-circle cultures. Thirdly, it recognizes the value of local teachers who are multilingual. Fourthly, it recognizes the value of learning English in contexts where English is used as a lingua franca. Fifthly, it recognizes that spoken language and written language can differ greatly and that they may be influenced differently by the linguistic context. Finally, it recognizes that assessment needs to be related to the context in which it is given, for example the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in Kirkpatrick’s (2014) recent research. As these ideas gain wider currency,
they will continue to bring about change in the way that English is taught. These ongoing changes create opportunities for educational entrepreneurship.

Table 3

*Kirkpatrick’s (2014) Principles of the English as a Lingua Franca Approach (quoted verbatim)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The native speaker of English is not the linguistic target. Mutual intelligibility is the goal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The native speaker’s culture is not the cultural target. Intercultural competence in relevant cultures is the goal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local multilinguals who are suitably trained provide the most appropriate language teachers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lingua franca environments provide excellent learning environments for lingua franca speakers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spoken is not the same as written.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment must be relevant to the ASEAN context.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Developments in technology.** Developments in educational technology are another major environmental factor impacting the teaching of EFL in Asia. Together, changes in the role of English and technological changes have effected significant change, creating opportunities for entrepreneurship. Technological developments have provided English teachers with many new tools, some of which have the potential to revolutionize language teaching; however, the potential of many of these tools has yet to be tapped. These largely untapped technologies create opportunities for educational entrepreneurship. The technologies come in many forms, and thousands of articles referencing their development have been published in recent years (Ertmer et al., 2012). Some examples include the subtitling of videos by students (Stewart & Pertusa, 2004), use of cellphones in language learning (Kiernan & Aizawa, 2004), the use of “virtual intercultural dialogue” (Thorne, 2013, p. 1) through online exchanges, the implementation of mobile games that make use of GPS technology (Thorne, 2013), and the inclusion of informal learning online (Sockett, 2014) in the range of activities available to the learner. These
technologies and many others have been integrated into language teaching in classrooms around the world.

Both the advent of new educational technologies and the more effective use of existing technologies provide opportunities for educational entrepreneurship. Specific applications of educational technology in the context of an intensive EFL program in Thailand are described and analyzed later in this thesis. Understanding the shifting role of English in Asia and the development of educational technology is useful in understanding the ways in which a specific EFL program in Thailand engages in educational entrepreneurship.

As outlined in the introduction, entrepreneurship involves the creation of “new means-ends relationships” (Shane & Venkataraman, 2000, p. 220). The various new means mentioned above — new approaches to teaching and learning, new methodologies for language teaching, and new educational technologies — provide a wealth of formerly unavailable options to educators. Many of these new means remain relatively underutilized in the Asian context, creating an opportunity for educational institutions to be early adopters. Combined with new ends — most notably educating students in English as a lingua franca rather than in “inner circle” (Kachru, 2006) American or British English — many novel combinations of means and ends are available. The following section further explores the meaning of entrepreneurship, particularly educational entrepreneurship.

**Defining Entrepreneurship**

The term *entrepreneurship* is used widely; however, the definitions that researchers provide are often vague and sometimes inconsistent. This impacts the state of entrepreneurship research, which has become a “hodgepodge” (Shane & Venkataraman, 2000, p. 217) because of
the broad use of this label. Before addressing other areas of research, this review explores the definition of entrepreneurship.

**Seminal definitions.** Theorists have used the term *entrepreneurship* for hundreds of years, beginning perhaps with Jean Baptiste Say circa 1800 (Drucker, 1985). Say observed, “The entrepreneur shifts economic resources out of an area of lower and into an area of higher productivity and greater yield” (as quoted in Smith and Petersen, 2006, p. 17). Say’s ideas were further developed by theorists such as Mill (1848), who posited that risk was an essential element of entrepreneurship. Schumpeter, who pioneered the idea of creative destruction (Schiller & Crewson, 1997), claims that Mill popularized the term *entrepreneurship* in economic circles (Carland, Hoy, & Carland, 1988). To Schumpeter, capitalist markets were able to function effectively because of the drive for innovation and entrepreneurship (Schumpeter, 1934; Schiller & Crewson, 1997). In his view, entrepreneurship was critical in effecting change in capitalist societies (Shane & Venkataraman, 2000). Schumpeter’s definition of entrepreneurship was much broader than Say’s, as it included not only individuals seeking to profit by shifting resources to areas of higher productivity but also managers of existing businesses and individuals involved in the public and nonprofit sectors (Schiller & Crewson, 1997). Subsequent theorists continued to broaden the definition of entrepreneurship and to apply it in domains other than business, resulting in hundreds of divergent definitions (Morris, Lewis, & Sexton, 1994).

**Contemporary definitions.** The many definitions of *entrepreneurship* can be classified into distinct categories. In an analysis of 75 common definitions of entrepreneurship, Morris et al. (1994) found that the top five most common key terms were “starting/founding/creating, new business/new venture, innovation/new products/new market, pursuit of opportunity” and “risk-taking/risk management/uncertainty” (p. 23). The breadth of these key terms indicate that
entrepreneurship now encompasses much more than it did originally. This breadth has also led theorists such as Morris et al. (1994) and Gartner (1990) to attempt to categorize these definitions.

Morris et al. (1994) advance a system of categorization that separates perspectives on entrepreneurship into seven categories: creation of wealth, creating of enterprise, creation of innovation, creation of change, creation of employment, creation of value, and creation of growth. The first perspective, the creation of wealth, is consistent with Say’s strictly economic definition (Smith and Petersen, 2006). Some theorists, such as Gartner, argue that the creation of enterprise is essential to entrepreneurship, and thus that activities that do not result in the creation of enterprise are not entrepreneurial activities (as cited in Carland, Hoy, & Carland, 1988). Other theorists, such as Drucker (1985) connect entrepreneurship and innovation. According to Drucker (1985), entrepreneurship is innovation in response to changes in the environment, such as industry structure, demographics, or new knowledge. As for change, Morris et al. 1994) found change to be the fifteenth most common key term in their study of 75 definitions of entrepreneurship. For yet other theorists, such as Schiller and Crewson (2001), entrepreneurship can be understood to mean self-employment. Others, such as Amit and Zott (2001) propose a close link between entrepreneurship and value creation. The concept of entrepreneurship as proactive growth is present in Sexton and Bowman-Upton (1991) among others.

Whereas Morris et al. (1994) identified major perspectives on the meaning of entrepreneurship, Gartner (1990) identified eight common themes in the discussion of entrepreneurship: “entrepreneurs, innovation, organization creation, creating value, profit or non-profit, growth, uniqueness, and owner-manager” (p. 15). The majority of these areas overlap: innovation, creation of organizations/employment, creation of value, and creation of growth.
Furthermore, Morris et al.’s category of employment creation is similar to Gartner’s theme of owner-manager. One major difference is that Gartner (1990) includes profit or non-profit in his definitions. This provides an additional subdivision within the field of entrepreneurship, dividing entrepreneurs based on their involvement with a specific type of organization.

The various definitions of entrepreneurship posited by researchers typically contain more than one of the themes described above. For example, George and Zahra (2002) define entrepreneurship as “new venture creation, innovation, and risk taking” (p. 5). The first two components of the definition, new venture creation and innovation, fall neatly into the classifications described above. The third, risk taking, is closely linked to the seminal definition offered by Mill (1848). While categorization schemes are useful, they may also give the false impression that researchers are proposing monodimensional definitions of entrepreneurship, which is not the case.

After analyzing main perspectives on entrepreneurship prevalent in the literature, Morris et al. (1994) synthesize the perspectives as follows:

Entrepreneurship is a process activity. It generally involves the following inputs: an opportunity; one or more proactive individuals; an organizational context; risk, innovation; and resources. It can produce the following outcomes: a new venture or enterprise; value; new products or processes; profit or personal benefit; and growth. (p. 26)

The researchers are careful to indicate that entrepreneurship is variable, i.e., it is heavily dependent on context. For this reason, even a well-constructed definition may be unable to sufficiently capture the nature of entrepreneurship (Morris et al., 1994). Using the degree and frequency of entrepreneurship as the two main dimensions of variability, the researchers
demonstrates five possible scenarios: a low frequency, low degree scenario is periodic/incremental; a low frequency, high degree scenario is periodic/discontinuous; a high frequency, low degree scenario is continuous/incremental and a high frequency, high degree scenario is revolutionary. Finally, the moderate frequency, moderate degree scenario is dynamic (Morris et al., 1994). This attempt to make the definition of entrepreneurship contingent on context does provide flexibility.

**Arguments against redefining entrepreneurship.** A great deal of time and attention has been dedicated to defining entrepreneurship. In the eyes of some researchers, such as Low (2001), entrepreneurship researchers have spent “disproportionate unproductive time” (p. 18) on this effort. Kilby (1971) compares the effort to define entrepreneurship to the hunting of an imaginary beast. Veciana (2007) furthers this argument, claiming that a scientific approach to the study of entrepreneurship would not necessarily begin by formulating an opinion. According to Veciana (2007), many researchers indulge in a tempting but counterproductive activity. After reviewing many existing definitions of entrepreneurship and finding them wanting, the researchers propose yet another new definition. As hundreds of definitions already exist, covering a vast range of possibilities, time spent on this redefinition may indeed be “unproductive” (Low, 2001, p. 18). For this reason, this literature review does not reformulate the definition of entrepreneurship; rather, it uses the contingent definition proposed by Morris et al. (1994), which is quoted above. This definition is suitably flexible, so it can be applied in fields not traditionally associated with entrepreneurship, such as education.

**Entrepreneurial Orientation (EO)**

The entrepreneurial orientation (EO) construct provides an alternative perspective on entrepreneurship. Rather than focusing on the definition of entrepreneurship itself, this construct
focuses on the way that firms approach entrepreneurship. This construct began to appear in the 1970s or 1980s, although the term *entrepreneurial orientation* was not used until the 1990s. Interest in this construct has grown to the point that it is now “arguably one of the most studied constructs in entrepreneurship literature” (George & Marino, 2011, p. 990) that enjoys a “strong and growing presence” (Covin & Lumpkin, 2011, p. 859) in the literature. Covin and Wales (2012) trace the roots of this construct back to Mintzberg’s 1973 research on the “entrepreneurial mode” (p. 679), and they credit Miller with designing a three-dimensional construct in 1983, a construct that included “innovativeness, risk taking, and proactiveness” (p. 680). In contrast with Covin and Wales (2012), Covin and Lumpkin (2011) indicate that “most researchers” (p. 855) credit Miller, not Mintzberg, with originating the EO construct, although Miller never used the term *entrepreneurial orientation*. In looking back at his 1983 article, Miller (2011) himself notes that he neither mentioned EO specifically nor intended “to develop an EO factor” (p. 873). Furthermore, Miller (2011) was surprised by the popularity of his early article, in which he had meant merely to provide a “crude typology of firms” (Miller, 1983, p. 770).

The seminal work on EO by Mintzberg and by Miller has developed into two distinct bodies of research: the “composite definition approach” (Covin & Lumpkin, 2011, p. 859) and the “multidimensional approach” (Covin & Lumpkin, 2011, p. 859). The composite approach is found in early articles by Miller (1983). Although Miller (1983) subdivided entrepreneurship into three variables — innovation, proactiveness, and risk-taking — there is little indication that the three variables would vary independently based on context. A similar approach is found in Covin and Slevin (1989), who discuss “entrepreneurial strategic posture” (p. 75) as a unified construct. Lumpkin and Dess (1996) provide a contrasting, multidimensional approach to the EO construct.
Dimensions of entrepreneurial orientation. Observing that the lack of consensus as to the definition of entrepreneurship has been a barrier to further developments of theory, Lumpkin and Dess (1996) furnish an alternative: the entrepreneurial orientation (EO) construct. This construct is related to the ideas of content (i.e., what is done) and process (i.e., how something is done) in the literature on strategic management. Rather than emphasizing what entrepreneurship is, they emphasize how it is done. Taking “new entry” (Lumpkin & Dess, 1996, p. 136), either in the form of starting a new form or embarking on a new venture within an existing firm, as the basic meaning of entrepreneurship, they distinguish five dimensions of how entrepreneurship is undertaken: “autonomy, innovativeness, risk taking, proactiveness, and competitive aggressiveness” (Lumpkin & Dess, 1996, p. 136). In applying the EO, researchers must be aware that its applicability is contingent on context and that it has been designed for a specific level of analysis. Lumpkin and Dess (1996) explain that both the impact of EO on performance and the relationship among the five dimensions of EO vary depending on the context. This is a key difference between the composite and multidimensional approaches to EO. Also, because new entry is generally a firm-level action — as is true in classical economics, a small business can be seen as an “extension” of its leader (Lumpkin & Dess, 1996, p. 138) — the EO has been designed for analysis at the organizational level (Lumpkin & Dess, 1996). Using the EO construct, Lumpkin and Dess (1996) and subsequent researchers using their framework are able to avoid some of the controversy associated with defining entrepreneurship.

Dess and Lumpkin (2005) have continued to develop and clarify their EO construct since its original publication in 1996, however the five core elements have remained unchanged. The first element, autonomy, was originally defined as self-direction (Lumpkin & Dess, 1996). In a more recent article, the authors explain that many of the best ideas for entrepreneurship come
from the “bottom up” (Dess & Lumpkin, 2005, p. 149) and that these ideas can be stifled if employees do not have autonomy. The second element, innovativeness, describes a firm’s capacity for creating new ideas and processes (Lumpkin & Dess, 1996). In defining this construct, the authors refer to one of the seminal theorists of entrepreneurship, Schumpeter, and his concept of creative destruction (Lumpkin & Dess, 1996). A more recent article defines innovativeness as “a firm’s efforts to find new opportunities and novel solutions .... innovativeness requires that firms depart from existing technologies and practices and venture beyond the current state of the art” (Dess & Lumpkin, 2005, p. 150). The researchers note that innovativeness involves serious risks, as not all innovations succeed (Dess & Lumpkin, 2005). The third element, risk taking, is characterized by actions such as incurring debt or committing large proportions of a firm’s assets (Lumpkin & Dess, 1996). This is later clarified as a willingness to embrace an opportunity without possessing full knowledge of potential outcomes (Dess & Lumpkin, 2005). All business ventures involve risk of some kind, but firms with an entrepreneurial orientation are more tolerant of risk than other firms. The fourth element, proactiveness, involves initiative and the pursuit of opportunities (Lumpkin & Dess, 1996). This perspective is important for companies that hope to lead their industries. Finally, Lumpkin and Dess (1996) assert that competitive aggressiveness is important to a new venture’s survival. A firm that demonstrates these characteristics is more likely to survive. It is important to emphasize that although many entrepreneurial firms do exhibit all of these behaviors, the five dimensions may vary independently.

The two approaches to defining EO, the composite approach and the multidimensional approach, have continued to appear in entrepreneurship literature. The composite approach has appeared in articles by authors including Zahra and Neubaum (1998) and Avlonitis and Salavou
The multidimensional approach in the form popularized by Lumpkin and Dess (1996) has also appeared frequently, for example in the articles of Voss, Voss, and Moorman (2005) and Pearce, Fritz, and Davis (2010). Since Lumpkin and Dess proposed their five-dimensional EO construct in 1996, no significantly adapted multidimensional EO constructs have received attention in the literature (Covin & Wales, 2011). While both approaches have their merits, the contingent, multidimensional approach may be more appropriate for application in a wide variety of contexts.

**Educational Entrepreneurship**

An increasing number of journal articles have been devoted to the phenomenon of educational entrepreneurship (Man, 2010). Several researchers have proposed definitions of educational entrepreneurs. Smith and Petersen (2006) defined the educational entrepreneur as “a rare breed of innovator whose characteristics and activities may lead to the transformation — not merely the slight improvement — of the public education system.” Peterson (2009) does not define educational entrepreneurs, but notes, “education entrepreneurs, acting like their counterparts in private business, are infusing certain corners of America’s moribund public education system with innovation and modernization” (p. 7). Hess (2007) notes the role of educational entrepreneurs in founding new and influential organizations and flouting conventions. These definitions are similar in that they emphasize innovation as a key characteristic of educational entrepreneurs.

**Dimensions of educational entrepreneurship.** Webber and Scott (2008) propose a six-dimensional framework for educational entrepreneurship: “innovative behavior, networking, time-space communication framework, local-global perspective, educational organizations as knowledge centers, and integrated face-to-face and Internet-based learning” (p. 1). The first
dimension, innovative behavior, also appears in various EO constructs, including the seminal construct proposed by Miller (1983) and the multidimensional construct described by Lumpkin and Dess (1996); however, Webber and Scott (2008) define innovative behavior as “generation of knowledge and skills” (p. 4), a definition which, in contrast with the definition provided by Dess & Lumpkin, 2005), does not include technological innovations.

The second dimension of Webber and Scott’s (2008) framework, networking, also has “roots” (p. 2) in business studies. According to Webber and Scott (2008), networking is of growing importance, and it is often a primary determinant of whether a company is able to adapt to changes in its environment and survive. In the field of business, authors such as Fuellhart and Glasmeier (2003) describe the range networking strategies that firms use to find necessary information about their environment. Networking is not included in the common EO constructs; however, it is tangentially related to proactiveness and competitive aggressiveness, two components of EO construct proposed by Lumpkin and Dess (1996). Networking would provide a company with the information necessary to be proactive and to engage aggressively with the competition.

