The Study of the Interrelationship between the LGBTQ Inclusiveness and Affective Factors in English as a Foreign Language Classrooms[1]

การศึกษาความสัมพันธ์ระหว่างความครอบคลุมความหลากหลายทางเพศและปัจจัยด้านอารมณ์ในห้องเรียนสำหรับการเรียนรู้ภาษาอังกฤษในฐานะภาษาต่างประเทศ[2]

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Abstract

This paper aimed to investigate the existence of LGBTQ inclusiveness in classrooms and its interrelationship with the affective factors, particularly self-esteem, toward students' learning English as a second language. The study's participants were two Thai students who self-identified as LGBTQ at one university. This qualitative study used semi-structured individual interviews and an ethnomethodological interview transcript analysis. The findings showed that two participants might gain experience in learning the English language in LGBTQ-inclusive high school and university classrooms. These environments can support two participants in learning the English language regardless of their gender identities. The stated levels of inclusiveness mainly were correlated with the rise in motivation and, finally, with self-esteem. Furthermore, the coexistence of motivation and self-esteem was reported that when lacking motivation, self-esteem can decline. All in all, these three elements are considered essential for developing productive English classrooms.

Keywords: LGBTQ-inclusive classrooms, LGBTQ students, English classroom contexts, Affective factors, Self-esteem

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บทคัดย่อ

วิจัยนี้มีจุดประสงค์เพื่อศึกษาการมีอยู่ของห้องเรียนที่ครอบคลุมความหลากหลายทางเพศและความเชื่อมโยงกับปัจจัยด้านอารมณ์ โดยเฉพาะอย่างยิ่งด้านความมั่นใจในตัวเองในการเรียนภาษาอังกฤษในฐานะภาษาต่างประเทศหรือไม่ ผู้เข้าร่วมการศึกษาเป็นนักศึกษาไทยจำนวนสองคนที่ระบุตัวตนว่าเป็นกลุ่มที่มีความหลากหลายทางเพศ การศึกษานี้เป็นการศึกษาเชิงคุณภาพ โดยใช้การสัมภาษณ์แบบกึ่งโครงสร้างและใช้ทฤษฎีชาติพันธุ์วิถีในการวิเคราะห์ข้อความจากการสัมภาษณ์ ผลการวิจัยแสดงให้เห็นว่าผู้เข้าร่วมการศึกษาสองคนอาจได้รับประสบการณ์การเรียนภาษาอังกฤษในห้องเรียนที่ครอบคลุมความหลากหลายทางเพศทั้งในระดับมัธยมศึกษาและมหาวิทยาลัย และความครอบคลุมนั้นยังช่วยให้เกิดความสำเร็จในการเรียนรู้ภาษาอังกฤษโดยไม่ถูกข้อจำกัดด้านอัตลักษณ์ทางเพศ อีกทั้งความครอบคลุมยังมีความเชื่อมโยงกับการเพิ่มขึ้นของแรงจูงใจมากที่สุดและความมั่นใจในตัวเองตามลำดับ นอกจากนี้แรงจูงใจและความมั่นใจในตัวเองสามารถเกิดขึ้นร่วมกัน เพราะเมื่อขาดแรงจูงใจความมั่นใจได้ตัวเองอาจจะลดลงได้ โดยรวมแล้วสามปัจจัยเหล่านี้ถือเป็นสิ่งสำคัญในการสร้างห้องเรียนภาษาอังกฤษที่มีประสิทธิภาพ

คำสำคัญ: ห้องเรียนที่ครอบคลุมกลุ่มผู้มีความหลากหลายทางเพศ, นักเรียนที่มีความหลากหลายทางเพศ, บริบทห้องเรียนภาษาอังกฤษ, ปัจจัยทางด้านอารมณ์, ความมั่นใจในตัวเอง

Introduction

Scholars have sought a certain relationship between gender and affective factors as one of the critical dimensions in the second language acquisition area, although it is deemed an everyday issue. Nevertheless, an exceedingly vivid obsession with gender differences between males and females has been extended (e.g., Akram & Ghani, 2013; Mathew et al., 2013; Van der Slik, 2015). It can be suggested that this may privilege cisnormativity dominating learning materials and even activities and exclude socially marginalized others opposing gender binarism and suppress their voices to prolong pleasure in gaining English learning experiences, especially in classroom contexts.

