

ENGLISH LANGUAGE AS DEVELOPMENT

A Case Study of Luang Prabang, Lao PDR

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วิทยานิพนธ์ฉบับนี้มุ่งระบุบทบาทของโลกาภิวัตน์ ตามมุมมองโลกาภิวัตน์แปลงสัมฐาณ (Transformationalist globalization) ในเมืองหลวงพระบาง สาธารณรัฐประชาธิปไตยประชาชนลาว ซึ่งเป็นแหล่งท่องเที่ยวที่มีเงินหมุนเวียนสูง อีกทั้งยังมุ่งตอบคำถามว่า การแพร่กระจายของภาษาอังกฤษนั้นเกิดจากนโยบายด้านภาษาของรัฐบาล จากการเรียนรู้การสอนทั่วไปในชั้นเรียน ภาษต่างประเทศ หรือ จากการปฏิสัมพันธ์นอกระบบโรงเรียนกับกลุ่มอาสาสมัคร นักท่องเที่ยว นักเดินทาง โครงการของบริษัทเอกชน และองค์กรนอกภาครัฐ ที่มุ่งสอนทักษะทางภาษาให้กับคนท้องถิ่นเพื่อพัฒนาคุณภาพชีวิตและการเลี้ยงชีพ ปรากฏการณ์โลกาภิวัตน์นั้นมีผลกระทบต่อพัฒนาซึ่งนำไปสู่การเปลี่ยนแปลงอย่างเห็นได้ชัดในชุมชน การเปลี่ยนแปลงเหล่านี้จะส่งผลกระทบต่อคนท้องถิ่นทั้งในแง่บวกและแง่ลบ โดยเฉพาะด้านภาษา ผู้เขียนได้ทำการวิเคราะห์การเรียนรู้ภาษาเพื่อแสดงให้เห็นว่าคนท้องถิ่นมีการเรียนรู้ “ภาษาโลก” ผลปรากฏว่า ในเมืองหลวงพระบางมีการใช้การศึกษาทั้งในระบบและนอกระบบโรงเรียน และวิธีการแบบนอกระบบโรงเรียน โดยการปฏิสัมพันธ์กับชาวต่างชาติและกลุ่มอาสาสมัคร ได้ส่งผลกระทบต่อคนในท้องถิ่นเมืองหลวงพระบาง ในทางที่ดีและกว้างขวาง โดยการปฏิสัมพันธ์กับชาวต่างชาตินอกชั้นเรียน ซึ่งเป็นการสร้างสภาพแวดล้อมที่เอื้ออำนวยต่อการแลกเปลี่ยนทางภาษาและวัฒนธรรมที่ดี วิธีการแลกเปลี่ยนความรู้นอกระบบโรงเรียนในลักษณะนี้ได้ส่งเสริมการเรียนรู้ให้แก่คนท้องถิ่นที่ไม่สามารถเข้าร่วมชั้นเรียนภาษาต่างประเทศอย่างสม่ำเสมอและมีประสิทธิภาพในโรงเรียนรัฐหรือชั้นเรียนพิเศษ งานวิจัยนี้ได้ชี้ให้เห็นว่าภาษาอังกฤษทำให้ชีวิตและการเลี้ยงชีพมีคุณภาพดีขึ้น และเป็นหลักสำคัญในการพัฒนา ทั้งในด้านสังคมและด้านเศรษฐกิจ จึงสมควรที่จะมีการกล่าวถึงภาษาในฐานะส่วนหนึ่งของการพัฒนา

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This thesis identifies the role of globalization through a transformationalist perspective on a highly commodified tourist destination Luang Prabang, Lao PDR. This paper also addresses whether or not the spread of the English language was due to language policy from the government, implemented through public education in foreign language classes, or through non-formal means of interaction with volunteers, tourists, travelers, private projects and NGO's dedicated to helping the local populace acquire language skills to improve their lives as well as their livelihoods. Globalization has local development impacts leading to transformative changes in a community. There are advantages and disadvantages for the locals who will be impacted by this transformative change, especially with regards to language. Language acquisition will be analyzed to determine how the locals gained competency in the "global language." The findings show that formal and non-formal teaching methods were implemented in Luang Prabang, with the conclusion that non-formal methods via interactions with foreigners and volunteers impacts the locals residing in Luang Prabang in an inclusive and positive manner and provides a rich environment for language and cultural exchange. This bottom up method of non-formal educational exchange empowers the locals who do not have access to private tutoring classes or consistent and quality foreign language classes in public schools. It has been demonstrated through the research conducted that English improves lives and livelihoods, which forms part of the social and economic pillars of development, therefore language should be incorporated as a component of discourse within development.