The third dimension is time-space communication framework. Webber and Scott (2008) define time-space communication framework as “local and distributed communication, learning through space and time” (p. 4), including both synchronous and asynchronous communication (Webber & Scott, 2008). This dimension of the educational entrepreneurship framework also has roots in business in the work of Van Geenhuizen (2004), who examined the use of emergent strategies in the manufacturing and communication sectors, specifically strategies centered on reductions in the need for physical proximity because of emerging technologies. The insights that he offers are equally valid in education.
The fourth, fifth, and sixth dimensions of the educational entrepreneurship framework proposed by Webber and Scott (2008) — “local-global perspective, educational organizations as centers of knowledge, and integrating face-to-face and Internet-based learning” (p. 4) — are closely related. All three involve the creating and sharing of knowledge through Internet-based and face-to-face interaction. Local-global perspective relies on faculty members to enable students to overcome their ethnocentrism (Webber & Scott, 2008, p.2). To engage in educational entrepreneurship, educational organizations must pay attention to the needs of the community in order to be centers of knowledge. The idea of meeting needs by searching for opportunities (Mintzberg, 1973, p. 45) is also found in the business sector. The final element of the framework, integrating Internet-based and face-to-face learning, places educational organizations in a wider arena, where they must face increased competition. To succeed in this environment, they must demonstrate competitive aggressiveness, a key element in Lumpkin and Dess’s (1996) EO construct. The use of newly emerging technologies has potential for transformative effects on education as well as on industry, providing opportunities for educational entrepreneurship.

Opportunities for educational entrepreneurs abound. As Hess (2007) observes, “To an unprecedented degree, this is the era of educational entrepreneurship” (p. 1). Webber and Scott’s (2008) framework, which borrows heavily from research on corporate entrepreneurship but focuses more on innovation and less on risk and autonomy than the EO construct, provides a tool for examining entrepreneurship in education. Webber and Scott’s framework also focuses heavily on the opportunities created by new technologies that have the potential to revolutionize education. The vast potential of these technologies raises a serious question: “In the 21st century, is it possible to educate children in radically more effective ways?” (Hess, 2007, p. 11).
**Opportunities for educational entrepreneurship.** As described above, education in many Asian countries is undergoing deep changes, most notably a shift from teacher-centered instruction to student-centered instruction. In language education, this shift is accompanied by other equally important changes: transition from outdated audiolingual methods to more current communicative methods and movement towards including meaningful content in language instruction. Yet further changes are being brought about by the increasing availability and power of educational technologies. In short, this is a period of great change.

Times of change and instability such as this present opportunities for new ventures and for innovation. Organizations that are able to act as described by Lumpkin and Dess’s (1996) Entrepreneurial Orientation, that is, demonstrating “autonomy, innovativeness, risk taking, proactiveness, and competitive aggressiveness” (p. 136) may be able to benefit from the many currents of change, whereas organizations that are unable or unwilling to engage with these massive changes risk becoming obsolete. Webber and Scott’s (2008) educational entrepreneurship framework provides an even more focused view of behaviors demonstrated by organizations that seek to adapt to current conditions and best serve their stakeholders: “innovative behavior, networking, time-space communication framework, local-global perspective, educational organizations as knowledge centers, and integrated face-to-face and Internet-based learning” (p. 1). Change presents dangers to organizations, but it also provides opportunities for entrepreneurship.

**Definitions of Innovation**

Innovation is a widely used term in the literature on entrepreneurship; however, there is little consensus on its precise meaning. Definitions of innovation in the literature vary, and many researchers rely on an implied, rather than stated, definition. Furthermore, some definitions of
Innovation are extremely vague, for example, “‘Innovation’ – the attempt to bring about beneficial change” (West & Farr, 1990, p. 9).

In an attempt to reach a definition that “captures the essence” (p. 1323) of innovation, Baregheh, Rowley, and Sambrook (2009) analyzed 60 definitions of innovation from a range of fields. Baregheh et al. (2009) justify the need for this analysis by pointing out the wide range of available definitions across disciplines: “‘innovation’ has many different definitions that align with the dominant paradigm of the respective disciplines” (p. 1323). Their analysis yielded the following definition: “Innovation is the multi-stage process whereby organizations transform ideas into new/improved products, service or processes, in order to advance, compete and differentiate themselves successfully in their marketplace” (Baregheh et al., 2009, p. 1334).

Two definitions of innovation, a business-oriented definition by Thompson (1965) and an education-oriented definition by Weideman (2002), exemplify the differences in the definition of innovation in business and education. Thompson (1965) provides a definition that is frequently cited in the field of business: “the generation, acceptance, and implementation of new ideas, processes, products or services” (p. 2). Furthermore, Thompson (1965) clearly differentiates between adaptive organizations and innovative organizations: innovation implies adaptation, but adaptation does not imply innovation. Innovation requires the generation of new ideas, whereas adaptation can mean the implementation of preexisting ideas. Writing about change in language teaching in Africa, Weideman (2002) claims that implementing a change in a particular context can be considered an innovation even if that change has already been implemented elsewhere. He described innovation as a means of aligning belief and practice: “The introduction … of [communicative language teaching in Africa] can, when one considers it from the angle of achieving an alignment between belief and practice, be viewed as a case of the introduction of an
innovation” (Weideman, 2002, p. 29). Weideman’s (2002) belief that innovation can mean putting existing ideas into practice in a new context stands in contrast with Thompson’s (1965) definition.

**Implications for Theoretical Framework**

The end results of this review are promising: a clear but flexible definition of entrepreneurship and a six-dimensional educational entrepreneurship construct that is based on both educational theory and business theory. The definition, from Morris et al. (1994) is a synthesis of many other definitions that have been proposed over the years, and it is applicable outside of the corporate world. The five-dimensional EO construct by Lumpkin and Dess (1996) has withstood the test of time; it is still in use in its original form. Like the definition of entrepreneurship proposed by Morris et al. (1994), this construct is flexible and applicable in a variety of contexts. Finally, the six-dimensional framework for understanding educational entrepreneurship that Webber and Scott (2008) propose incorporates many ideas from both business theory and educational theory. The Webber and Scott (2008) framework is used as the theoretical basis of this thesis; knowing its origins and related constructs is beneficial.

This literature review has developed the knowledge base that I bring to my research by providing a solid understanding of the many facets of entrepreneurship and the current educational context in which the research is situated. Having explored the many ways that entrepreneurship and educational entrepreneurship have been theorized gives me confidence that Webber and Scott’s (2008) framework is appropriate for this research. Shane and Venkataraman (2000) note that entrepreneurship involves the creation of “new means-ends relationships” (p. 220). The means that I have identified in this review, particularly the technological means, and explicitly included in the framework. The new ends of English teaching also fit into the
framework, particularly in the local-global framework element. Finally, innovation, the “sine qua non” of entrepreneurship (Malecki, Nijkamp, & Stough, 2004, p. 1) is represented in this framework. The concepts explored in this literature review inform my investigation of educational entrepreneurship at a language center in Asia.
Chapter III: Research Design

This study investigated three research questions: 1) How does this intensive English as a foreign language (EFL) program in Thailand engage in educational entrepreneurship in order to meet the changing needs of its learners? 2) What outcomes do they expect as a result of their entrepreneurial activity and why do they expect those outcomes? 3) What challenges does the EFL program face in pursuing educational entrepreneurship? This study’s research tradition, research design, data analysis procedures, and ethical considerations are included in this chapter.

Research Tradition

This research was conducted in the qualitative case study tradition as described by Yin (2014). As such, it had certain basic characteristics. These included some flexibility of research design, the consideration of multiple realities, data collection by the researcher, and inclusion of the views of participants as important data (Creswell, 2013). The goal of qualitative research is to explore a problem and to achieve an in-depth understanding of a particular phenomenon (Creswell, 2012), and the choice of the qualitative tradition had deep implications for all aspects of the study. For example, data was collected from a relatively small number of individuals, allowing for depth rather than breadth of coverage. The influence of the qualitative method also extended to data analysis, which involved the creation of themes in order to explore the meaning of the data (Creswell, 2012). All of these characteristics aligned with the goal of the study, making qualitative research the appropriate choice.

Selection of case. This EFL program was selected for this case study because of its perceived engagement in educational entrepreneurship as defined by Webber and Scott (2008). That is, the program was networking, making global connections, using Internet-based
technologies for communication and teaching, and making connections with the community. It was also perceived to be innovating, engaging in new behaviors that were not commonly practiced in Thai EFL programs. For example, the program was committed to teaching English using locally relevant content, to raising students’ awareness of globally important issues, and to using educational technologies to better meet learners’ needs. An example of locally relevant content was a media-based project that was completed in the lower-intermediate course. In this project, students researched a recent news story of their choice from an Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) country. They synthesized information from several news outlets to create a written report and short video. To complete the video, they also had to interview two people with expertise relevant to the story. This project also made significant use of available technologies, such as video recording using mobile phones and video editing. Content that was relevant globally was evident in the upper-intermediate course, where students were taught about the triple bottom line framework for business sustainability (Elkington, 1997). This framework assesses social, environmental, and financial aspects of firms’ performance. The students were assigned a major multinational company, and they assessed its sustainability using the triple bottom line framework. Working with a faculty advisor, they produced a term paper and prepared an oral presentation about their major findings. This course also used several educational technologies, including Google Docs (Google, 2016a) for peer editing, VoiceThread (VoiceThread LLC, 2016) for presentation practice, and Hangouts on Air (Google, 2016b) for collaboration. The projects described here are two examples of innovative behavior consistent with Webber and Scott’s (2008) educational entrepreneurship model. These and other innovative aspects of the program made its inclusion in this study worthwhile.
**Data sources.** At the site, data was collected from two main sources: the five course coordinators and a focus group of four teachers. As the researcher was also employed in this program, this could be considered a sample of convenience (Creswell, 2012). All five of the course coordinators were included. Four other specific teachers were asked to participate. These teachers were purposefully chosen to maximize the usefulness of the interview data. An effort was also be made to choose teachers who represent the overall demographics of the population of teachers from which they are drawn. A more detailed description of the demographics of the population and of the teachers selected is included in the section of this chapter on sampling. Potential respondents received a letter (Appendix B) explaining the research and asking for their participation. The participants were asked to sign an informed consent form (Appendix C). All participants were over 18 years of age, and all participants spoke English as a first language. Participants were asked to participate in one 1-hour session. The course coordinators were interviewed individually for 1 hour, whereas the other four teachers participated in a 1-hour focus group session. The course coordinators were interviewed individually because their role in administration and curriculum development allowed them to understand of the center’s functioning at the program level. For this reason, they were interviewed individually to allow follow-up questions and answers in depth. The focus group of teachers provided an opportunity to include a larger number of participants and to observe interaction, agreement, and disagreement among participants. These sessions were conducted on site at the language program in a meeting room.

Documents were also collected for triangulation, i.e., the use of multiple data sources to ensure the validity of the conclusions (Yin, 2014, p. 241). These documents included course syllabi, passing rates of the various classes, enrollment figures, and teaching materials. During
interviews and focus group session, teachers were asked to provide or recommend additional documents that could be useful in the study.

**Research Design**

The study took a qualitative case study approach. All aspects of this research were aligned with the principles of qualitative research. Creswell (2013) describes the characteristics of such research: the research is conducted in a natural setting, not a contrived or artificial setting such as a lab; the researcher takes a central role as a “key instrument” (p. 45) for gathering data, interviewing, and making observations; multiple forms of data are used; themes are created using inductive analysis. The focus of the research is on the participants’ perspectives; the design of the project is emergent, meaning that it may be progressively amended based on the researcher’s findings; the researcher must state his or her positionality; and the results of the research are holistic (Creswell, 2013). The study was consistent with these characteristics of qualitative research.

Data was gathered from participants in their place of work at a language center. The researcher personally gathered the data and interviewed participants. The data included transcripts of interviews, transcripts of the focus group session, and supporting documents from the center, providing multiple sources of information. Themes emerged from the data inductively. The perspectives of the teachers interviewed were emphasized in the data collection and analysis. The researcher’s positionality as part of the team of teachers participating in the research and as a foreigner in Thailand was also taken into account.

The case study uses a general inductive approach, as described by Thomas (2003), to analyze the data. The purposes of this approach are to condense data into concise results, to connect these results to the objectives of the research, and to find the “underlying structure”
(Thomas, 2006, p. 237) of the data. This approach is straightforward, and it does not require alignment with a complex philosophy (Thomas, 2006). The final outcome of analysis using this approach is a description of the central themes that underlie the data, an outcome that is appropriate for this study. This approach is consistent with aspects of the study outlined above. After collecting raw data from interviews and other sources, the researcher attempts to gain a deeper understanding of the phenomenon of educational entrepreneurship by looking for themes in the data. In order to answer the research questions about educational entrepreneurship in the language program, it is necessary to derive the “underlying structure of experiences or processes” (Thomas, 2002, p. 237). In short, the general inductive approach is consistent with the research questions of the study, with qualitative research, and with this type of case study.

In holding with the principles of qualitative research described above, this study gathered data from three sources: a semi-structured interview with each of the five course coordinators, a focus group of four teachers, and supporting documents. Creswell (2012) emphasized the importance of triangulation, which involves collecting data from various sources. Collecting various types of data using different methods is also part of triangulation. In this case, multiple individuals were interviewed and multiple types of data were collected. This allows the writing of a more “accurate and credible” (Creswell, 2012, p. 259) report that provides insight about the phenomenon of educational entrepreneurship in this context.

This case study met the three criteria for the application of the case study research as described by Yin (2014). First, case study research is appropriate for examining “how” or “why” a phenomenon occurs (Yin, 2014, p. 2). This aim suited the study, which sought to understand both how and why an EFL program engaged in educational entrepreneurship. Second, case study research is appropriate when the researcher cannot manipulate events to create experimental
conditions (Yin, 2014). This condition sometimes occurs in educational contexts, as experiments can cause logistical problems (Creswell, 2012). In the case of this particular study, some elements of experimental design, for example setting up a control group and an experimental group or holding certain variables constant, would have been impractical. The changes to the curriculum that created the conditions for this study were designed to manipulate the performance of students in the program; however, these curricular changes were not made under experimental conditions. Third, the research aims to explore a “contemporary” (Yin, 2014, p. 2), as opposed to historical, phenomenon. This study aimed to describe the ongoing behavior of an EFL program as it responded to current pressures such as changes in the role of English and changes in technology, a phenomenon that certainly qualified as contemporary.

Within the tradition of case study research, this study made use of a single-case holistic design. According to Yin (2014), the single-case design is appropriate in certain circumstances, such as when the case is revelatory, i.e., when the case can provide insight into a phenomenon that is not generally accessible or that had not been widely studied in the past. This research into the phenomenon of educational entrepreneurship in a Thai language program had the potential to reveal new insights, as this phenomenon had not been widely studied. Furthermore, the researcher’s position as an insider in the organization in which the research was conducted provided access that might not otherwise be available. For these reasons, the single-case design was justified.

The choice of a holistic rather than embedded case study was informed by the research questions guiding this study. The level of analysis relevant to the research questions selected for this study was the program as a whole. That is, the study sought to understand educational entrepreneurship as it was implemented by the program, not as it was implemented by particular
subunits of the program. An embedded case study design would have used subunits allowing for fine-grained analysis (Yin, 2014); however, such analysis would not have provided insight relevant to the research questions, which were concerned with the phenomenon of educational entrepreneurship at the program level. Because of this, using a holistic case study design with the program as the unit of analysis was appropriate.

In summary, this study used a qualitative holistic single-case study approach. The various aspects of this research design were compatible. Using this approach, the study was able to provide insight into the phenomenon of educational entrepreneurship as it was practiced in this context.

**Participants and Recruitment**

The participants in this study were all teachers and course coordinators in an EFL program in Thailand. Because this language center is affiliated with a college (although it is not a department of the university, nor are the students at the language center enrolled in the university), the dean of the college was asked to sign a letter of permission allowing the research to be carried out at the language center. This letter was signed before any participants were contacted regarding the research.

A total of nine participants – five course coordinators and four teachers – were included in the study. There were five course coordinators at the language center, and all of them were asked to participate. Four teachers were purposefully selected based on their participation in developing the curriculum of the program. An effort was also made to accurately represent the demographics of the population of teachers from which the four are drawn. Of the 21 teachers at the language center, a total of 11 were American, five were British, two were Australian, one was from New Zealand, one was Canadian, and one was Italian. Three of the 21 teachers held
dual passports (two Thai and American, the other Canadian and American). All received secondary and university education in a Western country. Two of the 21 teachers at the language center were female, and the remaining 19 were male. The teachers ranged in age from early 30s to early mid-50s. All of the participants had lived in Thailand for a minimum of three years, and some had resided in Thailand for up to 20 years. All of the teachers in the program had taught for at least five years, and the mean teaching experience was over a decade.

Each of the participants was given a letter by the researcher explaining the study and asking for their participation. The five course coordinators (i.e., teachers responsible for managing a particular course at the language center) were asked to participate in individual interviews, while four other teachers were asked to participate in a focus group. Once the participants agreed to participate, a time and date were set for the interview (for course coordinators) or focus group (for other teachers). These took place in the language center during normal operating hours (i.e., between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m.) at a time convenient for the participants.

When participants met with the researcher at the agreed upon date and time for the interview (in the case of the course coordinators) or focus group (in the case of the teachers) session, the research was explained to them orally, and they received an informed consent form. The participants were also informed that they could decline to answer any questions that they do not wish to answer and that they may leave the focus group or interview at any time. After reading the informed consent form, they signed it before the start of the interview or focus group session.

**Data Collection**

The interviews with each of the five course coordinators took place in a meeting room in the office of the language program. Each interview took approximately one hour to complete;
however, the exact time varied depending on length of the participant responses. The interviews were recorded using an mp3 recorder. The interviews were semi-structured, and the questions are included in Appendix A. Each interview continued until the questions in the Appendix A had been answered. Before the beginning of each interview, the researcher explained the study and asked each participant to sign an informed consent form. Each participant was also informed that he or she could decline to answer specific questions or stop the interview at any time. At the end of the interview, participants were asked to provide supporting documents (e.g., documents related to the curriculum or teaching materials) relating to points that they raised during the interview.