This position is consistent with Mawdsley and Willis's (2023) observations of the discursive practices of heteronormativity and cisnormativity in undergraduate pharmacy education in the United Kingdom. When the programs seem to operate in this manner, they can fail to incorporate equality, diversity, and inclusion of LGBTQI+ people and issues into the curriculum planning and delivery. While a few studies have examined LGBTQ inclusion in a pedagogical setting, especially in Thailand (e.g., Hongboontri & Duangsaeng, 2022; UNESCO, 2018), there remains evidence that some students still experience unfavorable and ineffective language learning circumstances in their

classroom contexts because of their gender identity, as Hongboontri and Duangsaeng (2022) revealed that bullying and discrimination against LGBTQ staff members and students have persisted in Thai schools.

For these reasons, this study is interested in exploring the existence of LGBTQ-inclusiveness in English language classrooms. Looking at this so-called "fossilized pedagogy trend" through a lens of queerness, the study aims to shift from the heteronormative landscape observation into diversity by exploring EFL LGBTQ+ learners in Thailand. Apart from disturbing the powers of heteronormativity by vocalizing inclusiveness in classroom contexts, this study aimed to investigate the interrelationship between inclusiveness and affective factors, especially self-esteem, whereby they can affect one another. To be noted, the study follows Taylor et al. (2016) regarding the idea that LGBTQ-inclusive classrooms used in this study indicate the classrooms with the inclusiveness of "all students, and especially sexual and gender minority students, and indeed any students who are negatively affected by homophobic, transphobic, heteronormative and cisnormative school climates" (p. 113).

Literature Review

Gender and Education

In understanding LGBTQ-related experiences and challenges within educational settings, various studies have shed light on the multifaceted dynamics that shape individual interactions and broader societal influences. Saraç and McCullick (2015), for example, showed that although the study's gay-identified participant received supportive responses when revealing his sexual orientation to friends, he was still reluctant to come out publicly. The most significant influences on homophobic beliefs and behavior in his society were thought to be traditional gender roles, misconceptions about homosexuality and homosexuals, and religion. The recent explosion of research into the problem of educational inequality appears to have increased practitioners' awareness of the issue (Pawelczyk et al., 2014). Many teachers feel compelled to combat homophobic language, even though they view their lack of professional training as a barrier (Świerszcz, 2012).

The blurring inclusivity of LGBTQ students perceived by teachers may be mostly observed in classroom contexts now that concerns have been lately raised about the classroom as a place

where heteronormativity permeates (Røthing, 2008). Liddicoat (2009) emphasized the contestation and opposition to non-heterosexual identities in this desexualized atmosphere, while social marginalization outside the classroom hinders learning by denying access to naturalistic circumstances (King, 2008). Taken together, gender identities are commonly regarded as obstacles within educational institutions due to a multitude of issues. Teachers should prioritize intervening in conditions that promote homophobia, both within the classroom and in naturalistic settings. As underlined by Dessel et al. (2017), interventions aimed at providing support and empowerment to LGBTQ youth can potentially provide broader effects on academic achievement and the overall atmosphere within educational institutions. These circumstances are considered regnant on a need-to-know basis in the LGBTQ-inclusive learning milieu.

Naturalistic and Classroom Contexts

Navigating the intricate landscapes of learning environments, two distinct perspectives converge to shed light on the dynamics shaping educational experiences. Cronin-Golomb and Bauer (2022) posited that naturalistic learning occurs outside the confines of a laboratory or a structured classroom, where learners engage with diverse sources like museums, articles, podcasts, and films. While such environments are frequently purposefully intended to aid in the flexibility of information acquisition, learners need the explicit structure and direction that curricula based on schools or even supervised lab materials offer learners (Cronin-Golomb & Bauer, 2022).