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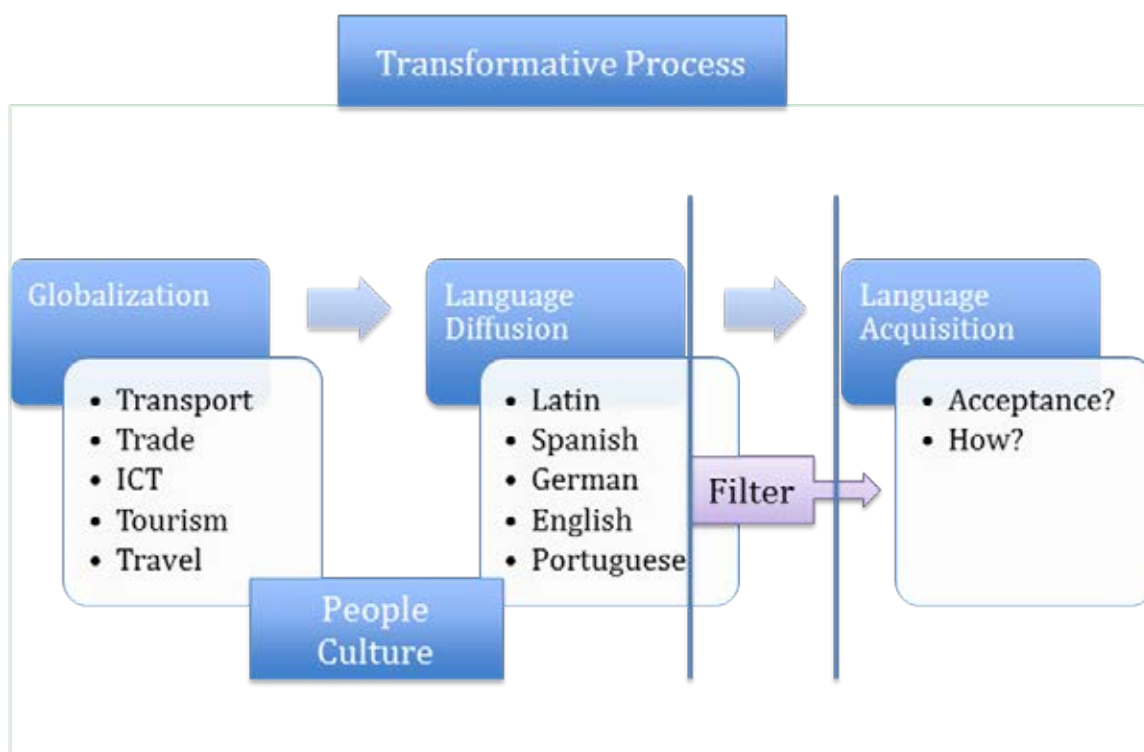
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Since the formation of Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in August 1967 there have been several additions such as Brunei in 1984, Vietnam in 1995, Laos and Myanmar in 1997 and Cambodia in 1999. An interesting fact to mention, however, is that at the formation of ASEAN, there was no official language stipulated in the Bangkok Declaration. Although the de facto language was English, there was no formal or written stipulation for such until 2007 at the ASEAN summit where the ASEAN charter was introduced. It stated in Article 34 that the working language of ASEAN would be English (Kirkpatrick, 2008). English was assumed as the common language and there have only been two proposals for a change in the lingua franca. French was proposed with the inclusion of Vietnam in 1997 and again at the meeting of ASEAN Committee on Culture, the Malaysian minister suggested they adopt Malay as the working language (Kirkpatrick, 2008). Kirkpatrick states that with the inclusion of Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos, there was an urgent shift from French to English language for inter-ASEAN communication and the level of spoken English, even among the elite of Laos and Cambodia remains comparatively low.

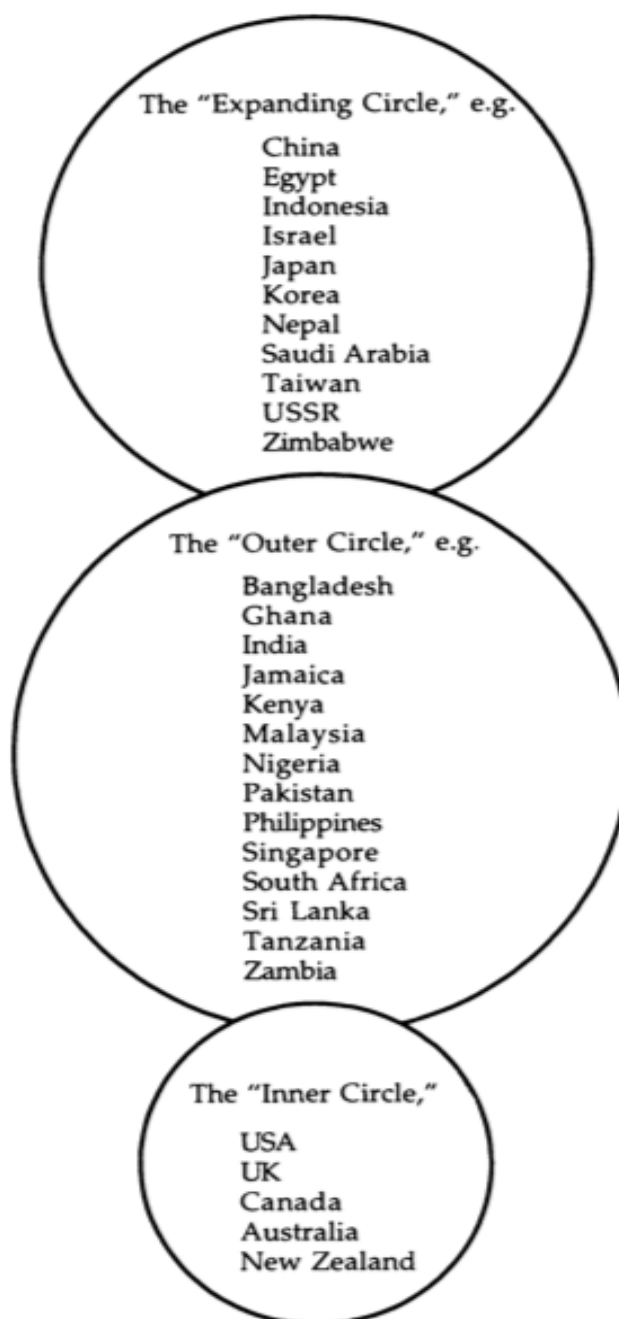
Although English has been considered to some as an imperial language and the perpetuation of hegemonic powers (D. Crystal, 2000, 2004; Kachru, 1996b, 1997; Ricento, 2010), there are others who would consider language diffusion and evolution as a process of change that occurs through time and increased interconnectedness of countries and people as several different languages have done before English (Mufwene, 2010; Ostler, 2005). Regardless of how English has arrived to the various parts of the world today, the fact remains that English provides benefits to those who have command of it (Euromonitor International, 2010; Park, 2010; Ricento, 2010). This paper will explore several concepts, which will explain how English has arrived in Lao PDR, its role in Luang Prabang, and its received presence among the locals.