The focus group with the group of four teachers was also conducted on the premises of the language program in one of the meeting rooms. The researcher and the teachers who participated in the focus group sat around a large conference table. An mp3 recorder was used to record the focus group session. The focus group lasted approximately one hour and covered all of the questions in Appendix A. While the focus group and interviews used the same questions, the participants in each were distinct (each of the five course coordinators were interviewed individually; four teachers participated in the focus group).

Like the interviews, the focus group followed a semi-structured format. This ensured that all of the major areas of interest were discussed while also allowing some freedom in the direction that the discussion takes. Before the focus group discussion began, the researcher explained the study orally and provided an informed consent form for all of the participants to sign. At the end of the focus group, the participants were asked to provide any relevant documents that supported their statements about the topics discussed in the focus group session.

**Data Analysis**
The data analysis had several stages. First, the data was organized and prepared for analysis. The interview and focus group recordings were copied and kept in two secure locations to protect against loss. The transcripts were transcribed using the Rev.com online transcription service, which had been approved by the IRB. The transcripts were formatted with wide margins to allow for extensive note-taking. Transcriptions of the focus group recording proceeded along similar lines; however, interactions between and among participants were also taken into account. Careful attention was paid to issues about which participants disagreed or experienced conflicting views. Observations about these interactions were noted and later considered in the analysis of the data.

The study did not use computer software for qualitative data analysis. Creswell (2012) recommends hand analysis in cases where a researcher is analyzing a relatively small database, wants to “be close to the data” (p. 247), and has time to complete such an analysis. In addition to the transcripts, other documents collected from the interviewees (e.g., course syllabi and teaching materials) were also organized according to the type of document and by course.

The next step in the data analysis was to get a general sense for the data. Creswell (2012) recommends reading the interview transcripts and other documents from start to finish and writing notes in the margins. These notes may or may not emerge later as codes. At this point, the purpose was to get a general sense of the data and of how it all fit together. This also began the process of convergence of evidence, in which multiple sources of information provide evidence about a phenomenon (Yin, 2014).

After the initial reading of the transcripts and other documents, a first cycle coding method was applied. The first cycle coding method was In Vivo Coding, which “[prioritizes] and honors the participant’s voice” (Saldana, 2010, p. 74). In this coding method, words or phrases
from the data are used as codes. Not every line receives a code; only the most salient points are coded. This is consistent with what Creswell (2012) calls “lean coding” (p. 252), which prevents the researcher from being overwhelmed by an unmanageable number of codes. In Vivo coding was applied to both the interview transcripts and the other documents. Assigning codes requires multiple readings of each of the transcripts and other documents. This allows the most salient information to emerge from the data.

Next, the second cycle coding method of axial coding was applied. This separated the codes generated during the first cycle coding into conceptual categories, reducing the overall number of codes. Major themes emerged, and these themes were interpreted through the lens of Webber and Scott’s (2008) educational entrepreneurship framework. Care was taken to include codes from multiple data sources (interview transcripts, focus group transcript, and documents) in the major themes. This provided convergent evidence for these themes. Such evidence strengthens the validity of a study (Yin, 2014).

In order to provide a more comprehensive analysis of the data, points of disagreement are also included in the findings. Including these points complements the “lean coding” (Creswell, 2012, p. 252) process by providing a broader perspective on educational entrepreneurship at the language center.

**Trustworthiness**

Lincoln and Guba (1985) explain the necessity of trustworthiness in establishing that research is “worth paying attention to, worth taking account of” (p. 290). The criteria that they propose are specific to naturalistic research, research which acknowledges the existence of multiple realities, the inseparability of the researcher and the research process, the contextual
nature of all hypotheses, the interconnectedness of cause and effect, and the inability of researchers to keep their own values out of their research.

Lincoln and Guba (1985) list four core criteria for trustworthiness in naturalistic research: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Credibility means that the researcher is adequately certain that the findings believably reflect reality. In this study, credibility is enhanced by triangulation, i.e., the use of multiple complementary sources of data to reach a conclusion. Transferability refers to the potential to apply the findings of the study to other contexts. In naturalistic enquiry, context is seen as highly important. Making precise statements about the applicability of such a study is impossible; however, a researcher can provide “thick description” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 316) that allows readers to judge whether the finding of the research can be applied to their context. This study provides such descriptions to make transfer possible. Dependability refers to the replicability of the study, i.e., the potential to repeat the study and once again yield the same findings. In this case, following a clear procedure (e.g., by using the same interview protocol for all semi-structured interviews) enhances dependability.

Finally, Lincoln and Guba’s (1985) fourth core criteria, confirmability, refers to neutrality of the study, i.e., the lack of bias due to the researcher’s own perspectives and beliefs. This study made use of member checking to enhance the confirmability of the study. That is, the transcripts of the interviews and focus groups were sent to the relevant participants. This allowed them to check the accuracy of the transcripts. The participants were asked whether the themes that emerged from the data were representative of their experience. In order to control for data collector bias, a standard procedure was followed in the interviews and focus groups. The researcher’s positionality was also taken into account. By reflecting on my potential biases, I
attempted to minimize the influence of these biases on my research by remaining cognizant of my privilege as outlined in Chapter One.

To remain cognizant of my privilege, I kept in mind the importance of avoiding a deficit view of Thai culture. That is, I tried to avoid making “common sense” (Jupp & Slattery, 2010, p. 203) comparison to dominant (in this case Western) norms. Such a bias could also color my view of the Thai educational system and the needs of the students who study in the language program. Finally, I needed to avoid stereotyping the participants as members of Western cultures or the students as members of Thai culture. By keeping these potential problems in mind, I attempted to deal with my biases.

**Protection of Human Subjects**

In order to ensure the protection of the participants in this study, it did not begin until IRB approval had been granted. The study involved interviews with adults about their professional experience, and it did not present any physical or psychological risks to the participants. Data was secure at all times, and participants all completed informed consent forms. Additionally, the identity of the participants was protected by assigning each an interview number for the purpose of data storage and analysis. Steps were taken to maintain strict confidentiality and data security throughout the study.

Each interview and focus group was recorded using an mp3 recorder. The recordings were transferred from the mp3 recorder to a password-protected computer, at which point the data was deleted from the mp3 recorder. Transcripts of the interviews and focus groups were stored on USB in two secure (i.e., physically locked and password protected) locations. Once the data analysis was complete, the transcripts were destroyed and the audio recordings were deleted.
To ensure confidentiality, the EFL program was not named. Participants were identified by interview number only. A hard copy and digital copy of the key to the identities of the participants was stored in a secure location separate from the data. Only the researcher had access to the recordings, transcripts, and key to the identities of the participants. By strictly following these steps, the participants have been protected from any potential breaches of confidentiality or other adverse effects.

Participants could not expect any benefits for participating in this research.

Conclusion

This study investigated educational entrepreneurship as it was practiced in an intensive English program at a language center affiliated with a Thai university. In order to achieve insight into this phenomenon, the study made use of a holistic single-case study approach within the qualitative tradition. The theoretical framework for educational entrepreneurship developed by Webber and Scott (2008) was used, and this framework served as the lens through which the data was interpreted. The research questions focused on how the program engaged in educational entrepreneurship, why they expected certain outcomes and what outcomes they expected, and the perceived challenges that the program faced. The tradition, approach, framework, and research questions were aligned to support this investigation.
Chapter IV: Research Findings

This chapter answers the three research questions that are under investigation in this thesis through data collected from interviews, focus groups, and curriculum documents. First, it explores the question of how an intensive English as a foreign language (EFL) program in Thailand engages in educational entrepreneurship to meet the changing needs of its learners. Next, it explores the outcomes that leaders and teachers in the program expect as a result of their perceived entrepreneurial activities and why they expect those outcomes. Finally, it explores the challenges that the program faces in pursuing educational entrepreneurship. This chapter prioritizes the voices of the participants; Chapter V will provide commentary on the findings.

Individuals who participated in the focus group are referred to as “teachers”; participants in the individual interviews (who also teach in the program but have an additional administrative position) are referred to as “course coordinators.” All participants in the research taught at the language center, but differentiating between the two groups is useful in reporting the research findings.

Before explaining the research findings, it is useful to revisit the definition of educational entrepreneurship. For the purpose of this thesis, entrepreneurship is understood to involve the creation of “new means-ends relationships” (Shane & Venkataraman, 2000, p. 220). This often occurs when new resources become available or when a person or organization is able to find a better use for existing resources (Shane & Venkataraman, 2000). As this thesis is concerned with educational entrepreneurship, it seeks to investigate the creation of such new uses of available resources in the field of education.

The ends of educational entrepreneurship include quality education that meets learners’ needs. Webber and Scott (2008) define educational entrepreneurship as “the strategic focus on
creating short and long-term opportunities for learning that will make a significant difference for individuals and their societies (Webber & Scott, 2008, p. 1). This definition focuses on learning opportunities as the main outcome of educational entrepreneurship. Webber and Scott (2008) propose the following dimensions to educational entrepreneurship: “innovative behavior, networking, time-space communication framework, local-global perspective, educational organizations as knowledge centers, and integrated face-to-face and Internet-based learning” (p. 1). After presenting the findings that relate to each research question in this chapter, the following chapter discusses the extent to which the EFL center selected for this case study meets each dimension of Webber and Scott’s (2008) educational entrepreneurship framework.

**Participants’ Definitions of Innovation**

Several definitions of innovation were presented in Chapter II. These ranged from vague — e.g., “the attempt to bring about beneficial change” (West & Farr, 1990, p. 9) — to more specific definitions. Thompson (1965) defines innovation as “the generation, acceptance, and implementation of new ideas, processes, products or services” (p. 2), noting that innovation requires the generation of new ideas. In his definition, innovative organizations (i.e., organizations that conceive and implement new ideas) are distinct from adaptive organizations (i.e., organizations that do not create new ideas and implement ideas conceived by others). In contrast, Weideman (2002) states that implementing ideas into a new context is innovation, regardless of whether the ideas have already been implemented elsewhere. He argues, for example, that implementing communicative language teaching in Africa decades after it had already become the dominant approach to teaching language in other contexts is innovative. A further definition was proposed by Bargheh et al. (2009), who, after reviewing 60 definitions of innovation, propose the following definition: “Innovation is the multi-stage process whereby
organizations transform ideas into new/improved products, service or processes, in order to advance, compete and differentiate themselves successfully in their marketplace” (p. 1334). Before presenting the findings as they relate to each research question, it is useful to explore the participants’ definitions, stated or implied, of innovation.

Participants’ understanding of innovation seemed to relate most closely to the definitions proposed by West and Farr (1990) and Wiedeman (2002). West and Farr (1990) described innovation as beneficial change, and Wiedeman (2002) argued that the implementation of already-created ideas in a new context could be counted as innovation. All of the course coordinators and the majority of the teachers in the focus group stated that the center was engaging in innovation; however, only a minority said that the center was using any completely new ideas. The ideas that they perceived as completely new were the video news project and the human rights project. For example, one teacher in the focus group described the human rights project and noted, “I’ve never seen that done at a university.” On the other hand, the majority of the comments regarding innovation situated the center’s innovations relative to other institutions in the Thai context. These comments included statement such as “I think [project-based learning] is something that doesn’t occur often here in Thailand, “creating your own website ... I don’t think that’s very common here,” and “I would say that out of the things that exist already, we tend to be on the fore edge of things.” Significantly, these statements all rely on comparisons with other programs in Thailand. The coordinators and teachers who made these comments are not arguing that the center’s actions are innovative in an absolute sense (i.e., that the ideas are completely new) but that the actions are new in the Thai context.

There is a clear disconnect between the participants’ understanding of innovation and the definition of innovation proposed by Thompson (1965). Thompson (1965) would not classify the
implementation of unoriginal ideas in a new context as innovative, but rather as adaptive. Discussion of the participants’ understanding of innovation in the context of the literature is included in Chapter V.

Research Question 1: How does one intensive EFL program in Thailand engage in educational entrepreneurship in order to meet the changing needs of its learners?

The first research question to be addressed examines the ways in which the language program that is the focus of this case study engages in educational entrepreneurship in order to meet its learners’ needs, as perceived by the faculty and administrators of the program. Data was collected and coded following the procedure outlined in the previous chapter. The major themes that have emerged from the data are presented in Table 4 and described below.

Table 4

Themes emerging from an analysis of the interviews in relationship to Research Question 1

- Applications of educational technology result in innovation and enhanced learning.
- Development of locally relevant content and language helps the curriculum to meet students’ needs.
- Use of project-based learning fosters content and language learning.
- Collaboration among teachers drives innovation and other aspects of educational entrepreneurship.

This section explains each of these themes in detail, drawing on specific examples from the data.

Applications of educational technology result in innovation and enhanced learning. Technology is central to instruction at the language center. In recent years, technology has becoming increasingly integrated into the curriculum. The program requires each student to bring a netbook or laptop to his or her classes each day. Wi-Fi is available throughout the building, and a resource room containing desktop computers, printers, and scanners is also open for students’ use. Even the desks used at the center have been chosen to comfortably accommodate laptops and to allow multiple different classroom setups conducive to
collaborative tech-based language learning. This wide use of technology is a relatively recent development. One of the coordinators noted the drastic change since his arrival several years previously, saying “when I first came here we had no computers in the classroom, we had overhead projectors ... [now] we have computers in every classroom, we’ve got Wi-Fi, [and] students bring their laptops.” The vast majority of the interviewees, teachers and coordinators alike, noted the steady increase in the integration of technology.

The curriculum documents that course coordinators and teachers provided to support their statements also highlight the importance of technology in the curriculum. All of the course syllabi mention technology in various forms, for example the requirement that students bring a laptop or netbook to class and that students create a Google account for sharing and receiving documents (although this will change soon as the center will begin providing Google Apps for Education accounts in 2016). The medium chosen for sharing documents after the interviews and focus groups is also significant. With the exception of one document shared by a participant from the focus group, all teachers and administrators chose to share documents via Google Docs rather than paper.

*Development of technology skills and language skills.* As noted by the majority of the course coordinators and teachers, the two primary reasons for this increased use of technology include a perceived need for the development of tech skills and the perceived effectiveness of technology for improving language instruction. A course coordinator explained, “students need to be up to speed with technology more than they did in the past” and “especially if you’re an urbanite and going to a modern university, as they are, you need to know how to use this stuff.” Several interviewees also mentioned the importance of tech skills for teachers, stating the many of the recent changes in education worldwide have been based in technology. One teacher in the
focus group stated, “Technology seems to be the main driver of our profession and our students.”

Keeping up with these changes is perceived to be part of a teacher’s job. Another course coordinator noted, “the world around us is going to keep changing, and especially the technology” and teachers should make use of the “different tools and difference approaches” available in order to help students realize their goals. After the interviews and focus group had been completed, several teachers provided documents that they believed exemplified the effective use of technology in language teaching. These included multimedia Google Docs for teaching content, examples of exemplary websites and videos created by students, texts that had been enhanced by adding links to relevant supporting documents. Two teachers also sent links to online resources, Quizlet.com and Dictionary.com, as examples of useful materials that can be used to build students’ vocabulary through games and flash cards.

**Innovation using educational technology.** The majority of the participants perceived that the increased availability and use of educational technology in the program has allowed innovation. This has taken many forms, including media-based projects, multimedia assignments and documents, and various applications of online services and cloud technologies. Several participants indicated that they perceived the media-based project in the intermediate-level class to be a prime example. In this project, which one of the teachers in the focus group described as an “original idea,” students are assigned a country in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and are asked to create a short news story comparing and contrasting an aspect of current events in that country (e.g., education, technology, politics) with the current situation in Thailand. They first read news articles on Google News then write a draft of the script for the introductory news segment. Once their advisor has approved the script, they write interview questions and select an appropriate and knowledgeable person to interview, often a citizen of the country that they are
investigating. They record the introductory news segment and the interviews then edit them to create a 6-8 minute video about the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) country. Because the students already possess a certain level of tech literacy, teachers do not need to dedicate much class time to teaching the technology. In an interview, one course coordinator supported this, stating, “using video and sound and editing ... just seems natural to them.” Each term, the best student videos from each class are shown in the auditorium on the university campus. Students vote to select the best of the videos shown, and the video that receives the most votes is also shown at the student orientation during the next term.

Participants also perceived that technology also makes other innovations possible. More than half of the total participants mentioned perceived innovations in their interview or focus group sessions. The center makes extensive use of multimedia documents that include video, audio, and text components to cultivate students’ content knowledge and language skills. One teacher in the focus group observed that these multimedia documents have “really changed the way kids understand things,” providing a deeper understanding of the material than other approaches. Also, since the students spend a considerable amount of time using their devices each day, integrating technology is perceived to be natural to them. Another teacher in the focus group observed that integrating technology allows the program to “take advantage of what they’re doing anyway” by asking them to engage with online materials. A third participant in the focus group said that the program should “take advantage of the digital form” of educational materials rather than trying to separate students from their devices. In interviews, most coordinators also supported these ideas. One coordinator remarked, “technology is so natural to [the students]” and that the students are quite comfortable using educational technologies in the classroom. This extends both to custom-made multimedia activities as described above and to
other online materials, which can be integrated into the classes. A coordinator commented, “Sometimes it’s using the technology to create something from scratch, whether it be an assignment or a worksheet, whatever it might be, a guidebook. In other cases, it’s finding what’s already been created that is out there on the Internet.” The documents that teachers and coordinators submitted after the interviews and focus groups provide examples of both custom-made materials, including videos made by teachers at the center about key content such as common logical fallacies, and other online materials, including YouTube videos about human rights. Several teachers and administrators indicated that the use of such materials is well within the students’ abilities and comfort zones.