Garrett and Spano (2017) asserted that classroom context is significant because while it is one thing to recognize that the classroom environment influences the development of creative potential, it is an entirely different matter to comprehend what it takes to create an optimally supportive creative learning environment. As this study is in line with previous studies that seek LGBTQ-inclusive classroom contexts (e.g., Butterfield et al., 2018, Flores, 2014; Page, 2016, 2017), the classroom contexts can be canvassed to explore the relationship between classroom conditions and the supportive environments deemed oxymoronic. Therefore, the bona fide facticity of modern classrooms in the current climate is decipherable that assumptions about safety and fairness are inaccurate, and the setting is not entirely safe for LGBT students (Connolly, 1999).

Looking at the EFL classroom contexts, for instance, students of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in the US who do not meet the patriarchal norm of being male, white, middle-class, young, heterosexual, and physically fit are at a disadvantage when learning the target language

(Martín, 2020). Even though Hongboontri and Duangsaeng (2022) revealed that many of the LGBTQ students in their EFL classes and at the university feel secure enough to discuss their sexual orientation, some LGBTQ students continue to struggle in their academic environment as well as with the climate of their university due to the pervasive heterosexism and homophobia on campus. LGBTQ students could perceive the classroom as a place that actively works to marginalize them as both learners and as individuals in the larger society (Furrow, 2012).

Of this, providing that classroom contexts lack embracingly inclusive vacancies for students to voice their thoughts but privilege heteronormative content or materials, this can negatively affect students' learning of a language. One area related is affective factors regarding motivation and sensibilities; for instance, students can become demotivated by concealed biases in the classroom, which prevents them from producing meaningful linguistic output and navigating their identities in novel social situations (Martín, 2020).

Affective Factors

Within the language acquisition domain, affective factors have been well recognized as a significant determinant shaping learners' experiences. The idea of affective factors to filter language input was already incipiently introduced by Dulay and Burt at the beginning of 1977. Nevertheless, the "Affective Filter Hypothesis" (Krashen, 1985) suggested later in the 1980s carrying the learner's motivation, attitude, anxiety, and self-esteem are deemed the primary affective elements affecting second language acquisition (SLA). Ni (2012) underlined that language learners who are highly motivated, self-assured, and anxiously low-filtered can absorb much information since they have low filters while those with low motivation, low self-esteem, and high anxiety have strong filters and gain limited input. Three factors: motivation, anxiety, and self-esteem, are addressed, respectively.

Firstly, motivation consists of effort, a desire to learn the language, and a positive attitude (Gardner, 1985). Prior to creating treatments that encourage interest and persistence in foreign language study, understanding students' motivation for foreign language acquisition was essential (Ramage, 1990). A language learner's motivation can be affected by various aspects, for instance, teaching styles (e.g., Tanveer et al., 2012; Sheikh & Mahmood, 2014; Atma et al., 2021; Ratminingsih et al., 2022) and teacher-student interaction (e.g., Rugutt & Chemosit, 2009; Zepke & Leach, 2010; Yunus et al., 2011; Akhtar et al., 2019). Secondly, language anxiety is viewed as "ranks high among

factors influencing language learning, regardless of whether the setting is informal (learning language on the streets") or formal (in the classroom)" (Arnold, 1999, p. 59). Anxiety in language acquisition primarily relates to the learners' worry and apprehension when communicating in a foreign language; these two elements are inversely correlated; now that anxiety increases, language acquisition decreases and vice versa (Bao & Liu, 2021).

Apart from motivation and anxiety, self-esteem is understood as "a psychological and social phenomenon in which an individual evaluates his/her competence and own self according to [a set of] values" (Rubio, 2007, p. 5). Furthermore, no cognitive or affective activity can be implemented without a certain degree of self-esteem or belief that you can perform an activity successfully (Bao & Liu, 2021). Those with higher self-esteem can experience less anxiety and be more motivated to study a language in class, making every attempt to learn and apply the language, while low self-esteem may prevent the students from participating in class, speaking the target language, or even leading them to lose interest in learning a new language when this situation worsens (Ni, 2012). Basco and Han (2016) reported a strong, positive correlation between self-esteem and motivation: the higher the self-esteem, the higher the motivation. However, there was a strong, negative correlation between self-esteem and anxiety: the higher the self-esteem, the lower the anxiety.