1.1 Conceptual Framework



Globalization will be one of the main concepts to support why English is a development issue, and explain how the language arrived to many different parts of the world. This paper will draw from the transformationalist perspective, claiming that the term 'globalization' is merely something to be analyzed and explored, not something which is necessarily definitive. Language diffusion is the distribution of a particular language to a group of people who do not speak the language as a lingua franca. It will be explained that language diffusion happened through a process of globalization, that is, increased connection and change due to historical and social processes. Braj Kachru's 3 concentric circles will be used to illustrate another example of how the English language expanded throughout the world. See Diagram on following page.

Table 1. Braj Kachru, Chart used from: "World Englishes: Agony and Ecstasy" (1996).



Three Concentric Circles

Although a language may be dispersed to all parts of the world, that is not to say that it will be received well and absorbed into the respective area in which it is being dispersed. A look into language acquisition will be investigated in Luang Prabang, Lao PDR, a country which falls into the extending circle category, to understand how English is perceived, as well as how the locals gain competency in this language, if at all.

1.2 Scope

The scope of this research will be the township of Luang Prabang. The focal point of this research will be on the students attending learning centers, which facilitate the learning of the English language. Some of these centers include Big Brother Mouse, the Luang Prabang Library, @my library and a private project called S.M.I.L.E. Project (Supporting Multitudes In Life and Education). All are free education organizations where English is taught with the help of travelers as volunteers. Another educational facility will be studied as well, which is a private institution where English language and Computer skills are taught at a cost of 250,000 kip per term (3 months), which is equivalent to about 32 USD. The study will aim to compare the differences between them to see which proves most effective as well as how the students actually acquire their English language skills. The age range varies from young students in the early teens up to adults interested in bettering their English skills.

1.3 Research Questions

This thesis aims to identify the impact of the English language on a World Heritage Site to determine if globalization, tourism, and foreign language undermine or empower the local people with regard to quality of life and livelihood. The following questions will be asked:

- 1) Why is English a development issue? (Why is it important for the development of Luang Prabang, Lao PDR)
- 2) Which foreign-language learning methods are implemented in Luang Prabang, and which prove most beneficial?

3) Why is non-formal education important?

These questions will be answered in the order that they are presented above. The over-arching question of this thesis, "why is English a development issue," aims to contribute more knowledge to the field of development regarding language and how it affects society on a micro level. The following question, "which foreign-language learning methods are implemented in Luang Prabang," is necessary in order to determine how students are learning the foreign language (English), which gives them numerous advantages. It is after this question is answered that the reader will understand that a top down, formal curriculum for language learning does not contribute as many benefits to the individual and societal development of Luang Prabang. The last question, "why is non-formal education important," will solidify the first question. Non-formal methods of language acquisition are based on a bottom up strategy, utilizing tourists and volunteers for educational as well as cultural exchanges. These prove to be more effective than the limited exposure students receive in public school. This strategy of non-formal education from the bottom up provides evidence that development by empowerment through language exposure is beneficial and advantageous, and some of the techniques found in the non-formal environment should be implemented in the formal classrooms, to increase human development with regards to education and indeed livelihood.

1.4 Objectives

The objectives of this thesis are:

1. To identify why English is important for the growth and development of Lao PDR.
2. To test a theory, which applies to the language learning methods implemented in Luang Prabang.
3. To assess why non-formal language learning is important.

1.5 Argument

This thesis argues that tourism is a product of globalization, and that this particular product aids in the dispersal of the English language, which is an invaluable asset to the people of Lao PDR. The findings also suggest that tourism provides an informal and advantageous manner in which to acquire the English language. The remaining argument of why this method of acquisition is important for the people in Luang Prabang is because it provides a free, widely accessible form of educational exchange, cultural as well as language.

1.6 Structure

This paper begins with the research methods utilized as well as the ethics behind the research. An extensive literature review will be presented, beginning with the background of Lao PDR, including the history of the formation of the country and the education system, up to the current situation, highlighting the deficiencies and improvements made since their independence in 1975. Once a proper context has been established, a sub-chapter will explain why English is a development issue through the explanation of the concepts 'development' and 'globalization.' It is only after development and globalization have been properly defined that this thesis can explain the concepts of language diffusion and language acquisition. Language diffusion will be explained as an extension of globalization, which utilizes several means by which to travel. Tourism will be one of the main concepts used to explain how the English language has traveled and diffused throughout the world. A sub-category of culture will also be discussed, to analyze if a foreign language impedes, empowers or affects at all, the town of Luang Prabang, a World Heritage Site and highly frequented tourist destination. Although tourism allows people to travel and their respective languages to travel with them, it does not mean that the people in the destinations to which they travel will be able to speak the same language. There must be a means of communication, which all can utilize, have access to, and benefit from. Acquisition of the 'universal language' will be examined through analysis of the formal vs. non-formal methods. After

the literature review has explained all of the necessary concepts, then this paper will explore the findings from the one-month field research. The findings will also highlight the importance of English through two distinctive narratives from those interviewed, who, have claimed that English has changed their life. After a complete and thorough review of the literature, explanation of different concepts and analysis of the findings and have been made, this thesis will conclude with a summary and recommendation for the future development of the education sector in Lao, PDR.