*Communication and feedback.* The curriculum at the language center has also integrated online services including Edmodo as well as cloud technologies including Google Docs and Google Slides. These technologies are used throughout the program. Edmodo provides several tools for communication and collaboration, allowing students to join an online class that can be easily managed by the teacher. The interface is similar to that of Facebook, providing students with a comfortable environment for sharing documents and receiving messages and feedback. More than half of the participants noted that using such tools for sharing files and assignments provides several advantages. One course coordinator observed that “it’s so much easier to communicate with students” using technology and that communication with students can be “instantaneous.” This concept is further supported by the statements of two other coordinators, who explained that cloud-based technologies such as Google Docs allow students to “work collaboratively in real time” both in class and at home and “students learn so much more from each other than in the past.” Furthermore, several participants explained that teachers can efficiently provide feedback about the students’ work. In an interview, one coordinator explained
that “it’s so much easier to edit what they produce” using cloud-based services compared to paper. Online collaboration can extend beyond writing, and several teachers use online platforms such as YouTube for group video editing assignments. These provide other ways of developing and assessing students’ speaking and discussion skills. Using these tools, students can annotate videos of their own individual presentations or group discussions.

**Concerns about technology.** Half of the teachers in the focus group and two of the course coordinators expressed concerns about the present and future uses of technology both in this particular program and in the wider educational context. One teacher noted that technology grows “exponentially” and another teacher noted that it has “enormous impacts.” As described above, participants perceived many benefits of technology; however, nearly half mentioned at least one drawback of using educational technology. Several participants perceived that new technologies can be problematic, particularly those that are not intuitive to use. One coordinator explained that he prefers not to “spend too much time telling them how to use a certain piece of technology ... It has to be fairly simple to use and incorporate into the curriculum.” Another teacher noted that new technologies always require an investment of energy to learn, explaining, “nothing’s easy in terms of technology I think. There’s always a learning curve and there are always challenges” and that the potential benefits must exceed the energy invested. One coordinator, cautioning about the overzealous application of technology, remarked, “If you’re afraid of technology, you’re lost. But at the same time, if you think it’s all about the technology, you’re just as lost” and stressed that appropriate pedagogy is more important than technology. Finally, although most of the interviewees stated that the center does not currently face any competition from online resources or other forms of Internet-based learning, several were uncertain of the future. More than one participant predicted that the center would face increasing
Internet-based competition in the future, and one course coordinator predicted “there’s the possibility that one day they won’t even need teachers [in the] long term.”

Development of locally relevant content and language helps the curriculum to meet students’ needs. The majority of the teachers and coordinators interviewed identified the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) as a major influence on the students’ needs. ASEAN has existed since 1967 as a political organization of Southeast Asian states. At the end of 2015, the ASEAN member states will implement the AEC, which aims to promote regional economic integration by lowering barriers to trade and encouraging mobility of labor. The official working language of ASEAN is English, and the need for English will almost certainly increase with the integration of the AEC.

Almost all of the teachers and coordinators interviewed perceived that students would need to greatly improve their English in order to remain competitive in the AEC. This topic featured prominently in the interviews and interest groups. For example, a coordinator asserted, “If Thailand is sort of at the bottom of the rankings in terms of English ability, then students here are going to start losing out on potential jobs.” Teachers and coordinators perceived that the need to improve students’ English was generally tied to the job market. One teacher noted, “[The AEC] will cause a lot of competition and Thai people will be left in the dust basically.” Several coordinators and teachers observed that the need for improved English had been noticed at the highest levels of the Thai government. In the focus group, one participant stated, “I think the whole AEC thing is big. If you look at the Thai government, they’re pushing it. They’re talking about the importance of English.”

More than half of the total participants perceived that students are likely to use the English in the future for communicating with other learners of English, most for business
purposes. One course coordinator supported this, noting, “English is becoming the lingua franca of Southeast Asia” and students need to learn “English as it is going to be spoken in this region.” Another course coordinator observed, “you’re not necessarily learning English to speak to an American or British person or an Australian. You’re learning English to do business maybe with Koreans, Japanese, or other Southeast Asian countries.” The end goal of the English as a lingua franca approach is not to provide students with native-like accents or an in-depth knowledge of Western culture; rather, the goal is to cultivate students’ ability to communicate their ideas clearly across cultures. This has resulted in a departure from previous approaches to teaching English as a foreign language. The goal of English as a lingua franca was succinctly summed up by a coordinator: “It’s buying a train ticket in London, is it?”

The materials used at the language center have been developed to reflect students’ need for content knowledge relevant to the region. Such materials are highly appropriate for the English as a lingua franca approach used at the center, and the regionally relevant content knowledge that the students develop will serve them well in future interaction with other non-Thai individuals. One course coordinator explained the process of constantly revising material to keep them relevant: “whether it’s talking about energy policies, pollution, or human rights, or ... business ethics, we are constantly upgrading and improving and making sure that those things are relevant to their lives.” All of these topics are represented in the multimedia teaching materials submitted by coordinators and focus group participants. Teachers and coordinators at the language center perceived that the relevance of the content taught also has implications for the students’ motivation to learn. One coordinator observed, “If you can relate those topics into current events that students can actually say, ‘Yeah, this is what’s important about the environment, this is really important. This is really happening in the world around me.’”
Additionally, the use of current events in language teaching allows the use of authentic materials on the Internet. Some teachers integrate news sites into their teaching as a way of cultivating students’ general knowledge. A teacher gave specific examples of how he integrates news into his classes, stating “I like to encourage my students to read the news, ask them to set their homepage to CNN, or BBC, or Bangkok Post.” Such materials are consistent with the English as a lingua franca approach to language teaching.

**Use of project-based learning fosters content and language learning.** The center uses project-based learning (PBL) in all of its language courses. During the interviews, each of the course coordinators of the English courses mentioned the use of PBL in their courses, and this is further confirmed by the teaching documents that they submitted and by the course syllabi. According to Thomas (2000), in order to be considered PBL, five criteria must be met: centrality, driving question, constructive investigations, autonomy, and realism. **Centrality** means that the project must be a major component of the course. **Driving question** means that the project must be designed around a question that pushes students to engage with important ideas in a particular content area. **Constructive investigations** means that answering the driving question must require the development of new skills and knowledge; the project is not merely designed to reinforce existing skills and knowledge. **Autonomy** means that students must take charge of their own learning to a significant extent; the project is not “teacher-led, scripted, or packaged” (Thomas, 2000, p. 4). And finally, **realism** means that the project must make use of real-world materials, audiences, and content to the greatest extent possible. Two course coordinators mentioned the growing prominence of PBL in language teaching. One stated, “[project-based learning] is getting really prominent in the field and we’ve taken that into our program.” The major projects
in the center’s curriculum, which feature prominently in the syllabi and documents submitted after the interviews, are described below.

The curriculum of the language center includes several projects: a website for lower intermediate students, a video news project for intermediate students, and several term paper projects for upper intermediate students. While the projects at the language center take several different forms, they follow a similar pattern. The procedure that each project follows is well documented in the teaching documents submitted by the coordinators. A course coordinator described the process of “gathering information, gathering research, outlining, gathering ideas, checking with an advisor, developing those ideas, doing further research, refining things, learning what a reliable resource is, presenting their materials, writing in drafts, getting feedback, and then presenting their overall work.” Based on the interviews and teaching documents, all of the projects require students to work with an advisor throughout the term and all involve the completion of several component parts at various points in the term (outlines, drafts, etc.). Furthermore, all of the projects involve some degree of independent research. The website project requires students to write about themselves and about Thailand, including several current news stories. The video project requires students to research another ASEAN country and compare a current newsworthy situation there with the current situation in Thailand. The term papers have varied topics, and each requires students to structure their research and writing using a relatively simple framework. This is supported by a course coordinator’s observation that “all four of [the projects] have a framework; they’re all based on a framework that helps students to focus their research and put their research into the appropriate basket in terms of organizing, supporting their ideas.” As described in the teaching documents and interviews, term paper topics include the discussion of a multinational company in terms of the triple bottom line
framework (people, planet, profit) and the discussion of the human rights situation in a particular country. These projects have been designed to provide students with a solid foundation for their university studies. One teacher in the focus group explained, “The full scope of the project ... pretty much reflects what they need to be doing in all of their classes at the university.” All of the course coordinators of the English classes perceived that the projects require the development of both language skills and content knowledge.

The interviewees noted several outcomes of the projects, including motivation, self-expression, and autonomy. One teacher mentioned that “the students are more interested and more motivated” because of the implementation of the website project. A coordinator described the outcomes of the video project, saying “It’s great having this video project. I think that students can express themselves using that,” and “I think [the video project] really helps with the speaking skills. It helps with the presentation skills.” Another coordinator stated that the website project “gets them learning autonomy,” which is one of the criteria for PBL. Overall, the interviews, focus group, and documents all point to the fact that projects have a central place in the curriculum of the language center. They are closely related to the themes mentioned above, as they all involve significant use of technology and are all designed to include relevant content.

**Collaboration among teachers drives innovation and other aspects of educational entrepreneurship.** Based on the results of the interviews and focus groups, program development at the language center is driven by collaboration among teachers. While the director and the course coordinators do have some formal authority, most decisions regarding changes to the curriculum are made by consensus. The majority of course coordinators mentioned the center’s use of discussion and consensus to make decision in the interviews, and more than one teacher mentioned it in the focus group. A coordinator observed that teachers have “different
viewpoints, different skills, [and] different focuses” and that including all of their voices helps to ensure continued innovation. Teachers are encouraged to express their opinions and to try new things. In the focus group, teachers noted that “it’s a very supportive atmosphere here” and “everybody is approachable.” The development of new ideas is supported by the layout of the office, which contributes to the collaborative atmosphere. This was explained by one coordinator: “The office is ... we sit really close to each other. It’s not divided off; we're not divided into cubicles or anything like that, so just the actual, physical layout of the staff office allows for the exchange of ideas.” In an interview, another coordinator stated that at the center “change is possible, change is encouraged, positive change, it happens all the time.” Change in the center occurs through both formal and informal processes.

Change is brought about at the language center through several formal processes. Participants in the interviews mentioned several concrete examples, including staff meetings and professional development activities. General faculty meetings are held at the beginning and end of each term. After the end-of-term faculty meeting, teachers from each class meet to make suggestions regarding potential changes. Nearly half of the interviewees made positive comments about these meetings, and none made negative comments. One coordinator remarked, “We’re always looking for new ideas. We have an actual process for that, with the staff meetings.” The interviewees also described the benefits of gathering all of the teachers of a particular class meeting at the beginning and end of the term. These meetings allow changes to be made immediately. A coordinator stated that “most [changes] were formalized in end-of-quarter feedback sessions, where we propose and discuss and usually, immediately approve, or not approve, changes to the way we do things.” Professional development activities also encourage innovation. At least twice per year, the center holds in-house seminars in which
teachers briefly share their research, teaching methods, or materials. A teacher in the focus group described these seminars as events where “people pick some aspect that they’ve been researching or that they’re interested in and present it to the rest of us.” Discussing an online tool that he had shared at a previous seminar, one of the interviewees mentioned that he “wouldn’t have really taken that as far if it wasn’t for having to do it for that workshop. I’d looked at it and thought ... I’d probably thought about it in the shower or something.” In this case, the seminar provided motivation to develop and share a useful teaching tool in an innovative application. Participants also mentioned annual workshops in which the curriculum is scrutinized. A participant in the focus group stated, “We do workshops periodically, an annual workshop, so we generally get together and do curriculum review.” Multiple participants perceived that these formal processes for implementing change allow opportunities for educational entrepreneurship.

Change also occurs through informal means. Whereas major changes would be introduced through more formal means, minor changes can be made through a simpler process. Almost all of the English course coordinators commented positively on the way that minor changes are made at the center; none commented negatively. A course coordinator explained, “Minor changes, we may have done, sort of, off the cuff, in the office, when we noticed something that was pretty obviously going to be an improvement.” There is significant freedom for teachers to make such minor changes. If these changes are successful, they can easily be shared in the office. A participant in the focus group stated, “I think individual teachers can do things quickly and share them around.” Because of the generally positive atmosphere in the office and camaraderie among the teachers, informal change is quite frequent. A coordinator noted, “There is quite a bit of sharing between the teachers and people just discuss what works ... we get on well enough as a team where we can kind of reach a consensus and compromise and
move things forward.” One interviewee observed the importance of learning from other teachers, even implying that informal sharing may be more effective than formal professional development. Another interviewee emphasized the importance of voluntary collaboration, noting that it cannot be forced:

> It is a fact that many of the people in the office are actually friends as well, but at least, in the office, there is a professional, cooperative working atmosphere. People share resources, share ideas, encourage people, fill in for people. That is extremely helpful. That is not something that you can just institutionalize or make a rule about, or anything like that. That is just sort of one of those intangibles that is created by the personalities in the office. That is very significant in keeping the program going and improving.

Collaboration through both formal and informal means has been an important driver for change, allowing the program to develop in order to meet the student’s changing needs as perceived by teachers and coordinators at the language program.

This section has addressed the first research question by investigating how an intensive EFL program in Thailand engages in educational entrepreneurship. The first and most prominent theme that emerged from analysis of the data is that the center engages in educational entrepreneurship by applying educational entrepreneurship in innovative ways in order to enhance students’ learning. Further themes emerged, including the development of locally relevant language and content to meet the students’ needs, the use of project-based learning to facilitate students’ learning of language and content, and the role of collaboration among teachers to drive educational entrepreneurship at the language center.

**Research Question 2: What outcomes do educational leaders and teachers in the program expect as a result of their entrepreneurial activity and why do they expect those outcomes?**
The second research question addressed in this study regards the expected outcomes of educational entrepreneurship at the language center. Coding of the data has yielded three themes, which are presented in Table 5 and described in the following section.

Table 5

*Themes emerging from an analysis of the interviews in relationship to Research Question 2*

- Students’ skills (language as well as content knowledge and critical thinking) are developed.
- Students become increasingly aware of current events and global issues.
- The program itself as well as teachers and students become increasingly internationalized.

Whereas the previous section presented the ways in which the center engages in educational entrepreneurship in order to meet its students’ needs, this section presents the expected outcomes of this entrepreneurship. Discussion of the research findings in the context of the literature on entrepreneurship, educational entrepreneurship, and innovation is included in Chapter V.

**Students’ skills (language as well as content knowledge and critical thinking) are developed.** The center’s goal is to prepare students to succeed in an English-medium university program. To succeed, students need more than basic language skills in speaking, listening, reading, and writing. They also need to develop in other areas: general knowledge, study skills, research skills, and critical thinking. These goals are described on the center’s website. The course syllabi, which were submitted as supporting documents, also refer to the goal and related skills. Each syllabus breaks down the skills to seven objectives, encompassing the skills mentioned above. Accordingly, aspects of the center’s curriculum address each of these areas. For example, critical thinking is emphasized in the term projects, which are found in all levels of the program. Students also study elements of informal logic, including common logical fallacies. When working on language skills, the work that the students do is frequently based on current,
relevant content and requires some level of critical thinking. This is supported by a course coordinator’s observation that “we’re always improving or updating the content that we have, and we try to make sure that it’s relevant and important, and up to date.” As the center engages in elements of educational entrepreneurship — innovating, using Internet-based learning, networking, etc. — teachers and leaders in the language program expect students to develop their skills and knowledge in key areas.

In the interviews and focus groups, the majority of teachers and coordinators in the program shared their perception that students’ language skills develop. Because of the integration of the AEC, as described above, most teachers and course coordinators perceived that students will need to further develop their English. A teacher in the focus group stated, “Their need for more advanced language skills has increased.” Furthermore, a course coordinator mentioned that “expectations have risen” regarding the level of English that students will need to succeed. A course coordinator explained that proficiency in English is “a pathway to success, a better career”; however, participants perceived that students entering the program often have relatively weak skills. Another coordinator noted that the students “often lack skills with writing, particularly academic writing.” The center seems to meet this need for language skills. Interviewees observed that students who complete the program are well prepared to begin their studies at the university and that the program is especially effective in developing their writing. While developing students’ language proficiency was seen as a primary aim of the program, teachers and administrators perceived that several other important developmental goals were also met.

All but one of the English course coordinators also observed that the program helps students to develop a number of skills in addition to language. They also perceived that students
often believe that language skills are much more important than other academic skills. For example, a course coordinator explained, students “might think ‘All I want to do is write that essay and pass the [university] entrance exam. Several interviewees mentioned that other aspects of academic proficiency are also necessary for success and that students’ skills are often underdeveloped in these areas. A coordinator stated, “In terms of critical thinking and general knowledge and awareness of the world ... some of them really are a bit lacking.” For this reason, the curriculum has been designed to concurrently develop students’ language skills and their abilities in other areas. Speaking about one of the term projects, an interviewee commented that “[the students] learn an enormous amount from it. Not just about language, also about academic skills, research skills, citations, etc.” The majority of course coordinators perceive that students will develop the skills that they need to succeed through the current curriculum. One teacher observed that the goals of education do not change greatly, but that the approaches may. He explained, “Being an effective teacher is mostly [about] cultivating that student as a person ... I don’t think that will ever change, but I do think there will be changes in the environment that you’ll have to maybe use different tools.” Based on the context of this quote, the teacher was referring to using different educational technologies and approaches to education. Through innovation and other aspects of educational entrepreneurship, the program is able to use these “different tools” to enrich students’ education.

**Students become increasingly aware of current events and global issues.** Many of the teachers and coordinators at the center perceived that students are unaware of important local, regional, and global issues. As noted above, the curriculum has been designed to expose students to current events and global issues through their term projects as well as through various materials that are used throughout the program. The development of students’ awareness is seen
as an important outcome of the program. It is included in the center’s mission statement, which is included on all of the course syllabi, documents that were submitted in support of the interviews and focus groups. According to the statement, the center aims “to provide educational experiences which cultivate students’ academic English communication skills; to foster their ability to be self-reflective and responsible learners; and to stimulate their curiosity about the world.” This curiosity is seen as lacking in students who enter the program.