Moreover, it can be argued that the various factors influencing teacher-student relationships, such as the utilization of biased language by teachers, interventions by the public against anti-LGBTQ bullying, the availability of a trusted adult for students at school, and the level of comfort in communicating with teachers, play a substantial role in predicting an individual's self-esteem (Dessel et al., 2017). Kosciw et al. (2012) underlined that students who possess the ability to recognize instructors who assist are more likely to experience a reduction in victimization, an improvement in self-esteem, higher academic performance, and enhanced attendance. Given the aforementioned points, it is crucial to examine the significance of teachers' classroom roles. As classrooms worldwide are becoming more populated with diverse student populations, it is essential for schools of education to sufficiently equip prospective teachers with the necessary skills to cater to the needs of all students effectively. Teachers with cultural competence can comprehend and effectively respond to cultural variety within their educational environments, encompassing several aspects, such as sexual diversity (Szalacha, 2008).

However, certain variables can obtain this effect of low self-esteem, and therefore gender identity, especially in LGBTQ-identified students, may be deemed one of the material factors to thwart effective language learning potentially when they are excluded. As witnessed in the publication, The 2017 National School Climate Survey: The Experiences of Lesbian. Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer Youth in Our Nation's Schools, LGBTQ students showed lower levels of self-esteem and higher levels of despair than heterosexual and cisgender students; as a result, there are significantly more suicidal thoughts and attempts among those who identify as LGBTQ (Kosciw et al., 2018). Taken together, it is imperative to look at whether LGBTQ-inclusive classroom contexts exist and then influence the self-esteem of students on the experience of learning English as a foreign language through the main research question: Do LGBTQ-inclusive classrooms exist and interrelate learners' experiences of learning English as a foreign language in terms of affective factors? As noted, self-esteem is centered now that this can be situated in the classroom contexts majorly focused.

Methodology

Participants

Two Thai students who self-identified themselves as LGBTQ were the participants of this study. The participants depended on how many enthusiastically participated in this study during one-week registration. The first-year students from various faculties in one particular university in northeastern, as well as its campus, Thailand, were highly welcomed now that they, first-year students, noticeably had experiences transforming from one setting to the other – high school to university as the so-called “educational environment metamorphosis” with the difference of encountering of either ‘inclusivity’ or ‘exclusivity’ in classroom contexts. To encourage voluntary participation in this study, a poster was created and then posted in a Facebook group of many students in the university. Those approaching could access participant registration by scanning the QR code provided.

Research Instrument

This study was conducted qualitatively using online semi-structured individual interviews as a research instrument since the interviewees' opinions can be presented in an explicitly designed context rather than a standardized style of dialogue, as in a questionnaire (Flick, 2022).

Furthermore, interviews could produce narratives highlighting how the participant interprets their experience and the complexity of interpersonal connections. As noted by Pavlenko (2001), “It is possible that only personal narratives provide a glimpse into areas so private, personal and intimate that they are rarely—if ever— breached in the study of SLA, and at the same time are at the heart and soul of the second language socialization process” (p. 167).

As an LGBTQ-identified insider who used to experience interiorized homophobia in the classroom as a high school student, the researcher aims to set the broad protocol questions to gain unbiased trajectories of results. Thus, two main themes in the interviews generally embarked upon 1) experience in learning English as a foreign language in a high school classroom (e.g., “How was your experience in learning English in a high school classroom?” and “What activities did you like and dislike the most? Why?”) and 2) experience in learning English as a foreign language in a university classroom (e.g., “Do you think those activities implemented in class yielded impacts on your experience in learning English?” and “Was learning English in a high school classroom similar to or different from a university classroom?”) (see Appendix).