1.7 Research Methods

For this thesis, many secondary sources and literature reviews were used to highlight case studies, and explain the necessary concepts to understand why English is a development issue. A site visit for approximately 1 month, June 2013, was required to gather the relevant data. Other research tools included 1) observations of daily life, teaching methods in classrooms (formal and non-formal) and interactions among locals and travelers, 2) qualitative measures in the form of 14 semi-structured interviews to gain a more profound insight into how the locals acquired the English language and how it has impacted their lives and livelihoods and also to be able to gauge how English and tourism are received in Luang Prabang.

A questionnaire was used in order to obtain a larger sample group of 20 foreigners and 20 locals, which gave statistics to reveal how the majority of second or foreign language learners gained competency in the English language. The surveys given to foreigners were by chance that the particular foreigner was speaking a different language other than English at the time of the researcher's observation.¹ The surveys were specific to the locals (incorporating those who were attending formal and non-formal institutions

¹ The researcher would attend several tourist areas, and when an observation was made that the tourist or volunteer was speaking in a language other than English, the researcher would ask if they spoke some English and if a survey could be conducted, to inquire more about how they learned the language.

where English was taught) and included several different factors such as age, gender, origin, native language, number of family members who spoke English and the rank of English language in the number of languages spoken. A table is provided on the following page of this thesis to give more details on the characteristics of those interviewed, however, all original names will be changed to English (some of the students interviewed had an English nickname already, therefore, to protect their identities and to preserve anonymity, all persons will be given different English nicknames).² The reason for surveying both foreigners and locals was to compare how language was acquired and how language is taught by their respective governments. An example of the questionnaires is attached in the appendix section of this thesis.

² The English nicknames, which some students had already, were chosen by the students themselves, for the purpose of making it easier for foreigners to pronounce them. They stated that it was better to have an English name, which could be easily pronounced, rather than to have a name which everyone would "mispronounce and forget."

Table 2. Participants interviewed. Semi-structured and in-depth.

This list is in the order of name, age, gender, native language, English Rank, province where they are from, motivation to learn English, why it's important, and occupation.

| | | | | | | | | |
|--------|-----|---|------------------------|---|--------------|----|---|---------------------|
| Sam | 17 | M | Hmong | 3 | Houaphan | VH | J | Student |
| Myles | 35+ | M | Lao | 3 | Champassak | VH | J | Tour Guide |
| Gary | 17 | M | Hmong | 4 | LPB | VH | C | Student |
| Philip | 22 | M | Khmu | 3 | Luang Namtha | H | C | Student/ Teacher |
| Nancy | 35+ | F | Lao | 2 | Champassak | VH | J | Student/ Sales |
| Sarah | 35+ | F | Lao | 3 | Sainyabuli | M | C | Project Director |
| Ann | 30 | F | Vietnamese / Lao | 4 | Khammouane | VH | J | Distributor |
| Finn | 17 | M | Hmong | 4 | LPB | VH | B | Student |
| Jack | 17 | M | Hmong | 3 | LPB | VH | J | Student |
| Tim | 27 | M | Lao | 3 | LPB | M | J | Teacher |
| Thomas | 22 | M | Phunoi | 4 | Phongsali | VH | J | Student/ Teacher |
| Brian | 24 | M | Lao | 2 | Oudomxay | VH | J | Student/ Teacher |
| Tony | 19 | M | Lantan | 4 | Bokeo | VH | J | Student |

Abbreviations:

B- Both

C- Communication

H- High

J- Job

LPB- Luang Prabang

M- Moderate

VH- Very High

The field research included consistent volunteer services for one formal and one non-formal institution as well as intermittent volunteering at several other non-formal institutions. The one-month observation and volunteer service in the private institution included 3 different teachers and ranged in size from 17-36 students. The ratio of males to females was almost 2:1, with an average of 12.71 male students per day and 7.14 female students per day. This private institution will remain nameless so as not to offend anyone who attends or works in this language school and more details will be given later in the thesis.

One of the consistent non-formal places where volunteer services took place was the S.M.I.L.E. Project, a grassroots, charity organization, which aims to help disadvantaged youth in the town of Luang Prabang. This particular organization teaches English every evening from 7:30-9 PM in a local temple, however, although the medium for instruction and conversation is held in English, the content of what is actually taught ranges from health and hygiene to life skills and culture or geography. It is an informal, student-led gathering, with a permanent, foreign volunteer to facilitate learning. The students ranged in age from 13 to 35+. The majority of the students attending this project were male, as the class is held inside a temple classroom and several novices and monks would attend. In the one-month observation, a maximum of 2 female students were recorded.