A minority of teachers and course coordinators perceived that knowledge of current events is important but that the Thai educational system does not cultivate this knowledge in students. One interviewee remarked, “in university education, it’s necessary to have some of this basic understanding of current events and important global events to fully engage.” Without such knowledge, students will not be able to place new knowledge in context. A teacher in the focus group observed that Thai high schools tend to prioritize the teaching of Thai history over world history, stating “Thai history they seem to learn quite a bit about in high school, but much less about world history.” Furthermore, a coordinator noted that the students “aren’t getting [knowledge of current events] out of their high school education.” For this reason, the center seeks to include current events and global issues in the curriculum. Educational entrepreneurship, particularly innovation and local-global perspective (Webber & Scott, 2008), can help to address this need.

Almost all of the English course coordinators perceived that the cultivation of students’ understanding of current events and global issues to be successful. Term projects require them to learn about current events in other countries, raising their awareness. A course coordinator stated that students in the program learn “about the world. A lot of them have never even heard about the countries [that they write about in the term paper].” One teacher observed that because of the
inclusion of current events throughout the curriculum, “I don’t see how any student could leave this program without having a bit more of an idea what’s going on in the world.” Another interviewee emphasized the effectiveness of the program in cultivating students’ awareness. He believes that students become aware “absolutely, through the evolving content that we have in all of our classes; the essay topics that we assign, the speaking and listening content that we go through, in some of our classes, and the reading content.” Awareness of global issues and current events is a major goal of the program, and the program seems to be effective in meeting this goal.

The program as well as the teachers and students themselves become increasingly internationalized. Through educational entrepreneurship, the center aims to increase the flow of students, teachers, and research among international institutions. Most of the participants in this study perceived internationalization to be an expected outcome of educational entrepreneurship, but it has not yet been fully realized. While some projects have been implemented, others are still being planned.

The perceived benefits of internationalization include the improvement of the curriculum, increased research productivity, and increased satisfaction among the teachers. Another perceived benefit is increasing students’ knowledge of other countries. For example, one of the teachers in the focus group observed, “It’s sometimes extraordinary how little they know about their neighboring countries. You’d think that they’d know a little bit more about Vietnam and Laos, being neighboring countries.” This knowledge will be important to the students at a later date, as many plan to engage in international business after graduating from university. A participant in the focus group stated, “the primary motivation for our students is business, at least
in my experience ... to do international business.” Internationalization of the program is perceived to be a means of meeting these goals.

Bringing guest lecturers and visiting teachers into the program is a major component of the effort for internationalization, as is the implementation of special programs for groups of students from other countries and conference attendance. Guest lecturers from other countries have visited the program, some to present to the teachers and some to present to the students. For example, a speaker from International Christian University in Japan visited in 2013 and in 2014 to deliver a talk on presentation skills to the students, and an American trainer visited the program in 2014 to present to the teachers about integrating technology into their lessons. Visiting teachers have also joined the program. In 2015, a visiting teacher from Macquarie University in Australia joined the program for one term, and in 2016 a visiting teacher from Northern Arizona University will join for two terms. A course coordinator was optimistic about the visiting teacher, saying that “he’ll be good for the program because we can learn a lot from him and he can, hopefully, learn a lot from us.” These guest lecturers and visiting teachers have mainly been arranged through networking, and one of the interview participants observed that the director has “lots of contacts with people in Japan and people in America.” In addition to guest lecturers and visiting teachers, intensive courses for groups of students from other countries have arranged. For example, several groups of students from Chiba University in Japan have come to the center for two-week language and culture courses. Teachers from the center have begun attending conferences much more frequently. A participant in the focus group stated, “We've had teachers going to Japan, and Singapore, and Cambodia, and other conferences within Thailand as well where people can trade ideas with teachers and other educators, authors ... from other parts of the world and from other types of programs.” Together, all of these activities have
served to internationalize the program, encouraging the exchange of ideas with individuals from other countries.

Several other projects relating to internationalization are still in the planning stage. Trips to neighboring countries have been proposed, as have teacher exchanges and joint projects with intensive English programs in other countries. One coordinator expressed his interest in bringing groups of students to Singapore. He explained that students would benefit as “there’s all sorts of educational resources there with the different places you could take [students].” Such a trip would benefit students’ language skills as well as their knowledge of another Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) country. Thus far, the program has brought in visiting teachers but has not sent any teachers to other programs outside of Thailand. This is currently being negotiated with several other programs, including a program at Renmin University in China. One coordinator stated that teachers are excited that “there’s a possibility of exchanges” for them, as it would provide an interesting opportunity for professional development, travel, and growth. The center also aims to link with another intensive English program in ASEAN for joint student projects. Teachers recognize the potential of such a relationship. As one coordinator observed, “It’d be great to find some partner courses that we could sync and do some projects with.” Students enrolled in the other program could learn about Thailand and practice communicating with Thai students, while the students at the language center could learn about another ASEAN country and practice using English to communicate with other non-native speakers. The center has been successful thus far in internationalizing; however, there are still many opportunities for productive new projects.

In response to the second research question, this section has explored the outcomes that teachers and administrators at the language center expect to result from educational
entrepreneurship. Analysis of the data yielded three main themes. The expected outcomes were improvements in students’ language, content knowledge, and critical thinking skills; development of students’ awareness of current events and important global issues; and the internationalization of the program. Participants in the study hoped that through these outcomes students could be prepared for the increased competition that will result from the imminent integration of the ASEAN Economic Community.

Research Question 3: What challenges does the EFL program face in pursuing educational entrepreneurship?

The final research question concerns the barriers that must be overcome for the center to pursue educational entrepreneurship. The themes emerging from coding of the data are presented in Table 6 and described below.

Table 6

Themes emerging from an analysis of the interviews in relationship to Research Question 3

- Cultural barriers inhibit educational entrepreneurship.
- The program sometimes lacks resources, especially IT support.
- The relationship between the community and the center is underdeveloped.
- Bureaucratic barriers at the institutional and national level inhibit educational entrepreneurship.
- A minority of teachers resist change.

While participants indicated that the program faced all of these challenges in pursuing educational entrepreneurship, they did not feel that the problems were insurmountable.

Cultural barriers inhibit educational entrepreneurship. One recurring theme in the interviews and focus groups was that participants perceived aspects of Thai culture to be barriers to educational entrepreneurship. In particular, they perceived that students’ preference for highly structured, teacher-centered instruction limits the ways in which the center can innovate.

Traditional methods of instruction in Thailand were teacher-centered, and researchers have noted
sociocultural resistance to student-centered approaches to instruction (Hallinger & Bryant, 2013). Several teachers and course coordinators also noted resistance to student-centered approaches to teaching at the language center. One coordinator explained, “In Thailand people still like to come sit in a classroom and be guided by a teacher as the purveyor of knowledge — the sage on the stage.” Student-centered approaches to teaching are sometimes much more difficult to implement because of the students’ preference. In an interview, one of the coordinators provided an example, explaining, “Sometimes if I’m tired and I walk into a class, and I want to take the easy way out, I'll go teacher centered. I'll say, ‘Open your book to this page and do this exercise’ and they eat it up. Whereas if I do the Western approach and I try to elicit things from them, that's a lot more work.”

Almost all of the participants perceived the conservatism of Thai culture to be a barrier to innovation and educational entrepreneurship. According to one coordinator, “Thailand’s very conservative and one of the hallmarks of conservative is slow to change. They’re also a culture that doesn’t like uncertainty too much.” Another coordinator stated, “That can be a barrier, the institutional bureaucratic side of things ... that would be top down.” A third interviewee noted that this management style is not limited to any particular institution; it is systemic, explaining, “some of the bigger bureaucratic issues that are preventing other kinds of change, they kind of represent the way things run nationally, so that’s not really anything we can really deal with here, locally.” This perceived national and cultural tendency to rely on tradition and hierarchy leads teachers to feel their ability to innovate is constrained.

This perceived traditionalism also extends to technology and online learning, which are often used in educational entrepreneurship. Coupled with the general resistance to change or disruption of hierarchy described above, this can be a significant impediment to innovation.
Several interviewees noted this fact, stating that Thailand is quite traditional regarding Internet-based learning, meaning that parents and students mistrust technology and value more traditional teacher-student relationships. Additionally, a teacher observed, “I think that for higher learning, probably online education really hasn’t taken a hold here.” Supporting this, a coordinator stated, “We’re in an environment that’s probably not in the leading edge of this sort of [innovation].” The majority of participants perceived aspects of the culture of students at the language center, Thai culture in general, and cultural resistance to new modes of education to be barriers to educational entrepreneurship.

The program sometimes lacks resources, especially IT support. Several participants noted the lack of resources as a barrier. While the compensation at the language center is competitive by Thai standards, resources are not always available for support or development projects. Multiple participants also noted a lack of IT support, which is a barrier to implementing technology-based initiatives. Additionally, more than one participant noted that the overall structure of the institution is not always well suited to the implementation of new ideas. A comment made by one coordinator, “there’s something inherent in the limitations of the learning center in general,” sums up these observations.

Because much of the innovation and educational entrepreneurship that the center engages in relies on technology, lack of IT support is a major barrier. Interviewees provided several examples of this. One relates to the attempted use of Kaizena, an online tool for providing audio and text feedback on students’ writing. In the focus group interview, one of the teachers who had attempted to use this tool explained, “[Kaizena] wouldn’t work on our servers. We tried to get it fixed, and our IT department couldn’t figure out what it was.” Whereas in that case the IT department could not identify the problem, in other cases the department actively resists the use
of new tools and refuses to assist teachers. One teacher in the focus group gave another example, stating that “there was quite a bit of resistance [from IT] for getting Google Classroom.” Furthermore, a coordinator lamented that he had never been able to get any support from IT, which limited his ability to innovate, stating, “I’ve never had the ability to get any sort of IT support at all. I think if you had that then you would have much more of an opportunity to really innovate.” He also noted at the IT department did not even respond to communication. The lack of effective IT support is perceived to be a barrier to educational entrepreneurship at the language center.

The organizational structure of the language center can also be a barrier to educational entrepreneurship. A minority of course coordinators mentioned this barrier; however, they emphasized its significance. This takes several forms, including the way in which teachers are paid for their work and the number and type of support staff. Teachers are paid per teaching hour, and there is no direct payment for non-teaching activities. While teachers’ contracts stipulate that they are required to help with materials development, no incentive is given. Teachers are generally helpful in creating and sharing resources, but are sometimes reluctant to commit significant time and energy to new initiatives. In an interview, one of the coordinators described the situation, stating, “We’re basically paid per hour, per teaching hour. There isn’t an explicit incentive to do materials, creation, preparation, and other things like that because of the way [remuneration] is structured.” Teachers and coordinators also perceived that larger initiatives are hampered by the lack of support staff. A team of ten Thai staff support the administrative side of the program, but their regular duties sometimes prevent them from assisting in new ventures. This came up in the interviews, with one coordinator noting that “we don’t really have the support staff” for some new ideas that he would like to implement.
Regarding the lack of support, however, the general tone of the interviews was not entirely negative, with one coordinator commenting, “I think we do a pretty good job in our circumstance, but I do think it’s a little bit daunting of a task given our circumstance.” The lack of support that the center sometimes faces is perceived to be a barrier, but not an insurmountable one.

The relationship between the community and the center is underdeveloped. Almost without exception, the interviewees noted that the language center is not active in the community. While there are examples of community involvement, these are limited to one or two short-term projects each year. For example, the center collects and donates materials to needy schools every year. A teacher in the focus group stated, “We go to rural provinces up in the mountains or out in the countryside, to a school, and bring books, and clothes, and rice, and other supplies.” Two years ago, the center also organized a 9k run to raise money for charity. Describing the run, one interviewee observed, “We had the charity run ... for marketing purposes.” While these activities doubtless provide some benefit to the community, they are limited in their duration and effect.

Several interviewees pointed out that the center lacks much meaningful activity in the wider community. More than one stated this bluntly. One coordinator stated, “I don’t think we do much for [local community],” and another stated, “We don't have any specific programs or projects, at the moment, that specifically engage with the wider community.” Helping to meet community needs does not seem to be a focus of the center’s activity. Teachers and coordinators perceived that it could provide more opportunities for the disadvantaged. By becoming more involved in the community, they perceived that the center could reach groups of individuals who would benefit greatly from any opportunities provided. Doing so is important to educational
entrepreneurship as defined by Webber and Scott (2008), which emphasizes “creating short and long-term opportunities for learning that will make a significant difference for individuals and their societies” (p. 1).

Several teachers and coordinators expressed their interest in becoming more engaged, acknowledging that the center could do more for the community. These activities could go beyond donations and charity, drawing on the center’s expertise in teaching. In the focus group, one teacher stated, “I think we should be more involved in terms of maybe teaching English. I know we donate books and stuff like that, but we don't really do anything directly related to language learning in these poor areas.” This would strengthen the center’s relationship with the community and allow the center to better understand and meet the needs of all of its students and stakeholders. The center is beginning to move in this direction, providing language classes for local civil servants, but the relationship with the local community still remains underdeveloped.

**Bureaucratic barriers at the institutional and national level inhibit educational entrepreneurship.** Approximately half of the participants perceived bureaucracy to be a barrier to educational entrepreneurship. This bureaucracy is evident at multiple levels, affecting the educational system in Thailand as a whole as well as the individual institution. This sometimes causes teachers to feel that they lack the ability to effect change. One coordinator stated that “from the top down, we are not in full control of what we do here ... there’s a huge bureaucratic hierarchy.” Bureaucrats at different levels can also block attempts to innovate or effect change. An individual may try to save face by protecting something that they themselves implemented, regardless of whether or not it is effective. A course coordinator explained, “someone who sets up a system doesn’t want anyone to tell them how to do it differently.” Teachers and
administrators at the language center perceive that bureaucratic barriers to change are evident in the Thai educational system.

Several participants perceived that the Thai educational system suffers from excessive bureaucracy. Consistent with the hierarchical nature of Thai culture (Hofstede, 2014b), new guidelines are often passed down with little or no explanation. A teacher in the focus group stated that “[this] is another worrying trend here in Thailand, is these new directives that come from time to time and try to improve education, which may not be based on sound logic or research.” Even when the changes are based on research and have the potential to improve education, as has been the case with the attempted shift from teacher-centered to student-centered learning, change efforts are often perceived to fizzle out. This is captured in one teacher’s statement that “despite a lot of talk about reform in the Thai educational system, I don’t really notice a huge amount of difference.” Efforts at system-wide change are often perceived as ineffective. In support of this, one of the course coordinators observed, “Expectations are not good that [reforms] will actually work out because of the way they’re going to handle it.” The language center manages to avoid some of the bureaucracy inherent in the wider educational system; however, bureaucracy is still perceived as a barrier to educational entrepreneurship.

Multiple participants perceived that there are some bureaucratic barriers to educational entrepreneurship at the language center. Some of these barriers spring from the current organization of the center, which can inhibit efforts to implement new initiatives. As one of the course coordinators observed, educational entrepreneurship at the language center takes place “within the parameters of ... an established institution.” Innovative activity does not always fit neatly into established programs. This idea is supported by a statement from one of the teachers in the focus group, who observed, “Sometimes it's not that easy to implement changes because of
the administrative structure.” All of this being said, the language center manages to avoid some of the bureaucracy inherent in the Thai educational system as a whole. One of the coordinators noted, “I think we’re lucky that we sit slightly apart from the university or typical educational system in this country ... I think we’ve got a bit more freedom here [in the language center].” These bureaucratic barriers seem to impede educational entrepreneurship, but they can be overcome.

**A minority of teachers resist change.** The final barrier to be discussed is resistance to change among teachers at the language center. This is a significant barrier to educational entrepreneurship, which involves change and innovation. All of the course coordinators and most of the teachers mentioned some form of resistance to change, most often in observation of others but also sometimes in themselves. A teacher in the focus group commented, “Another new thing comes along [and] there’s that resistance from the teachers and the students” and another teacher mentioned “the inherent resistance to change that many teachers have.” A coordinator explained that the risk involved in change was one explanation for such resistance, stating, “There’s inherent risk in making changes and sometimes you want to avoid that risk.” Another explanation was the “universal” human tendency to resist change. In explaining people’s tendency to avoid change, he stated, “Some people are very reluctant to change. I’d say that’s probably universal.” For these reasons, some interviewees advised against frequent change, stating, “You don’t want to make major changes too often.” This generalized resistance to change involves a minority of teachers at the language center.

In the interviews, a commonly cited reason for resisting change is the amount of work that making changes entails. This leads to situations in which improvements are not implemented, even when teachers perceive that they would clearly improve the program. Several
participants mentioned that change requires work on the part of those implementing the change and on the part of others adapting to the change. This was explained by a course coordinator, who stated, “It takes, sometimes, a lot of work to go back and rewrite the curriculum or rewrite materials ... if there’s a change, it involves work.” Another course coordinator observed his own tendency to avoid change when it entailed significant effort, stating, “The more invested you are in something, the more reluctant you are to change ... I’m reluctant to change things sometimes, even when I know it’s an improvement, just because I know that it’s more work for me.” A third coordinator mentioned that some teachers tend to prefer reusing the same materials, and thus resist changes that would require revision of the way that they teach. Avoidance of change because of the effort it requires is perceived to be a barrier to educational entrepreneurship, but participants perceived that it can be overcome.