Of this, it could navigate into a principal objective of whether or not their experiences of learning English in both classroom contexts – high school and university – signal and unfold the neglect of LGBTQ inclusion and affect ‘self-esteem’ in achieving English learning experience. During the gradual yet extant phasing-out of the COVID-19 pandemic, Google Meet as a gratis online tool for communicating and vice versa was deemed convenient for conducting the interviews.

Data Collection

One week was spent on having approximately 7-10 participants. There were, however, two participants willing to participate in the study. The study employed a limited sample size of two participants for the case study due to various factors, namely 1) time constraints (the study was conducted within a single semester – part of a specific course), 2) the accessibility of participants identifying (not all individuals were willing to disclose their gender identities openly), and 3) the availability of participants (they may have needed more time to dedicate to participating in the study).

The participants were then contacted via e-mail to arrange an online interview appointment. The interviews were held within two weeks. Each participant was interviewed separately and equipped with approximately ten minutes. The participants’ interviews were

recorded on audio with their informed consent. The audio recordings of interviews were then transcribed and entered into a written text. The transcriptions were edited for readability, conciseness, and clarity. Edited transcription thus addresses issues like grammatical mistakes, slang, and incomplete sentences (Brooks, 2021). As noted, the interviews were conducted in the participant's native language – Thai, so the transcriptions were translated into English before proceeding to the analysis.

Data Analysis

This study utilized an ethnomethodological analysis of the interview transcript inspired by King's (2008) study in pursuance of the investigation into participants' SLA experiences. The ethnomethodological method of interview analysis examines responses as accounts rather than reports. In this study, only two participants can be associated with the fundamental core of ethnomethodological analysis of interviews, as it allows for exploring the genuineness of participants' narratives, hence facilitating a comprehensive investigation and comprehension of a particular occurrence. Moreover, this type of analysis may entail exploring the inquiries that encapsulate the challenges and unquestioned approaches encountered by individuals within a specific organization (Rawls, 2002). The complete verbal expressions of the participants were presented to emphasize the theme that arose from the interviews. The participants' remarks, organized into categories and subcategories, were analyzed to understand their perspectives on the presence of LGBTQ-inclusive environments in high school and university classrooms.

Results

To concisely demonstrate the overall interviews, this part is designated to be selective in presenting the participants' words. Two participants were anonymized using the pseudonyms Chart and Aey, respectively, to conserve their privacy. This study adapted Lochmiller's (2021) method of illustrative reporting to present a prominent theme that emerged from the interviews (see Figure 1). The theme focuses on English language classrooms and their associated categories, serving as a crucial pivot for understanding LGBTQ-inclusive classroom contexts in English language learning. Additionally, this theme sheds light on other significant aspects of this topic. The heart of ethnomethodological analysis was employed to illustrate each category by utilizing participants' accounts of interviews.

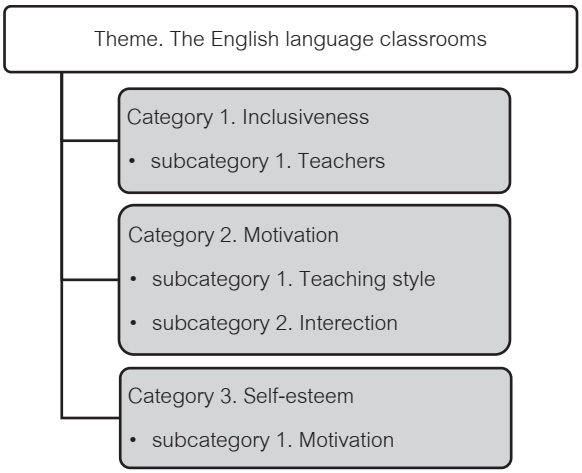


Figure 1 Illustration of a theme in the study

The English language classrooms

The two participants discussed their predominant acquisition of English language learning experiences within classroom settings. They observed that regardless of whether these classrooms were situated in a high school or a university, they were fortified by similar factors, namely inclusiveness, motivation, and self-esteem. This statement implied that these three categories are influential in shaping the central theme of the study. In other words, these three aspects are the foundational elements that contribute to establishing a conducive learning environment for English language acquisition. Three factors are discussed below to answer the main research question and share their critical interrelationship.