Some of the other places in which more sporadic volunteer services took place were in: Big Brother Mouse, the Luang Prabang Library (Children's Cultural Center) and @ my library. These centers will be explained in further detail later, where a more detailed illustration of its students and environment will be addressed.

1.8 Significance

Language tends to fall under categories such as anthropology, sociology, ethnography etc, but this research intends to demonstrate that language is, in fact, also a

development issue due to the fact that we cannot develop and access certain opportunities or even information without the command of English. Language should also be included in the discussions concerning development, as it serves as an important part of the evolution of individuals as well as communities, particularly in the social and economic facets of development.³ Locals in Luang Prabang will be impacted by this research, as they will be the ones directly benefitting from English language diffusion and commerce caused by tourism, a phenomenon induced by increased mobility and globalization. Public and private sector educators will also be impacted by the empirical evidence this research will convey, that, 'input theory' through "comprehensible input" is the most salient method to acquiring language skills (Krashen, 1976, 1981, 1982). Government officials who are responsible for tailoring a national curriculum will also be able to take advantage of the findings from this thesis for the same reason as mentioned above. This research will give insight into how a language is acquired and therefore how classes of foreign language should be taught. It will assist in the process of creating policies geared towards the development and improvement of the education sector in Lao, PDR.

1.9 Limitations

Although this thesis intends to be as inclusive as possible, the researcher realizes that the data collected from students attending a private school and the non-formal institutions who could speak English well enough to answer questions is limited, and may not necessarily provide balanced opinions on tourism, culture and language. The research only incorporated those currently residing in Luang Prabang, and as the field collection took place during June, which comprises part of the summer break, no public school classrooms could be observed. This research then had to rely on literature

³ Indeed one might argue that language, especially the English language, also incorporates the political facet of development as it is the government, through national education planning and policy implementation which determines whether or not the people will have access to the language which provides an increase in individual economic standing and social transformation.

reviews, studies done by large international organizations and the data provided by the participants about their public school environment in Luang Prabang or in their home village. If the research had been conducted during the school year with observations of all three methods: public, private and non-formal education, instead of only private and non-formal, then a more nuanced argument would have been presented. This thesis also recognizes the disparity of those interviewed regarding gender, as more males were interviewed than females, contributing to an unbalanced triangulation of data regarding the opinions of English, tourism, and cultural change within the community.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review comprises a vast majority of this thesis, as it is important to explain the concepts which will be addressed. The concepts a) Globalization, b) Language Diffusion and c) Language Acquisition will be the major contributing theories to indicate why English is a development topic. Firstly, it will be shown that globalization is a transformative process, which includes several different actors including the state, the region as well as the entire globe, but also new forces will be explained as emergent in the shaping of reality today. These new actors include social media, pop culture, ICT and tourism. It is through these new forms that language, as well as culture, can diffuse to places where it did not originate. There is existing literature to support that language diffusion has taken place throughout history, but that new forms and the speed with which they are traveling are unprecedented. Globalization and language diffusion go hand in hand, but the third concept, language acquisition, requires the local populace to accept or reject the changes that are being experienced in their respective society. This is the filter, which has been exemplified in Chapter 1, in the conceptual framework. Before the above concepts are mentioned, however, a context must be established of the history of Lao, PDR (henceforth Laos), which will enable the reader to better understand the concepts within the context of Laos.

2.1 SETTING THE SCENE

This section of the thesis aims to give a broader context as to how modern day Laos has been shaped and constructed, beginning with a very early historical record followed by a discourse on border demarcations and colonial legacy and leading up to the more recent history. The entirety of which portrays the lack of autonomy and self-determination until their independence, when the leading political party gained control of the country and began its restructuring towards a more unified national entity. After the

background of the country has been explained, a sub-section will bring the reader specifically to the situation regarding education in Lao PDR.

2.1a Background of Laos

Laos, (formerly known as the Lane Xang kingdom), emerged in 1353 with the ascendance of Fa Ngum to the throne. Fa Ngum is the first king who successfully unified the various regions and cities of Laos, forming the Lane Xang kingdom in the mid 14th century, although the ethnic Lao believe it was earlier than this (Asia Pacific Parliamentary Forum, 2009). According to AFFP (2009), in the middle of the 16th century, the capital was moved to Vientiane in order to protect against outside invaders, of which Laos has faced several. At this particular time it was the Siamese (Thai), who were invading and expanding their dominance in the territory. King Phothisarath and his son King Setthathirath tried to unify the Lane Xang kingdom and exert their power over the rest of the territories from 1520 to 1571, successfully doing so, signifying the peak of the unified kingdom (Jerndal & Rigg, 1998).

After the death of King Phothisarath, his son, Setthathirath, who, at the time was controlling Lan Na (modern day Chiang Mai, Thailand), went back to the capital (Luang Prabang) to claim the throne, but the kingdom had begun to divide as Setthathirath's wife had been overthrown by local chiefs in Lan Na and factions had begun to emerge within the kingdom (Jerndal & Rigg, 1998). In the beginning of the 18th century, the Lane Xiang kingdom was fragmented into 3 separate kingdoms based in Vientiane (middle), Luang Prabang (north), and Champassak (south), and each were at risk of absorption by neighboring states (Jerndal & Rigg, 1998).