Although resistance to change is present in the program, more than one interviewee expressed the belief that this resistance could be overcome. One coordinator mentioned that teachers may initially resist change, explaining “maybe for some teachers [innovation] becomes a little bit overwhelming. I think sometimes they don’t always know where to start.” Another coordinator emphasized the transformative potential of a few teachers on the program:

I think it just takes a few teachers to spearhead changes, mostly by doing the legwork, creating materials, maybe doing some internal training, trying to change people's minds a little bit through one-on-one conversations, having meetings, presenting new ideas. I think change can happen if we just kind of go at it, piece by piece, situation by situation. The main thing is, it just takes a teacher or two to spearhead changes by actually kind of just doing the legwork. I think, usually, if it's a good idea, and it shows, teachers will follow through.
By committing themselves to effecting change, one or two teachers can set the standard for others, resulting in significant change in the program. This has implications for educational entrepreneurship, which would require change, innovation, and teachers’ investment of time and energy.

The third research question guided this study to investigate the challenges that the language center faces in pursuing educational entrepreneurship. Analysis of the data brought several perceived challenges to light, including cultural barriers, lack of resources, an underdeveloped relationship with the community, bureaucratic barriers, and resistance to change from a minority of teachers. While each of these is an impediment to educational entrepreneurship, the participants in the study felt that these challenges could be overcome.

**Areas of Disagreement**

There were three areas of disagreement that are significant enough to be mentioned in the findings: the influence of ASEAN on students’ changing language needs, the importance of educational technology, and the use of particular content for language teaching. Two participants were skeptical about changes to the students’ language needs based on the integration of the ASEAN Economic Community. These participants were not opposed to using the English as a lingua franca approach to language teaching or to creating materials and assessments that are relevant to the region and to regional English; however, they did not see a pressing need to make changes. For example, one coordinator mentioned that “there’s a lot of hype” about ASEAN in general and that he had yet to see significant change in the use of English in the decade or so that he had lived in Thailand. While he believed that some change could eventually be expected, he believed that the pace would be much slower than was generally accepted. Both of the participants who were skeptical about this point had lived in Thailand for a decade or more.
There was a degree of disagreement about the usefulness of educational technology. This disagreement was particularly evident in the focus group, where the younger teachers tended to emphasize the benefits of educational technology, whereas the older teachers tended to emphasize the drawbacks. While all of the teachers in the focus group acknowledged that educational technology was useful for certain purposes, some of the participants expressed concern about the potential for technology to distract students. Additional concerns about technology are included in the above findings related to Research Question 1. While the disagreement about technology was not extreme, it is worth discussing because technology is used heavily in the language program.

The third area of disagreement was how much content to include in students’ language instruction. While nearly all participants spoke in favor of project-based learning and the inclusion of some relevant content, a minority of teachers voiced concern about the choice of topic and about the amount of time dedicated to content. For example, one teacher in the focus group mentioned that the center should avoid including too much business-related content into the curriculum. Although the majority of students at the center plan to enter a business major, other majors are also represented. The teacher explained, “we can’t specialize in one particular aspect … a lot of [the students] are going to do international business, but we still need to feed into the whole university.” The concern that content in the language program can be overemphasized should be addressed.

**Summary of Findings**

This chapter has reported the key findings from interviews, a focus group, and curriculum documents. It has presented the key themes emerging from these sources of data, organizing the themes by according to the research questions. These research questions investigated three
aspects of educational entrepreneurship as it is practiced at the language center: how the center engages in educational entrepreneurship to meet its students’ changing needs, the outcomes that are expected from educational entrepreneurship, and the challenges that the center faces while pursuing educational entrepreneurship. The themes of applying educational technology, developing locally relevant content, using project-based learning, and collaborating among the teachers in the language center emerged from the investigation of the how the center engages in educational entrepreneurship in order to meet students’ needs. The perceived outcomes of educational entrepreneurship include the development of students’ content knowledge and language skills, the internationalization of the program, and students’ increasing awareness of global issues and current events. The study concluded that the major challenges faced by the program in engaging in educational entrepreneurship are cultural barriers, bureaucratic barriers at the national and institutional levels, lack of resources and IT support, lack of a deep relationship between the center and the community, and resistance to change from a minority of teachers. The following chapter discusses these findings in terms of Webber and Scott’s (2008) educational entrepreneurship framework as well as the implication of the findings for the various stakeholders of the language center.
Chapter V: Discussion of Research

This case study of an intensive EFL program in Thailand has provided insights into educational entrepreneurship as it is practiced in this particular context. The field of English language education continues to evolve due to economic, technological, and pedagogical changes, and developing an understanding of how educational entrepreneurship can allow institutions to take advantage of new opportunities created by these changes. This chapter will revisit the problem statement and research questions before discussing the findings of the study in the context of the literature review. It will then present the limitations of the study and recommendations for further research.

The landscape of education in Asia is changing rapidly. This is particularly true in Thailand, where the Ministry of Education has been attempting major reforms since around the time of the economic crash in 1997 (Terwiel, 2011). Since the implementation of the Education Reform Law in 1999, the Thai government has attempted to increase educational institutions’ autonomy and enhance student-centered learning; however, these efforts have met with uneven results and the reform efforts are still ongoing (Hallinger & Lee, 2010). More specific to language teaching, the prestige of English has been increasing, and it is now the highest-prestige second language in Thailand (Buripakdi, 2011). Contributing to change in education, educational technology has continued growing in availability, power, and diversity. While educational entrepreneurship has received more attention in the US and other countries, little is known about the ways in which language programs in Asia engage in educational entrepreneurship in order to meet their students’ changing needs and to take advantage of a rapidly changing environment. Such knowledge could benefit the many stakeholders of English language education, which is
increasingly important as English cements its role as the lingua franca in many parts of the world.

In order to develop an understanding educational entrepreneurship in this context, the study investigated the following research questions:

1. How does one intensive EFL program in Thailand engage in educational entrepreneurship in order to meet the changing needs of its learners?
2. What outcomes do educational leaders and teachers in the program expect as a result of their entrepreneurial activity and why do they expect those outcomes?
3. What challenges does the EFL program face in pursuing educational entrepreneurship?

Significantly, all of these research questions rely on the presupposition that the language center is indeed engaging in educational entrepreneurship. Before discussing the results of this investigation, this presupposition should be explained.

**Entrepreneurship at the Language Center**

Entrepreneurship and educational entrepreneurship have many definitions. As discussed in the literature review, entrepreneurship has been a topic of academic interest since around 1800 (Drucker, 1985). Certain definitions of entrepreneurship — including the seminal definition proposed by Say circa 1800, “The entrepreneur shifts economic resources out of an area of lower and into an area of higher productivity and greater yield” (as quoted in Smith and Petersen, 2006, p. 17) — focus purely on economic yield would be a poor fit for interpreting the center’s activities; however, the definition of entrepreneurship has evolved since Say’s seminal definition and now encompasses a much wider range of activities. Many definitions of entrepreneurship
have been developed over the years, and, based on a synthesis of prevalent definitions, Morris et al. (1994) proposed this definition of entrepreneurship:

Entrepreneurship is a process activity. It generally involves the following inputs: an opportunity; one or more proactive individuals; an organizational context; risk, innovation; and resources. It can produce the following outcomes: a new venture or enterprise; value; new products or processes; profit or personal benefit; and growth. (p. 26)

This definition is quite flexible, and it does encompass the activities undertaken by the language center. The inputs in the language center are consistent with Morris et al.’s (1994 definition). The changes to the Thai educational context as a whole, to educational technology, and to the students’ needs for English as a lingua franca provide an opportunity; several proactive individuals are involved in the center’s activities; the center is an organization; there is risk involved; significant educational innovation takes place; and resources are devoted to the process. Morris et al. also list possible outcomes, some of which are evident at the language center. New ventures, for example the courses for civil servants or for visiting Japanese students, are created (although no new enterprises have yet been created; value is created through the more efficient use of resources; new processes have been implemented and new products, in the sense of new courses, have been created (although no new physical products have been created); profit has grown steadily and many individuals have benefitted from the center’s activities; and the program has grown from approximately 350 students in 2012 to approximately 500 students in 2015 (this does not include special courses such as the course for visiting Japanese students). In short, the center does practice educational entrepreneurship as defined by Morris et al. (1994).

**Educational Entrepreneurship at the Language Center**
For the purposes of this study, educational entrepreneurship is understood through Webber and Scott’s (2008) six-point conceptual framework: innovative behavior, networking, time-space communication framework, local-global perspective, educational organizations as knowledge centers, and integrated face-to-face and Internet-based learning. They note that educational entrepreneurship aims to provide equitable access to education and has the goal of “promoting growth in social and human capacity” (Webber & Scott, 2008, p.1). The language center engages in educational entrepreneurship as it is presented in Webber and Scott’s (2008) framework. The center innovates, particularly in its applications of educational technology; it networks productively with other institutions, it utilizes various forms of communication to enhance efficiency, it has a local-global perspective as it develops individuals’ cultural knowledge and engagement with important regional and global issues, and it integrates face-to-face and Internet-based learning in all of its courses. The element of the framework that is least evident in the center’s activities is “educational organizations as knowledge centers” (Webber & Scott, 2008, p. 4). The center’s relationship with the wider community is underdeveloped, a shortcoming that will be discussed below. The center’s overall mission is also in line with the purpose of educational entrepreneurship proposed by Webber and Scott (2008). Although realistically the center must make a profit to remain operational, the primary goal of the center is to educate, to “[promote] growth in social and human capacity” (Webber & Scott, 2008, p.1). For all of these reasons, the center can be seen to be engaging in educational entrepreneurship as defined by Webber and Scott (2008).

**Innovation at the Language Center**

As explained in Chapter IV, the majority of participants in this study understood innovation to mean the implementation of ideas that are new to a particular context *regardless of*
whether the ideas have previously been implemented elsewhere. Nearly all of the participants in the study stated that the center was innovative; however, only a minority gave examples of novel ideas that had been conceived at the center. The remainder of the examples of innovation that they mentioned were novel to the Thai context but had already been implemented elsewhere. These center’s actions could certainly be considered innovative under West and Farr’s (1990) definition of innovation as “the attempt to bring about beneficial change” (p. 9); however, other definitions of innovation would exclude most of the changes made at the language center.

Whether these changes are innovations or not depends on the definition of innovation. There is precedent in the literature for classifying these changes as innovations. For example, Wiederman (2002) described a similar situation: the implementation of the communicative approach to language teaching in the African context decades after the approach had become dominant elsewhere. Other definitions, such as Thompson’s (1965) definition, would classify the language center’s actions as adaptive, not innovative, as it was with few exceptions implementing ideas that were conceived elsewhere. If the center is not seen as innovative, it could be seen as implementing sound pedagogical principles (e.g., student-centered learning) into a new context. All of the examples of innovative behavior mentioned by the participants are non-traditional in the Thai context. In either case, innovation or adaptation, participants perceived that the center is attempting to meet the “bring about beneficial change” (West & Farr, 1990, p. 9) to meet the students’ needs.

**Summary of Findings**

Investigation of the research questions through a case study of a language center in Thailand yielded five major takeaways, which are included in Table 7 below.
Table 7

Summary of Major Findings

- The perceived changes in the students’ needs were the major driver of educational entrepreneurship.
- Educational technology facilitates educational entrepreneurship, but it can be overemphasized.
- Internationalization is both a means and an end to educational entrepreneurship in this context.
- The language center does not adequately involve the community in its efforts at educational entrepreneurship.
- Many barriers to educational entrepreneurship can be overcome through efforts at innovation by a few highly motivated teachers.

These findings can be understood through the lens of the theoretical framework and in the context of the literature review. Each of the takeaways will be explained in detail below.

**Perceived changes in students’ needs drive educational entrepreneurship.** Analysis of the data collected in this case study revealed that the single greatest driver for educational entrepreneurship at the language center was a perception that students’ needs are changing due to the integration of the member states of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) into the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC). Shane and Venkataraman (2000) described entrepreneurship as the seeking of “new means-ends relationships” (p. 220), and in the case of the language center the changing ends of language education, primarily preparing students to participate in a more regionally integrated economy and to communicate with other non-native speakers of English, provides impetus for change. In the interviews, nearly all of the teachers and course coordinators mentioned their concern regarding students’ changing needs. Several interviewees made a comment to the effect that students’ need for English, and in particular their need for English as a lingua franca, was increasing. For example one of the course coordinators stated, “The need for them to learn English, not only for [university] but for their personal and professional lives, it’s probably only increased.” The interviewees also perceived pressure due to
increased competition. In the focus group, two teachers stated, “We’re ranked I think second to last in terms of Asian countries [in English proficiency]” and “Thai people will be left in the dust basically.” Their concern about increasing competition motivated them to take action.

This finding brings to light the need to ensure that students and their parents have a clear understanding of the growing need for English as a lingua franca. Otherwise, they may not appreciate some of the changes that are being made to the program. While most of the interviewees stated that students and their parents were aware of the situation, a few expressed concern. For example, one coordinator stated, “I don’t think most of them have really thought through what the consequences for Thai students might be in the future.” The perception of changing needs can motivate students, parents, teachers, and administrators. For this reason, it is important to stay informed and to communicate information about these changing needs to all stakeholders.

This finding has implications for various stakeholders of the language center. First of all, it highlights the importance of networking and remaining highly conscious of the environment. This means that the program director and coordinators must create relationships with other institutions and individuals to stay current on developments in Thailand, Southeast Asia, and Asia. They must also communicate information about the changing situation to teachers, who will then be in a position to help their students adapt in order to succeed.

**Educational technology facilitates educational entrepreneurship, but it can be overemphasized.** Teachers and administrators perceive that technology facilitates educational entrepreneurship at the language center. The educational goals at the language center — improving students’ language, content knowledge, and related academic skills — are largely addressed through technology. In addition to the aforementioned communicative uses of
technology, the curriculum at the center uses many online resources for raising cultural literacy. Multimedia exercises give students a much clearer understanding of issues, such as by allowing them access to primary sources such as interviews and video footage. As described in Chapter IV, technology also facilitates project-based learning. Undertaking projects, such as the short news video comparing a situation in another ASEAN country with the situation in Thailand, can lead students to become more engaged as well as more aware. The dimension of innovative behavior is also closely related to technology in the ways in which educational entrepreneurship is practiced at the language center. Chapter IV describes in detail the ways in which technology results in innovation at the language center, including video editing, website creation, project-based learning, and multimedia materials. Technology is also used for other purposes, including networking. While information can be obtained in many ways, the most efficient ways are via technological means. Networking with other centers can occur through face-to-face interaction at conferences or other gatherings; however, relationships will be maintained through technology. Technology mediates communication as well as making possible joint research and writing projects among geographically distributed individuals. Technology is perceived to pervade most aspects of educational entrepreneurship at the language center.

All of this being said, not all perceived impacts of technology are positive. While all interviewees noted the importance of educational technology in the success of the language center, several also noted potential drawbacks of overusing educational technology. Technology was seen as a useful tool, but one that could not be applied in all situations. As one participant in the focus group noted, “Obviously you have to use [technology] for certain things” but not for everything. A coordinator noted that depending on the specific context, “Sometimes a pen and paper is better than a computer,” and teachers must decide whether or not to use technology
based on students’ needs at that time. Distraction is also a perceived drawback. A teacher in the focus group explained, “It can be extremely distracting. It’s very much on the teacher, how they use it and how they control the use in the class.” The difficulty in keeping up with technology is another perceived drawback, as technology develops so quickly. This topic was discussed at length in the focus group, where one teacher stated, “It's hard to imagine what it will be like in the next 10 years, because technology seems to grow a bit exponentially.” Some interviewees perceived keeping up with this continuous and rapid change as a further distraction.

Overabundance of information can also confuse students and teachers alike. Teachers in the focus group believed that “you can overload” if too many channels of communication are use.

While technology is central to the language program’s efforts at educational entrepreneurship, it does have disadvantages. For this reason, teachers and administrators at the language center should not see technology as the sole means of developing the curriculum and effecting change.

**Internationalization is both a means and an end to educational entrepreneurship in this context.** Internationalization is a critical motivation for educational entrepreneurship at the language center as well as a goal of educational entrepreneurship. As explained above, teachers and administrators at the language center were motivated to engage in educational entrepreneurship because of their perception of students’ changing needs. The primary cause for the change in students’ needs is the integration of the AEC; however, this integration is just the most recent step in the ongoing process of globalization. This concept came up in several interviews, with one coordinator stating, “Even without [the AEC], the economies of Southeast Asia have been integrating through their transport systems and ... trade has happened, so the need for English has intensified regionally.” Interviewees believed that students will need enhanced English skills (especially regarding their ability to communicate with other nonnative English
speakers) and more fully developed knowledge of the wider world in order to thrive in an increasingly competitive environment. A perceived end of educational entrepreneurship is to help the students, and thus Thailand, to meet the challenges of globalization and internationalization.

The importance of internationalization both as an educational goal and as a means of achieving educational goals has implications for the stakeholders in the language center. Based on current trends, internationalization will continue to grow in importance as ASEAN continues to integrate. Educators based in the developing world, particularly in regions such as ASEAN that are entering into regional trade pacts, should expect increased pressure due to globalization and internationalization. The center would be wise to dedicate significant resources to international networking through conference attendance, invited guest speakers, and visits to language centers in other countries. Individual teachers can also network and cultivate their students’ cultural literacy by engaging in joint projects with other centers.

**Community relationships should be developed.** Another major takeaway is that the language center does not have an adequately developed relationship with the community. While the center does engage in some community-oriented activities, these are limited in scope. With the exception of a class that is currently being run for local civil servants, the major community-oriented events are charitable rather than educational. Several interviewees mentioned the charity run, which was a single event held in 2012. One teacher also questioned the purpose of the run, saying that it was held “for marketing purposes.” Other interviewees pointed to the annual donation drive as the major community-oriented event. The teachers and coordinators who participated in the study found these activities worthwhile; however, such activities are highly infrequent and only reach a small group of individuals in the community.
Without exception, the interviewees thought that the center should be more involved. As one coordinator stated, the center “could do more for the community.” Another coordinator explained that the students who enroll at the center already enjoy significant advantages. The center helps them to develop and to progress along a certain path, but it does not provide novel opportunities. The coordinator explained, “the students who come here already have the opportunities they have. This is just part of that path. I don’t think this is what springs them into something else.” Further community engagement could be the key to “springing” some individuals into opportunities that they would not otherwise been able to access. The center has the potential to do much more good through community engagement.