Category 1. Inclusiveness (Teachers)

Excerpt 1.

Chart "It is just that the teachers at school did not restrict me, and they were supportive, too. Since I was an active student interested in language, they supported me and pushed me to speak more."

Chart "Then the teachers try to push everyone to speak, as I said from the beginning that I am a talkative person. Well, I will speak all the time."

Excerpt 2.

Aey "Not really. Most of the language teachers in my school are women, and the majority are LGBTQ. If those LGBTQ teachers taught us, it is fun because they always entertained us."

Aey "For female teachers as a new-generation person, I can talk to them about anything because they are open-minded and understand the students. It helps significantly because it is not just the teacher and students, but an older-sister-and-younger-brother relationship where we can discuss anything and consult on some issues."

Two participants provided affirmative answers ("...did not restrict me" and "Not really") when asked about questions posed organically, such as inquiring whether they felt constrained or restricted during the learning process in classrooms. The displayed utterances can imply that they originated from the individuals themselves. To emphasize the importance of individual agency, they extensively discussed the role of supportive educators in fostering a pleasant learning environment in the English language classroom. It is worth mentioning that teachers who demonstrate openness to challenges and diversity and unwavering support for students enhance students' heightened enthusiasm for learning English within the classrooms. This space allowed learners to practice their English skills, particularly speaking skills. It serves as a "sympathetic hearing session" for teachers to directly observe authentic situations where learners encounter challenges in understanding content subjects and other difficulties. Furthermore, within the discourse, there was a specific instance where a participant mentioned "the majority are LGBTQ" while discussing their own experience of learning English in a classroom setting. This anecdote serves as a potential indication of LGBTQ inclusiveness within these educational environments. The way LGBTQ educators as members of the in-group can contribute to the creation of a positive and engaging learning environment, leading to an increase in learners' motivation and self-esteem.

Category 2. Motivation (Teaching Styles and Interaction)

Excerpt 3.

Chart "I enjoyed learning English. However, it did involve some theory, and my knowledge was not particularly advanced during that period. It was just basic stuff, you know? But that is what I like, easy things."

Chart "Most of my high school teachers focused more on theory than anything else, making the lessons quite dull. It is because, in Thailand, we tend to place a lot of importance on English grammar. The teachers would teach it to the point where it became tedious and uninteresting. There were few activities either, especially in the English class."

Chart "There are other factors, such as boring teachers. If the teacher makes the lessons dull, it will feel boring despite the interesting subjects. For example, last semester, we learned reading with a foreign teacher. He may need help understanding Thai students like us due to cultural differences. So, he made us feel reluctant to go to class. However, not wanting to learn at all was not bad enough."

Excerpt 4.

Aey "In my class, the teacher teaches, and the students sit and learn. Others may only be interested in learning a little, so the interaction between the teacher and the students may be less."

Aey "Although we may learn the same theory, there needs to be more interaction between teachers and students in university classrooms. This differs from high school, where we can discuss everything with our teachers. Interacting between teachers and students is therefore greater. It is okay to learn."

Aey "When it is like this, we will feel tired and do not like learning or participating in classroom activities. Therefore, I only talk to my friends or sit quietly when studying. I do not want to speak that much. Also, when we have questions, we will not be confident enough to ask because we fear being judged."

In addition to fostering a sense of LGBTQ inclusiveness through the support of teachers, it is important to emphasize the issue of demotivation in English language schools due to monotonous teaching methods and limited opportunities for engagement, that is, teacher-student interaction. This implies that despite the inclusion of LGBTQ students, there exists a potential situation in which they may be barred from participation in language learning due to two reported causes. Teachers only employ pedagogical approaches that are conventionally centered on theoretical concepts, emphasizing the explicit instruction of knowledge, particularly in relation to grammatical elements. Given the nature of the topic being considered as possibly unyielding, it necessitated exertion to engage with and consequently led to fatigue. There is a concern that these teaching techniques may result in teachers assuming a central role in the classroom, which could

have negative repercussions such as being perceived as "boring teachers." The occurrence of "a few activities" resulted from the extensive coverage of theories. This approach may highlight the importance of integrating material with engaging activities to increase students' motivation in the English language classroom. Due to the presence of theory-oriented classrooms, the potential for significant interaction between teachers and students was limited. It is apparent that a decrease in motivation among the participants resulted in a decline in their self-esteem.