There are several Lao historians, and others such as Dommen, who believe that Laos has had a linear and traceable history, therefore proving its legitimacy as a sovereign nation before the arrival of the French (Dommen, 1985). However, as authors Jerndal & Rigg contend, this notion is based on a relatively thin and shortly lived

example of national unity (Jerndal & Rigg, 1998). Even Stuart-Fox claims that Laos has an underdeveloped, or as he states "poorly developed" nationalist historiography, which leads to a lack of support for inclusive national identity (Stuart-Fox, 1997). The separation into three kingdoms, allowed for the possibility of easy absorption from surrounding states, which led to later invasions and colonizations by the Siamese (Thai) and French (Jerndal & Rigg, 1998). In the 19th century, and again in the mid 20th century the French were the invading outside force (Asia Pacific Parliamentary Forum, 2009). There was also a brief period where it was discussed that the demarcations of what is today geographically Laos might actually be dismantled and the remaining territories divided between Annam (central Vietnam), Tonkin (northern Vietnam) and Cambodia (Ivarsson, 1999). Stuart-Fox (1997) claims that the French wanted to use Laos as a "hinterland" for the Vietnamese to be able to exploit. This portrays the adversity that the country has faced historically and the lack of autonomy of the Lao people in the decision-making process.

Laos, as a country, is a modern construct post World War II (Jerndal & Rigg, 1998). Jerndal & Rigg state that although there have been people of Lao ethnicity living within the borders of what is today considered geographically Laos, the people living within them did not actually have a 'country' until the arrival of the French. In the past, the idea of 'territory' did not necessarily mean the land itself, but instead, territory meant the people in a certain area which were under the control of the King (Jerndal & Rigg, 1998). The authors state that this notion of 'territory' led to the negotiations between the British, for the Burmese border and the French, for the Siamese and Vietnamese border, as it was the foreign colonialists, not the locals, who insisted on knowing which piece of land belonged to whom.

In the past, Laos, and the people within its borders, have had a tumultuous experience. More recently, the country has seen many wars including: WWII (1939-

1945), the Indochina war (1946-1954), the Vietnam war or the American war,⁴ (1955-1975), which spilled over into Laos and led to the Lao civil war (1964-1975) (Asia Pacific Parliamentary Forum, 2009; Jerndal & Rigg, 1998). With the victory in 1975 of the communist Pathet Lao, which later formed the Lao Peoples Revolutionary Party, the country had gained its independence and began its efforts to unify once again and build a nation with the help of its communist neighbors (Jerndal & Rigg, 1998). The Lao constitution was revised in 1986, 1991 and 2003, to incorporate a more market-oriented strategy, while being "regulated and managed in the direction of socialism," emulating a Chinese model, to develop the country further and invest in the nation in areas such as education and infrastructure (Asia Pacific Parliamentary Forum, 2009; Kunze, 2013; Lao PDR Constitution, 1991/2003; Library of Congress, 1994; Soukamneuth, 2006).

2.1b Education

After the independence of Laos in 1975, the government took over the previous French education system that had been established in the 1950s and began to restructure it to a Lao curriculum (Library of Congress, 1994).⁵ It faced many of the same problems as before such as overcrowding, lack of teaching materials, reading material and resources for infrastructure and teachers. Teachers were paid very low and irregular salaries, therefore having to supplement their income with work in agricultural farms, leaving classes to be held for only a few hours per day, resulting in the sometimes delayed completion of up to 11-12 years for 5 year primary education (Library of Congress, 1994; UNESCO, 2012). Laos follows a 5+4+3 system, or a 12 year curriculum consisting of primary, lower secondary and upper secondary years (UNESCO, 2012). Although the English language is not a part of the primary school curriculum, foreign language does form a part of the secondary school (lower and upper) curriculum.

⁴ The name of this war depends on which literature reviews are cited and from which ideology one is viewing it. The Lao framing would indicate the latter "The American War."

⁵ There was also American influence involved in shaping the educative policies during the period 1964-1975 (The American war in Laos).

There have been many international investors in Laos such as the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the European Council (EC), the World Bank (WB), the government of Australia, Germany, and Japan as well as other UN agencies, which have all contributed to the development of the education sector (MOE, 2009). As a result of the country opening up to more international partnerships, they have jointly devised a comprehensive educational development framework policy, which aims to expand the existing school systems with specific attention to access, equity, quality and effective management to increase the national human resource development strategy (MOE, 2009).

According to the UNESCO education system profile for Lao PDR, although there have been several improvements over the past few decades there still remains major challenges. UNESCO states that although net enrolment rates have risen from 80% to 91.6% in 2009, they mask the urban/rural disparity as many of the rural villages remain without a primary school within reasonable commute. In this same study, about 57% of all primary schools and 70% of primary schools in the poorest districts remain incomplete, meaning that they do not offer the full 5 years of primary education. Access is not the only issue concerning public education deficiencies.

The survival rate to grade 5 is about 67% according to a study done in 2007 and the repetition rate stands at about 17% (UNESCO, 2012). High drop out and repetition rates can be attributed to many factors, but among them include access, language barriers (as ethnic minority groups do not speak the language of instruction: Lao), low quality of teaching, irregular attendance of teachers and students as well as the difficulty of transition of children in rural areas to a formalized education system (UNESCO, 2012). The curriculum for the first 5 years of primary school does not include any foreign language exposure other than the Lao language, and the number of Lao language classes given in year 1 is 396 and tapers down to 264 in year 5, this is because, as mentioned before, many of those attending formalized classes are from ethnic backgrounds and do

not speak Lao as their native language and require an intensive and consistent interaction with the National language and language of instruction (UNESCO, 2010-2011, 2012). In the World Data on Education, UNESCO states that the curriculum for lower and upper secondary schools have 99 periods of foreign language class, but do not specify exactly which foreign languages are available (UNESCO, 2010-2011). This study, although meant to show the progress of the education sector within the country, additionally highlights the challenges presented using the formal, top down, policy-implemented approach, especially when teaching a foreign language, namely English, which will prove beneficial to people's development.