Many barriers to educational entrepreneurship can be overcome through efforts at innovation by a few highly motivated teachers. The importance of the efforts of a small number of teachers in catalyzing change was an important finding of the study. One course coordinator observed the potentially powerful results of one or two individuals in effecting change, stating “The main thing is, it just takes a teacher or two to spearhead changes by actually kind of just doing the legwork. I think, usually, if it's a good idea, and it shows, teachers will follow through.” Such effects are possible through effort, i.e., “doing the legwork,” as well as through clear understanding of the situation, i.e., having “a good idea, and being passionate. Cooperation, which emerged as a major theme from the interview data, was important as a means of effecting change; however, cooperative efforts often began after a few teachers began a new undertaking. That is, teachers cooperated to “follow through” on projects begun by a small number of their peers.

This small group of teachers was composed of innovators who led the development of the program. Their impact is highly visible in the current curriculum. Several of the projects and
applications of technology that set the program apart were first implemented by a single teacher who was passionate about a particular area. That is true of the news video project, which was created by a teacher who had previously been a regional correspondent for a major news agency. It is also true of the human rights term paper project, which was created by a teacher who is currently completing a Ph.D. in human rights and has a passion for social justice. Various applications of technology in the program, such as the use of Google Forms and Google Docs to create online databases of students’ writing and comments, have been spearheaded by a teacher who had previously worked as an educational consultant in the United Kingdom. These and similar projects define the curriculum of the language center, and each of them began with a single passionate innovator.

The major challenges that the program encountered while pursuing educational entrepreneurship included cultural barriers, lack of resources, bureaucratic barriers, and teachers’ resistance to change. All of these challenges except the lack of relationship with the community have been faced effectively, largely through the innovation of a small number of teachers, and the underdeveloped relationship with the community still may be addressed in the same manner. Cultural barriers among the Thai students at the language center include a general unwillingness to engage content that is perceived to be too heavy, such as current events. This challenge has been addressed through innovations such term projects described above. Another challenge, the lack of resources and IT support, has also been addressed through the innovations of individual teachers. The coordinator who discussed the lack of resources most extensively in his interview is also among the most active in creating online resources for the students enrolled in the program. While making more resources available for innovators would almost certainly yield better results, the actions of individuals have compensated for the lack of resources to this point.
Bureaucratic challenges have also been overcome to an extent through the actions of individuals. As one coordinator observed, change can sometimes be difficult because teachers “don’t always know where to start.” Once the change begins, however, the initial bureaucratic barrier is lessened or removed. Through the data collected for this study, the efficacy of innovation in overcoming barriers to educational entrepreneurship became apparent.

**Discussion of Findings in Relation to the Theoretical Framework**

This study examines the actions of a language center in Thailand through the theoretical lens of Webber and Scott’s (2008) educational entrepreneurship framework, which includes the following dimensions: “innovative behavior, networking, time-space communication framework, local-global perspective, educational organizations as knowledge centers, and integrated face-to-face and Internet-based learning” (p. 1). The derivation of this framework was discussed in Chapter II and its applicability to the actions of the language center was revisited at the beginning of this chapter. The following section will discuss the findings of this study in relation to the dimensions of the framework.

**Innovative behavior.** Innovative behavior has pride of place as the first of the six elements of Webber and Scott’s (2008) framework and is a core component of many definitions of entrepreneurship and of educational entrepreneurship. As mentioned in the literature review, Morris et al. (1994) analyzed 75 common definitions of entrepreneurship and found that innovation was one of the five most common key terms. Innovation also appears in the seminal entrepreneurial orientation construct (Miller, 1983) and the multidimensional entrepreneurial orientation construct proposed by Lumpkin and Dess (1996). Malecki et al. (2004) quite accurately described an indispensable part of entrepreneurship. In that innovation is one of the most, if not the most, important aspect of educational entrepreneurship at the language center,
the findings of this study are consistent with the framework and with the literature from which it is derived.

As Webber and Scott’s (2008) framework would suggest, innovation is at the heart of the center’s efforts at educational entrepreneurship. All of the interviewees mentioned some form of innovation, and most considered the center to be highly innovative. As described in Chapter IV, the center has implemented many novel uses of educational technology, content-based language teaching, and project-based learning in order to meet its students’ changing needs, particularly their need for English as a lingua franca in an increasingly integrated region. Based on the interviews, the elements of the curriculum that are perceived to be most effective in meeting students’ needs are also perceived as innovative.

Interestingly, several of the course coordinators and teachers who participated in the study noted that the center is highly innovative for its context. A comment by one of the course coordinators sums up this concept neatly. Observing the importance of context in assessing how innovative the center is, he stated, “In the Thai context, I would say that we are very innovative ... compared to other places that I’ve taught in Thailand, I would say we’re super innovative, maybe even cutting edge.” Another coordinator made a similar comment, stating, “If you were in a school in Silicon Valley in California, I think the atmosphere would be different.” Education in Thailand is still largely teacher-centered and bound by tradition (Hallinger & Bryant, 2013), and the center’s innovations should be understood in this context. While Webber and Scott’s (2008) educational entrepreneurship framework is a valuable lens, it could take context more clearly into account.

In keeping with Webber and Scott’s (2008) framework, innovation is vital to the educational entrepreneurship as it is practiced at the language center. As described above, this
innovation begins at the level of the individual or dyad before being adopted at the level of the institution. The finding that one or two innovative teachers can act as a catalyst for innovation at the level of the institution is empowering. The importance of innovation spearheaded by a few individuals is consistent with the theoretical framework for educational entrepreneurship.

**Networking.** The findings of this study highlighted the importance of networking, the second element of Webber and Scott’s (2008) framework for educational entrepreneurship. Networking and the information that it provides are of growing importance (Fuellhart & Glasmeier, 2003). As Webber and Scott (2008) assert, “Professional and academic networks can facilitate information acquisition that contributes substantially to the ability of organizations and individuals to adapt successfully to changing internal and external conditions” (p. 2). Quickly evolving conditions heighten the importance of networking in order to remain informed.

The study found that educational entrepreneurship at the language center was largely driven by perceived changes in the needs of students, e.g., the need for more highly developed language skills or for greater content knowledge. This finding is consistent with Webber and Scott’s (2008) educational entrepreneurship framework, which includes the dimension of networking in order to ensure “successful adaptation to changing conditions” (p. 4). The changing conditions in this case are the increasing integration of ASEAN and the corresponding need for the development of English as a lingua franca. The adaptations take the form of the innovations described above. The integration of the ASEAN Economic Community will provide many opportunities for students, but the majority of these opportunities will require the ability to communicate in English with other nonnative speakers. The rapidly changing economic and social conditions in Thailand require new approaches to language education, approaches that can be developed through educational entrepreneurship.
All of this being said, the results of the study demonstrate the lack of substantial networking within the local community. As described above, the center has engaged only minimally with the local community, mostly through charity work. In the future, the center should develop this aspect of educational entrepreneurship in order to provide greater opportunities to members of the community. Networking in order to create a dialogue with the community would be a first step to increased involvement. This aspect of Webber and Scott’s (2008) framework is useful in highlighting both the strengths and weaknesses of the center’s current efforts at educational entrepreneurship.

**Time-space communication framework.** The role of new forms of communication in increasing efficiency has been previously explored in the field of business, yielding findings that can be generalized to other fields (Van Geenhuizen, 2004). Time-space communication framework speaks of the effective use of “synchronous and asynchronous communication” (Webber & Scott, 2008, p. 4) to increase efficiency. Without the use of technology, only local, synchronous communication is possible; technology provides distributed and synchronous options. As described above, educational technology has greatly facilitated educational entrepreneurship at the language center, and one major application of technology was communication.

This study’s finding that educational technology facilitates educational entrepreneurship at the language center is consistent with this dimension of Webber and Scott’s (2008) framework. The center uses many forms of communication, including asynchronous distributed communication. As described by Webber and Scott (2008), this mode of communication enhances efficiency. The use of email, messaging software, and online services for communication among teachers and students at the language center was mentioned in by several
interviewees. The extensive use of cloud-based tools for communicating with students about their assignments and commenting on their work was also mentioned by several participants. These tools are used both synchronously and asynchronously throughout the program, and they are perceived to have deep impacts. In the view of the participants, communications technology enhances learning.

Participants in the study perceived that communication technologies would grow in importance in the future. As one coordinator observed, “There’s always something new coming online.” The findings of this study are consistent with the local-global perspective dimension of Webber and Scott’s (2008) framework, and this dimension will most likely continue growing in influence as technology improves.

**Local-global perspective.** The local-global dimension of Webber and Scott’s (2008) educational entrepreneurship framework relates to connections between an institution and the wider world. These connections which have many potential benefits for educators and students, including the development of pedagogical approaches, objectives, and skills (Adams & Sperling, 2003). Often, the connections that make these benefits possible are created and maintained through technology. Creating and maintaining these connections helps students develop “local-national-global cultural literacy” (Webber & Scott, 2008) and become global citizens. This dimension of Webber and Scott’s (2008) framework is closely related to internationalization.

In line with this aspect of educational entrepreneurship as described by Webber and Scott (2008), a major finding of this study was that internationalization plays a significant role in the center’s educational entrepreneurship. Internationalization drives the need for educational entrepreneurship through its effects on the students’ needs, especially the needs for increased proficiency in English as a lingua franca and knowledge of regional and global events. The
language center also strives to meet these changing needs through internationalization, which can be understood through the local-global perspective of this framework. Projects such as the class for visiting Japanese students and the visiting teachers from the United States and Australia are the product of networking and local-global perspective. Further projects related to internationalization that have yet to be realized include student exchanges with institutions in other ASEAN countries and teacher exchanges abroad.

Based on the results of this research, teachers and administrators at the center perceive the importance of cultivating a local-global perspective. This is evident in the amount of time and effort that they spend attending conferences and networking with educators in other countries. It is also evident in the curriculum documents. The course syllabi mention increased regional and global awareness as an objective of each course. The center’s mission statement, which indicates that the center aims to “to foster [students’] ability to be self-reflective and responsible learners; [and] stimulate their curiosity about the world” appears on the front page of each syllabus. Internationalization is an important element of educational entrepreneurship at the language center.

**Educational organizations as knowledge centers.** Webber and Scott’s (2008) educational entrepreneurship framework includes “educational organizations as knowledge centers” (p. 4) as one of its six dimensions. This is further explained as “sources of knowledge creation for students, faculty members, and support staff ... sites of essential learning ... [that pay] attention to access, resources, and community needs (Webber & Scott, 2008, p. 4). A major finding of this study is that the center has not adequately developed its relationship with the community. A more fully developed relationship with the community would provide opportunities for educational entrepreneurship; however, the center is currently failing to take
advantage of these opportunities. The center is also failing to achieve a major goal of educational entrepreneurship as it is explained by Webber and Scott (2008), who suggest “equity” (p. 1) as a major consideration for educational initiatives in education. Without substantial ties to the community, providing more equitable access to education will not be possible.

The language center’s potential for development in the area of community engagement can be understood through Webber and Scott’s (2008) educational entrepreneurship framework. The center strives to develop students’ awareness of local, regional, and global issues and current events, aligning with the “local-global perspective” of the framework, which speaks of the aim to develop “local-national-global cultural literacy” and help students to become “principled, reflective, engaged citizens” (Webber & Scott, 2008, p. 4). Establishing a closer relationship with the local community would benefit multiple stakeholders. It would be advantageous for students engaged in the existing classes, who could become more involved in local issues in a hands-on as opposed to purely academic way. It could provide opportunities to members of the local community, who, like the current students, will likely face increased competition in the coming years due to the integration of the AEC. The center could do more good, even without an increase in available resources, by developing a closer relationship with the community.

**Integrated face-to-face and Internet-based learning.** The final dimension of Webber and Scott’s (2008) educational entrepreneurship framework relates to the growing use of Internet-based resources to complement face-to-face learning. Integration of face-to-face and Internet-based learning is evident at the language center. As described above, the critical role of educational technology in educational entrepreneurship at the language center was a major finding of this study. For example, cloud-based services facilitate collaboration. These resources allow students to continue collaborating and discussing course materials even outside of the
classroom. One coordinator observed that “collaborative-based learning online ... lets students learn so much more from each other than in the past where they would have to actually be in the same room as each other.” Teachers also integrate a variety of Internet-based materials into their lessons, particularly for homework. This allows more class time to be spent discussing meaningful material, developing students’ language skills while cultivating their knowledge of the world around them.

This dimension of Webber and Scott’s (2008) framework speaks of integrating face-to-face and Internet-based learning, not replacing one with the other. Several participants in the study mentioned that Internet-based learning could and should be integrated into the language center but that Internet-based learning could not at this time replace face-to-face learning. There are several reasons for this, the most commonly cited being that online education is not yet widely available or accepted in Thailand. This aspect of educational entrepreneurship accurately reflects the current situation in the Thai context; however, future entrepreneurial efforts may emphasize Internet-based learning at the expense of face-to-face learning. Still, this dimension of Webber and Scott’s (2008) framework is highly relevant to language center’s current efforts at educational entrepreneurship.

Overall, Webber and Scott’s (2008) framework provides a valuable lens through which to understand educational entrepreneurship as it is practices at the language center. As explained above, all of the key findings can be explained in terms of the various dimensions of the framework. The dimension that is the least developed in the center’s current efforts at educational entrepreneurship, educational organizations as knowledge centers, was acknowledged by teachers and administrators as important, providing direction for future development. The theoretical framework was developed in a Western context as the product of
joint research between academics in Canada and Australia. This study has applied the framework in a country whose culture, institutions, and environment are in many ways dissimilar to those in the countries where the framework was developed. Its usefulness in interpreting the results of this study demonstrates its flexibility and applicability in diverse contexts.

**Discussion of Findings in Relation to the Literature Review**

In this section, the major findings of the study are considered in relation to the literature review. Each of the principle areas included in the literature review is discussed below. Overall, the study’s findings are consistent with the literature reviewed in Chapter II.

**The state of English education.** A review of the literature regarding the state of English education in Thailand revealed that ongoing reform efforts by the Ministry of Education aiming to modernize the Thai educational system have been largely unsuccessful. These efforts, which were precipitated by the economic crash of 1997 and which began in earnest with the Nation Education Act in 1999 aimed to modernize the educational system and replace traditional teacher-centered learning with student-centered learning (Fry, 2002b; de Segovia & Hardison, 2009). The educational reforms also sought to address a perceived lack of critical thinking skills among Thai students, which was partially blamed for the economic crash (Jungck & Kajornsin, 2003). Despite ongoing efforts, reform efforts have achieved limited success have not achieved some of their major goals, such as (Hallinger & Lee, 2010).

Consistent with the literature indicating that reform efforts in the Thai educational system had not resulted in significant changes at the classroom level, many of the interviewees stated directly that they could not discern a difference in the levels of language skills or knowledge of the incoming students, for example, a teacher stated that “despite a lot of talk about reform in the Thai education system, I don’t really notice a huge amount of difference” and one of the course
coordinators observed, “[the Ministry of Education] wants the English of level to increase, and
they try out various things. I don’t think they’ve had much success.” Several of the coordinators
and teachers interviewed also confirmed that they could not perceive a change in students’
critical thinking skills over the years that they had been employed in the program. Some of the
teachers interviewed had taught at the language center for over a decade, so the lack of perceived
change is not due to the length of their employment in Thailand.

The persistent use of the teacher-centered approach in the Thai educational system noted
in the literature review was evident in the data collected for this study. The persistence of the
teacher-centered approach is related to aforementioned lack of change due to attempted
educational reforms. As one coordinator noted, many students at the language center tend to
prefer the teacher-centered approach because that is what they have been received throughout
their educations in the Thai educational system. When he uses a teacher-centered approach, they
tend to “eat it up,” whereas using a student-centered approach is “a lot more work” because the
students lack experience with this type of approach and sometimes resist it, preferring the teacher
to be “the sage on the stage.” These comments align well with Kantamara et al.’s (2006)
explanation for the failure of student-centered learning to take root in the Thai educational
system: “Teachers — and students — are often uncomfortable with the underlying philosophy
[of student-centered education] and uncertain of the appropriate practices to make it succeed” (p.
7). What little student-centered learning the students at the language center had previously
received might have been inexpertly facilitated and ineffective, further reinforcing their
preference for teacher-centered learning.

The state of Thai education noted in the literature review reflected in the findings of this
study, particularly to the major finding that perceived changes to students’ needs were the major
driver of educational entrepreneurship. Teachers and coordinators at the language center perceive that the Thai educational system is not preparing students to succeed in an English-medium university program and to compete in an increasing integrated regional economy. That is, they perceived that students’ needs were changing, but that the Thai educational system is unable to adapt to meet these changing needs. This creates an opportunity for educational entrepreneurship in order to meet these needs.

**Developments in technology.** Developments in educational technology have resulted in deep changes in education, including language education. Chapter II of this thesis reviewed literature on some of the available educational technologies have been applied in the language classroom, including video subtitling (Stewart & Pertusa, 2004), Internet-mediated intercultural exchanges (Thorne, 2013), and the use of smartphones (Kiernan & Aizawa, 2004). These technologies provide novel means of cultivating students’ language skills.