Category 3. Self-esteem (Motivation)

Excerpt 5.

Chart "I do not think any teacher can make us lose self-esteem. Unless we were not confident, we just got bored studying with that teacher."

Excerpt 6.

Aey "I think it (motivation) helps (self-esteem) a lot because it is not just the teacher and students only. It is like a sister-brother relationship where we can talk about many things and consult on some issues."

As previously noted, motivation and self-esteem could escalate and coexist. When an individual experienced a lack of motivation, it could have a detrimental effect on their self-esteem. Conversely, their motivation was heightened when the activities aligned harmoniously with the learners' inclination towards a specific ability, such as speaking skills. Nevertheless, it was brought to the attention of one of the participants that uninteresting teaching methods or uninspiring teachers can contribute to diminished motivation and individual self-esteem. Still, these factors should not be seen as the sole determinants.

Discussion, Conclusion, and Recommendation

Taken together, these findings imply that the presence of LGBTQ-inclusive educational environments, both in high schools and higher education institutions, is reported and associated with improved English language proficiency, unhampered by limitations or biases related to gender identity. The promotion of LGBTQ inclusivity could be strengthened through the presence of supportive educators, including LGBTQ and female teachers, who provide encouragement, foster an enjoyable learning environment, and lend a sympathetic ear to their students.

This study posits that neglecting the influence of gender identities on English language acquisition among participants can support the notion of inclusiveness in educational settings, wherein LGBTQ students are not impeded in their enthusiastic participation in the classroom. These findings could affirm Garrett and Spano (2017) that the classroom environment influences the development of creative potential; it is an entirely different matter to comprehend what it takes to create an optimally supportive creative learning environment. Additionally, their narratives contest the idea of prevalent educational resources and activities that unintentionally marginalize them as individuals who resist gender binarism or may favor heteronormative learners.

It is crucial to recognize that the findings do not completely invalidate the concerns raised by other researchers regarding the challenges faced by LGBTQ students. The presence of heterosexism and homophobia (Hongboontri & Daungsaeng, 2022), the perpetuation of the marginalization of LGBTQ identities (Furrow, 2012), and the hidden biases (Martín, 2020) still pose significant obstacles to student motivation and overall well-being. The study, however, provides valuable evidence supporting the positive claims made by Hongboontri and Daungsaeng regarding the sense of security experienced by many LGBTQ students in EFL classes and within the university context. Even when the unplanned questions (see Appendix, Theme 1: Questions 4 and 6 and Theme 2: Question 5) emerged from asking about their direct LGBTQ-biased treatment experiences, the two study participants did not share the narratives of already-marginalized gender identities, including needlessly encountering gender bias, discrimination, and constraints.

There are several reasons why incorporating certain strategies may contribute to improving motivation and self-esteem, hence enhancing the efficiency of the English learning experience within classroom settings. The perspective presented by Dessel et al. (2017) regarding the availability of a reliable adult figure for students at school and the importance of establishing a comfortable relationship with teachers holds considerable relevance in predicting levels of self-esteem. This notion also aligns with the findings of Kosciw et al. (2012), suggesting that the identification of supportive educators is associated with higher reported levels of self-esteem. These insights collectively support the argument that the presence of a supportive environment, particularly in terms of self-esteem, is interconnected with the concept of supportiveness. It might be extrapolated to corroborate Szalacha's (2008) claim that teachers are essential in fostering inclusivity across the various gender identity spectrums.