"There is an evident imbalance between the developed and developing world when it comes to English language research and English language educational endeavors" (Bolton, Graddol, & Meierkord, 2011). These authors assert that educators in many Outer and Extending circle contexts face challenges with regard to conditions, facilities and resources, which differ greatly from those that face the developed world. Bolton et al. contend that there are deficiencies at all levels of education from primary to high school, with public education systems in poorer areas afflicted with lack of resource, incompetence and corruption. Herein lies the problem. As many of the students do not have access to primary school or do not finish primary school, have difficulty adjusting to the formalized classroom, have a poor quality of teaching or limited access to secondary school, how can they be expected to obtain a valuable asset such as English, which can help them break the cycle of poverty and open up avenues of opportunities?

2.2 ENGLISH AS A DEVELOPMENT ISSUE

Why is English a development issue? Typically, as stated earlier, when there are studies regarding language or language policy, they are categorized within genres of anthropology, ethnology or linguistics, but this paper will aim to discuss why English also falls under the development umbrella, concerning themes such as economics, political science and sociology. To determine why English is a development issue and its

role in the global world, first, definitions of development and globalization must be explained.

2.2a Development

Development is an often vague and ambiguous term, which can invoke and encompass many different concepts such as progress, change, growth, or improvement. According to Coleman (2010), 'development must accommodate both economic and social elements', so although economic growth is important for the country, it is not sufficient if it does not also incorporate a plan for social growth as well. This thesis will focus on the social development of a community, with regard to human development in education, specifically English education, which will in turn have a domino effect and increase economic standing by providing more employment opportunities. Development, in this respect, will be defined as the enabling of people "to live long, healthy, educated and fulfilling lives" (UNDP, 2010). The Human Development Index incorporates three different dimensions: health, education and living standards, and English will be a major variable in the education and living standard dimensions.

English proves to be a development issue because those with access to it prove to fare better in the world of employment, earning a higher salary than those who do not speak English (Euromonitor International, 2010). Euromonitor International has found positive quantitative indicators showing that a command of the English language directly impacts individual earning power by up to 25% in developing countries, using the case studies of Cameroon, Nigeria, Rwanda, Bangladesh and Pakistan (Euromonitor International, 2010). In fact, English has become such an asset in the developing world, that in the mid 1990's, South Korea was pushed into a heated pursuit of English for its market value. The government as well as private corporate sectors were actively promoting English as a crucial resource in order to become competitive in the global economy (Park, 2010). This identifies the correlation between English and economics.

Another example of English playing a crucial role in the developing world is through China's policy implementation. One journalist reports that while traveling from Shanghai to Hangzhou, all of the road signs were in both the Chinese and English language (Andrews, 2011). According to Andrews (2011), a Chinese newspaper, *China Daily*, claims that more than 300 million people are already studying English and by 2016 English language classes will be implemented and taught beginning from Kindergarten. In an appearance at Dartmouth College, New Hampshire, USA, a former governor, Jon Huntsman, claimed that China was the largest, or soon to be largest English-speaking nation today (Gregg, 2011). The Chinese government is even requiring all state employees under the age of 40 to become proficient in more than 1,000 phrases (Andrews, 2011). China realizes how important it is to learn other languages in order to do business with the rest of the world and is taking measures to prepare its residents to become more competitive in the global economy.

If one has command of the English language, we can infer that they will most likely have a higher standard of living, and possibly a more fulfilling life because of the opportunities they will be presented with. Park (2010) states that in a rapidly globalizing market, English has become a valuable asset and is seen as something which can be detached from gender, ethnicity and social status and is instead being treated as something which can be commodifiable, or at least an acquirable skill. This last phrase, "or at least an acquirable skill" will be explained further in the subsection on Language Acquisition and it will be demonstrated that the English language is not limited to those with high social or economic status.

Coleman (2010) asserts that English brings with it the entitlements and freedoms, which are attributed to development, such as jobs, higher education, greater income, international opportunities etc., but that access to English is far from equally distributed. He argues that although the benefits of English are often exaggerated, he recognizes that there are at least 4 areas for which the command of the English language is useful: 1)

employability, 2) international mobility, 3) accessing information and 4) as an impartial link language. Coleman claims that English plays a major role in various aspects of development (Coleman, 2010). One example mentioned deals specifically with Laos, the Swedish infrastructure project. The Swedish government decided to provide English language training to the Laotian counterparts involved with the project, not for the benefit of the Swedish government itself, but because the Swedish government recognized the benefit for donors as well as the recipient countries to be able to participate in international events and discussions utilizing the English language (Coleman, 2010). This explains why English is important for the development of Laos, to be able to participate and communicate in the International language.

In the late 90's, the President of the Lao Women's Union⁶ of Champassak was attending a ceremony of the English Language Teaching program for senior government officials, and when asked "How important is English in relation to your present and future work", she responded that "English played a very important role in Lao civil service and had become one of the criteria for promoting all government officials, especially those who held high positions" (Appleby, Copley, Sithirajvongsa, & Pennycook, 2002). This article further states that English has and will continue to play an important part of the socio-economic development of Laos.