The growing importance of educational technology was another finding of the study that was present with the literature review. The study found that technology plays a key role in the learning that takes place at the language center. As explained in detail above, technology has been key in innovating and in overcoming barriers. It is instrumental in many ways, facilitating project-based learning and allowing students to better understand current events and global issues. It is also used for managing courses and communicating among teachers and students, providing greater efficiency than previous methods. Ertmer et al. (2012) noted that thousands of articles about educational technology have been published in recent years, many of which highlight the use of technology to overcome barriers in the field of education. The data collected for this study suggests that the language center has begun to take advantage of some of these technologies; however, the center has certainly not achieved the full potential benefit of the
available technologies. Technology has become integral to the curriculum and learning at the language center, and this trend will almost certainly continue in the future.

The major findings of the study are consistent with the literature regarding educational technology; however, there was one minor point of difference between the findings of the study and the literature. As mentioned in one of the major findings above, participants in the study perceived that overemphasis of technology had significant drawbacks and that the use of technology should be balanced with sound pedagogy. A course coordinator explained the need for balance, stating, “If you’re afraid of technology, you’re lost. But at the same time, if you think it’s all about the technology, you’re just as lost.” Apart from this minor difference, the literature and study findings were similar.

Overall, this research aligns well with several concepts that were introduced in the literature review. The review of the literature regarding the state of the Thai educational system, the shift away from world Englishes and towards English as a lingua franca, and the development of educational technology was highly relevant to the investigation of educational entrepreneurship at the language center. In return, this thesis is able to offer one more example of an institution that is affected by the reform efforts in the Thai educational system, that is striving to prepare students of English to interact meaningfully with other language learners from diverse cultures, and that is working to maximize the benefits of educational technology to meet its students’ needs.

**Implications for Practice**

The most direct implications of this study would be for the various stakeholders of the language center. The areas in which the center is most effective in using educational entrepreneurship to meet students’ needs, for example innovation and integrating Internet-based
and face-to-face learning, have been identified, as have the areas in which the center needs further development, such as its relationship with the community. This will be useful in the center’s future development. An action plan included below.

The study’s findings also have implications for teachers and administrators in other language programs in Thailand, ASEAN, and Asia. The findings are particularly relevant to educators in developing countries, where rapid economic change and globalization are likely to correspond to change in the means and ends of language teaching. The themes and findings that have emerged from this study could be useful to administrators leading their centers through such change and to teachers striving to meet understand and meet their students’ changing needs.

Finally, the finding that a small number of teachers were responsible for sparking innovation and educational entrepreneurship at the language center should be an inspiration to educators and scholar-practitioners in a wide variety of contexts. Webber and Scott’s (2008) described the goal of educational entrepreneurship as “the strategic focus on creating short and long-term opportunities for learning that will make a significant difference for individuals and their societies” (p. 1). These learning opportunities can begin from a single individual or who is ready to “spearhead changes” is his or her organization.

Conclusion

This case study has investigated three research questions in order to better understand educational entrepreneurship as it is practiced at a language program in Thailand. The study was guided by three research questions, which focused on how the program engages is educational entrepreneurship, what outcomes are expected of this educational entrepreneurship, and what challenges the program faces in pursuing educational entrepreneurship. Data was collected through interviews, curriculum documents, and the observations of the researcher and analyzed
using in vivo and axial coding. Themes emerged in each of the areas of interest, and these themes were distilled to the following takeaways: the perception that students needs were changing drove educational entrepreneurship, the center did not adequately involve the community in its efforts at educational entrepreneurship, educational technology plays a key role in educational entrepreneurship but can be overemphasized, internationalization is both a means and an end of educational entrepreneurship, and many barriers to educational entrepreneurship can be overcome through the efforts of a few key individuals in the organization. These findings were interpreted through the lens of Webber and Scott’s (2008) educational entrepreneurship framework. The major findings were consistent with the framework, which was useful both in understanding the center’s current efforts at educational entrepreneurship and directions in which it could develop in the future.

**Limitations**

This research involved a case study at a language center in Thailand. The results may not be generalizable to other institutions because of the use of a single case. That being said, an effort has been made to provide adequate description so that readers will be able to discern which insights or conclusions could be applied in their context. Additionally, the cultural context of the research is significant. Thai culture differs from many Western culture in many ways, including the perception of hierarchy, bureaucracy, and authority. While certain results of this research might be generalized to independent of context, this should be done cautiously. In particular, the challenges that institutions in culturally dissimilar countries face would probably differ.

The definitions of entrepreneurship and educational entrepreneurship that this study has selected must also be considered. While these definitions were chosen after a thorough literature review and are not inherently limiting, their use limits the degree to which this study can be
compared to other studies on entrepreneurship or educational entrepreneurship. As discussed above, the center engages in entrepreneurship as it is defined by Morris et al. (1994). This definition was selected because it is a flexible composite of many earlier definitions; however, other, more specific definitions also commonly appear in entrepreneurship research. Because of the variation in the definitions of entrepreneurship, the body of research on this topic is a “hodgepodge” (Shane & Venkataraman, 2000, p. 217). When comparing the results of this research with other studies of entrepreneurship or of educational entrepreneurship, the definitions of these key terms that each study uses must be scrutinized.

The choice of Webber and Scott’s (2008) educational entrepreneurship framework also has implications. Just as there are many definitions of entrepreneurship, there are many definitions of educational entrepreneurship. For this reason, readers should be cautious when comparing this study to other research in the field of educational entrepreneurship. The center practices educational entrepreneurship as defined by Webber and Scott (2008); however, its actions may not fit as well within the bounds of other definitions of educational entrepreneurship. For example, Smith and Petersen (2006) describe educational entrepreneurs as innovators who bring about revolutionary change in public education, and Hess (2007) emphasizes the role of educational entrepreneurs in creating new organizations. The choice of Webber and Scott’s (2008) framework for educational entrepreneurship was appropriate for this study, but the specificity of the framework may limit comparison to other research.

**Future Studies**

Following on this single case study, a multiple case study would enhance the generalizability of the findings. Such a multiple case study could be conducted either among
several language centers in Thailand or several language centers in ASEAN. Including language programs in other ASEAN countries would greatly improve the generalizability of the results.

Further research could also follow up on the same language center. Such research could gain greater depth by including additional stakeholders, such as students and their parents, in the data collection and analysis. This would provide an additional means of verifying whether the teachers’ and administrators’ perceptions (e.g., regarding the students’ preference for teacher-centered or student-centered learning) are accurate.

Additional research could frame the center’s activities using different research questions and definitions of key terms. The research questions selected for this study asked how the language center engages in educational entrepreneurship, what outcomes are expected from educational entrepreneurship, and what challenges it faces when engaging in educational entrepreneurship. These research questions presuppose that the center is indeed engaging in educational entrepreneurship. As described above, the center is engaging in entrepreneurship as defined by Morris et al. (1994) and in educational entrepreneurship as defined by Webber and Scott (2008); however, different definitions of entrepreneurship or of educational entrepreneurship might lead to significantly different results. Further research that defined entrepreneurship and educational entrepreneurship different and asked whether or to what extent the center engages in educational entrepreneurship would also be productive.

**Action Plan**

This three-point action plan is based on the findings of this study. The elements of this plan attempt both to develop the strengths of the program and to address weaknesses. The plan includes the following: continuing the process of internationalization, training teachers in the pedagogy of technology use, and hiring more local teachers.
Continuing the process of Internationalization. Thus far, internationalization has been a strength of the language center, which has arranged visiting teachers from Australia and the United States, hosted guest speakers from universities abroad, increased teachers’ participation in international conferences, and provided short courses for groups of students from Japan. While the current efforts at internationalization are beneficial, certain aspects could be further developed. Specifically, the program should become more involved with other educators and educational institutions within ASEAN. This would give students and teachers more exposure to regional English. Student exchanges would also provide opportunities to communicate with other language learners in authentic English as a lingua franca situations. International activities within the ASEAN region have the additional benefit of being less expensive. I will attempt to pursue internationalization involving countries in the region through existing organizations, such as the ASEAN University Network, a regional university association that has its headquarters in Bangkok.

Training teachers in the pedagogy of technology use. As documented in Chapter IV, the potential drawbacks of educational technology were a point of disagreement among participants. While participants listed many benefits of the integration of educational technology into the curriculum, several participants voiced concerns about the potential of these technologies to disrupt learning, for example by distracting students. In order to address this concern, I will arrange guest speakers and trainers to present on pedagogical concepts related to educational technology. Previous guest speakers and trainers have focused much more on how to use educational technology than on whether to use educational technology in a given situation. Teachers at the language center are proficient in using educational technology; the next step for many is to learn to discern when technology is an effective tool and when it is a distraction.
**Hiring more local teachers.** Hiring more local teachers would benefit the center. According to Kirkpatrick (2014), local teachers whose first language is not English but who have learned English to a high level of proficiency are excellent language teachers. They can empathize with the students, predict grammatical issues that the students may have, and (something that native English teachers cannot do) provide a model of a highly successful learner of English. An additional benefit of hiring local teachers is that they would be able to help the center create closer ties with the local community. Participants in this study identified the lack of a relationship with the community as something that they would like to address, and hiring more local teachers would be an excellent first step to developing this relationship. I plan to prioritize the hiring of local teachers in the coming terms.

**Personal Reflection**

This study was completed over the course of approximately one and a half years. During that time, my views on educational entrepreneurship and on the role of the language center have evolved significantly. These changes to my views are due to several factors: extensive reading of related literature, the close examination of the center’s curriculum, analysis of the data for the study, and interaction with my thesis committee. The specific outcomes of the thesis aside, the process has required me to look closely at elements of my own practice. This has been rewarding in many ways. Primarily, though, I am now able to look at myself more critically as a teacher and as a member of a team leading an educational institution. In my understanding, this is the true value of the doctoral studies that I have undertaken, which have culminated in this thesis.

By most definitions, the language program that served as the focus of this case study is not entrepreneurial. A question from a member of the thesis committee brought this into focus: “Is this educational entrepreneurship or just good pedagogy?” While most definitions of
entrepreneurship would exclude this center’s activities, all of the participants — without exception — demonstrated their knowledge of and interest in good pedagogy. Every participant expressed a strong interest in meeting their students’ needs. The teachers and coordinators at the language program are willing to work long hours and to struggle against various impediments to ensure their students’ success — but they are not entrepreneurs, nor are they innovators in the strictest sense of the term. Whatever the next frontier of language learning is, it will not originate at this language center.

This does not mean that the center is failing in its mission. Far from it — the teachers at the center are (as evidenced by outcomes beyond the scope of this study) meeting many of their educational goals. The center is certainly not pushing the envelope of what is possible in language teaching. Nor should it — this program can achieve success by selecting and adapting innovations dreamt up by truly cutting-edge programs. An important role of educational leaders in this program is to adapt innovations conceived elsewhere to thrive in this particular cultural, educational, and economic context.

The growing demand for English education that the participants perceived is well documented, and this demand does create a space for entrepreneurship. While good pedagogy should remain the priority, institutional growth should also be considered — these two goals are not exclusive. The program would benefit from a greater focus on entrepreneurship in its strictest sense. Looking to the future, prioritizing a more entrepreneurial style of management and looking to the true innovators for new ideas could allow the center to expand, experiment with new ventures, and expose a larger group of students to effective education. It is an interesting and rewarding time to be in the field of English education in Southeast Asia. As the region
continues to develop, negotiating their own path from the traditional to the modern, there is certainly a place for entrepreneurship in education.
References


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Appendix A
Interview and Focus Group Questions

Students’ needs

1. How are the students’ needs at the Preparation Center for Languages and Mathematics (PC) today different than they were in the past?
2. Are changes in the available educational technologies and in students’ tech literacy relevant to language teaching?
3. Are there any differences in terms of the purpose for which they are learning English? Is there any difference in terms of the type of language that they will need?
4. Are there any differences in terms of the Thai educational system? Does the current political situation in Thailand or in Southeast Asia influence the students’ needs?
5. Are any of the students’ needs not met? If so, why aren’t they met?
6. Will the students’ needs continue to change? What changes do you predict in the near future?

Educational entrepreneurship

1. Does PC engage in innovative behavior? If so, please give some specific examples of innovative behavior that it has engaged in.
2. Does PC encourage teachers to generate new knowledge and skills? If so, please give specific examples of knowledge and skills that have been generated.
3. Has innovation at PC helped to meet the needs of the students? If so, how?
4. Does PC network with other institutions? If so, how is this done? Which institutions influence PC?
5. How does PC find out about changes in the environment (e.g., changes to university or government policy, changes in students’ needs, changes in the field of education)?
6. Has networking helped to meet the needs of the students? If so, how?
7. What modes of communication are used within PC? What modes of communication are used to communicate with parents, students, and other stakeholders outside of PC?
8. Are the modes of communication used by PC changing?
9. Have changes in the modes of communication helped to meet the needs of the students? If so, how?
10. Does PC help students to become aware of important regional and global issues? If so, how is this done? Specifically, which issues are integrated into the curriculum?
11. Does PC help students to become better citizens of the world? If so, how?
12. Has raising awareness of important issues helped to meet the needs of the students? If so, how?
13. Does PC help to meet community needs? If so, which needs?
14. Does PC involve faculty, staff, students, and parents in meeting community needs? If so, how does PC involve them?
15. Has community involvement helped to meet the needs of the students? If so, how?
16. Is PC using Internet-based learning? If so, give specific examples.
17. Has PC faced any competition because of Internet-based learning? If so, how has this competition influenced PC?
18. Has integrating face-to-face and Internet-based learning helped to meet the needs of the students? If so, how?

**Expected outcomes of educational entrepreneurship**

1. What are some of the specific results or outcomes, positive or negative, of change at PC? Overall, are the results of change positive?
2. What specific results or outcomes of change at PC can we expect in the future?
3. Overall, is PC able to change effectively in order to meet students’ needs?

**Barriers to educational entrepreneurship**

1. Is it sometimes difficult to implement change at PC? Why? Please give specific examples of barriers to change.
2. What specific barriers to change at PC can we expect in the future?
3. What strategies are used to overcome barriers to change?

**Closing Questions**

1. Do you have anything else to add? Is there anything important that we haven’t covered?
2. Do you have any questions for me regarding this study or the topics we’ve just discussed?
Appendix B
Letter of Permission

Dear Dr. Sarayut Nathaphan,

I am currently working on my dissertation in the Ed. D. in Curriculum, Teaching, Learning, and Leadership Program at Northeastern University, and I would like to ask your permission to conduct research at the Preparation Center for Languages and Mathematics.

This research is about the ways that the Preparation Center for Languages and Mathematics is changing in order to meet the changing needs of the students enrolled there. In order to investigate this, I would like to interview five of the course coordinators and four of the teachers currently employed by the Preparation Center. Participation is strictly voluntary. Each of the participants will be interviewed for one hour, with the possibility of a short follow-up interview.

This research will benefit the Preparation Center. The findings of this research can inform the development of the curriculum. Also, we will gain a clearer idea of whether the students’ needs are being met effectively.

The identities of the instructors participating in the research will be protected, and the name of the Preparation Center will not be mentioned in the published research. Also, no personal information that could be used to identify the participants will be included in the dissertation. Before I begin the research, approval will be obtained from the Institutional Review Board at Northeastern University.

Please indicate whether you approve of this research and sign below.

Thank you for considering this request.

Sincerely,

Alexander Nanni

☐ I give permission to you to conduct the research project described above.

☐ I do not give permission to you to conduct the research project described above.

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<td>Dr. Sarayut Nathaphan</td>
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<th>Signature of Chair of the Advisory Committee</th>
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Appendix C

Informed Consent Form

Northeastern University
Human Subject Research Protection

Signed Informed Consent Document: Department of Education

Name of Investigator(s): Chris Unger (Advisor), Alexander Nanni

Title of Project: Innovation in EFL: A Case Study Exploring a Program’s Response to Change

Informed Consent to Participate in a Research Study

You are being invited to take part in a research study. This form will tell you about the study, but I will explain it to you first. You may ask me any questions that you have regarding the study or your participation. When you are ready to make a decision, you may tell me if you want to participate or not. You do not have to participate if you do not want to. If you decide to participate, sign this statement and I will give you a copy to keep.

Why am I being asked to take part in this research study?

I am asking you to participate in this study because you are an instructor or course coordinator at the Preparation Center for Languages and Mathematics.

Why is this research study being done?

This study is being done to gain a better understanding of the ways that the Preparation Center for Languages and Mathematics is changing in order to meet students’ changing needs.

What will I be asked to do?

If you decide to take part in this study, you will be asked to participate in a 60-minute interview. You will be asked to check a transcript of the interview for accuracy. You may also be asked to participate in a shorter follow-up interview.

Where will this take place and how much time will it take?

You will be interviewed at the Preparation Center for Languages and Mathematics unless you request another suitable location. The initial interview will take 60 minutes, and the follow-up interview may take up to 30 minutes. Checking the transcript of the interviews should not take longer than 15 minutes.

Will there be any risk or discomfort to me?

No risk or discomfort are foreseeable.

Will I benefit from being in this research?

No.
Participating in this research will not benefit you directly, but your participation will help to improve the curriculum at the Preparation Center for Languages and Mathematics in order to better meet the needs of the students.

**Who will see the information about me?**

No one other than the researcher will see information about you. The researcher will use pseudonyms for all participants in the study, and the recording of the interview will be kept securely. After the study has concluded, all recordings will be destroyed.

**Can I stop my participation in this study?**

You can stop participation in this study at any time. Participation is completely voluntary. Even after the interviews have begun, you can quit at any point.

**Who can I contact if I have a problem or question?**

You can contact the researcher, Alexander Nanni, at nanni.a@husky.neu.edu. The primary investigator, Chris Unger, is also reachable at c.unger@neu.edu.

**Will I be paid for my participation?**

You will not be paid for your participation.

**Will it cost me anything to participate?**

Participating will not cost you anything.

---

**I agree to take part in this research.**

________________________________________
Signature of person agreeing to take part

________________________________________
Printed name of person agreeing to take part

________________________________________
Signature of person who explained the study and obtained consent of above person

________________________________________
Printed name of person above