It can be argued that inclusiveness within educational settings is closely linked to the development of motivation and self-esteem. However, it is crucial that both participants identified motivation as the primary factor influencing their English language learning experiences rather than their LGBTQ gender identity or self-esteem. Furthermore, the present findings provide strong evidence in favor of the prior studies (e.g., Tanveer et al., 2012; Sheikh & Mahmood, 2014; Atma et al., 2021; Ratminingsih et al., 2022), which have also highlighted the significance of teaching styles and teacher-student interaction in fostering motivation (Rugutt & Chemosit, 2009; Zepke & Leach, 2010; Yunus et al., 2011; Akhtar et al., 2019). It is worth noting that motivation and self-esteem might be interconnected. The counterproductive experiences of LGBTQ-identified learners can be affected chiefly by low motivation, together with self-esteem happening afterward. This assertion may contradict the temporal sequence presented in Ni's (2012) study, which suggests that individuals with higher levels of self-esteem tend to exhibit more motivation to study a language in a classroom setting.

In summary, while this research may not conclusively establish the widespread integration of LGBTQ inclusivity in English language classrooms in Thailand, it presents compelling evidence suggesting the potential prevalence of such inclusiveness through specific means; these include the incorporation of unbiased and non-discriminatory classroom narratives spanning various periods, as well as the utilization of inclusive learning materials and activities. Additionally, the study highlights the positive impact of inclusivity on participants' motivation and self-esteem, underscoring its significance in cultivating conducive learning environments that embrace both LGBTQ students and all individuals in the class. Neglecting these factors could hinder students' full engagement in classroom activities. The research puts forth the idea that the adaptability and flamboyancy of teaching styles play a crucial role in shaping learners' attitudes and interests. Recognizing teaching styles as a pivotal factor, the study suggests that adjusting these styles can significantly influence learners' emotional experiences, warranting careful consideration. Furthermore, it stresses the importance of fostering effective teacher-student interaction to enhance the overall learning experience, providing learners with meaningful and engaging activities that contribute to a supportive and inclusive classroom atmosphere.

Due to the limitations, this study can recruit only two participants and barely solicit other tremendously considerable perspectives, such as their life, characteristics, and learning styles, so

the results are deemed not comprehensively retable to bespeak a more vast, in-depth investigation of the subject matter concerning experiences of English language learning in LGBTQ-inclusive classroom contexts. Fortunately, this study can assert LGBTQ inclusion existence. It is imperative for further studies to have more subjects and seek not only a learner's language learning experience but also suggested essences to shed light on it now that certain learners may undergo different English learning experiences whereby some confront LGBTQ-exclusive classrooms and then its far-reaching effects on them, for example. Shifting from classroom contexts to naturalistic ones is recommended to seek whether or not it is similar or different when comparing two learning contexts.

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Appendix

Semi-structured interview questions schedule

Theme 1.	Experience in learning English as a foreign language in a high school classroom
Planned questions	1. How was your experience in learning English in a high school classroom? 2. What activities did you like and dislike the most? Why?
Unplanned questions	3. Did you feel authentic and true to yourself during the experience? 4. Were there any instances where you felt restricted or constrained? 5. Did the support you received contribute to your confidence in expressing yourself verbally? 6. Are there specific activities or content that cater to particular groups, such as boys, girls, or other specific demographics? Or is the content more universally appealing? 7. Does this factor influence your confidence in speaking, or does it simply make you less inclined to participate in a foreign teacher's class? 8. Does the classroom environment strike you as open and diverse? 9. Did the fact that the teacher identifies as LGBT have an impact on your experience?
Theme 2.	Experience in learning English as a foreign language in a university classroom
Planned questions	1. Do you think those activities implemented in class yielded impacts on your experience in learning English? 2. Was learning English in a high school classroom similar to or different from a university classroom?
Unplanned questions	3. Have you encountered any topics that discourage your interest in learning English, or do you generally find the learning experience positive? 4. In your opinion, what factors contributed to the perceived dullness in the teaching style? 5. How inclusive do you think the university classroom environment is in terms of addressing diverse perspectives, backgrounds, and other factors beyond the interests of a specific group? 6. To what extent do you believe a limited interaction between teachers and students impacts your confidence, especially when it comes to participating in class activities or speaking up?