⁶ The Lao Women's Union is "a mass social organization of women at all strata throughout Lao PDR" and was officially established in 1955. It functions to unite women and involve them in the national protection and development process. It also helps to promote the implementation of gender equality and advancement for women in socio-economic developments of the country. It also focuses on educating women to their rights as well as informing them about the constitution, laws and international instruments regarding women's concerns. It consists of 1,015,506 members. (Lao Women's Union, 2010)

2.2b Globalization

Globalization has many discourses, some ranging from hyperglobalist and skeptical to those who are more transformational. McGrew (2010) states that globalization can be seen as the widening, deepening, intensifying and speeding up of worldwide interconnectedness. This includes interconnectedness in the political, economic, ecological as well as the cultural. This author claims that interconnectedness is when one nation or even a small community has the ability to affect the fate of another community, state or region on a global scale. One example given is the lag of the US economy, which is felt everywhere "from Birmingham to Bangkok" (McGrew, 2010). Globalization is also an obscure term which leaves its definition up to the scholar choosing to mold it in a way which he sees fit (Mufwene, 2010). Mufwene gives examples of the definition "global" meaning worldwide but also all-inclusive or comprehensive. He explains it very broadly as an 'interdependent' relationship between local communities (glocalization) or among states within the same region (EU, ASEAN) as well as hub and spoke trade agreements through global cities (Tokyo, Paris, New York, Chicago, Sao Paulo etc.)(Mufwene, 2010). These "global cities" are the major ports of entry and diffusion of finances as well as trends of languages and cultures, which will be discussed further in the subsection 'language diffusion'.

The main stream of thought from the hyperglobalist perspective is that the state is being rendered an ineffective tool to regulate the economy, which is increasingly dependent upon a global or supranational force (Ohmae, 1991). Skeptics on the other hand believe the extent of economic globalization to be exaggerated and instead, believe that the world is being divided up into several regional and political blocs, within which varying types of capitalism exist (Hirst & Thompson, 1999).

Transformational globalization differs from the other schools of thought with regards to its attribution to the spatial re-organization between economic, political, military and cultural power. Globalization cannot simply be reduced to economic logic

but must also incorporate several factors, which contribute to the process of transformation of power relationships like historical processes, educational institutions and especially social movements (Held, McGrew, Goldblatt, & Perraton, 1999)(historical processes, educational institutions and social movements added).

Table 3. Transformationalist Perspective on Globalization

| | Transformationalist Globalization |
|--------------------|--|
| Globalization | Global transformation, but also differentiation and embeddedness |
| Method | Qualitative rather than quantitative approach |
| Economy | Globally transformed, new stratification, globalized but differentiated |
| Politics | Politics globally transformed; nation-states important but reconstructed; sovereignty shared |
| Culture | Globally transformed; hybridization; complex, differentiated globalization |
| History | Globalization is old but present forms are unprecedented |
| Normative Politics | Cosmopolitan democracy |
| Future | Uncertain; agency left or right, continued, stalled, or reversed |

Information provided by (Martell, 2007).

Increasing trade, real-time communication, faster transportation, and higher interdependence upon neighboring states can all be attributed as part of the process of globalization. A more in depth analysis of globalization as given by McGrew (2010) is defined as the: 1) stretching of social, political and economic activities so that decisions made in one region of the world affect those living in another region, which, have significance to individuals and communities in distant regions, 2) the intensification or magnitude of interconnectedness, meaning the widespread dispersion and use of iphones, clothing, language, music as well as other popular items, including consumption of certain varieties of food like Italian pasta or Indian curry and also world trade and general reliance upon others, 3) the accelerating pace through which we communicate as well as the evolution of transport systems which have enabled humanity to connect at an unprecedented speed, meaning that sharing ideas, news, goods, information, capital and

technology move at a quicker rate than ever before, and lastly, 4) the deepening or embeddedness of connection from local communities to the rest of the world, that when changes are made in one place, have an effect on a global scale and vice versa (McGrew, 2010). More simply put, McGrew gives us a concise definition of globalization, which is "a historical process that involves a fundamental shift or transformation in the spatial scale of human social organization that links distant communities and expands the reach of power relations across regions and continents" (McGrew, 2010).

This idea of globalization, then, extends its definition to also incorporate the power of ordinary people to shape reality, which includes "pop culture", meaning that the music, clothing, dance, language or overall attitude of one area has an impact somewhere other than the place it originated. The specific concept inferred is the overwhelming acceptance and influence of the South Korean singer, "Psy." "Gangnam Style" is an unforgettable song, music video and dance, which, at its peak, was sung and emulated in many parts of the world, especially Asia (all one has to do is go to the local discoteque, bar, or simply look at the popularity on facebook and youtube). Therefore, with the stretching, intensifying, deepening and accelerating pace of interconnectedness and social influence from all parts of the globe, there is no doubt that a transfusion of culture as well as languages will be encountered in distant regions, even in relatively remote places like Luang Prabang, Laos. This is not to say that culture is "homogenizing," as Reisinger (2010) would see it, but instead, culture is expanding, hybridizing and evolving to shape social reality in local communities.

Through the transformationalist lens, we can begin to see the effects and influence of social marketing transforming cultures through the soft power⁷ of music, dance, fashion, and TV or movies, even in remote Laos. So although Korea's music, TV series, fashion and culture are well accepted in the Southeast Asian Countries, what about the

⁷ Soft power will be explained in more detail in the Chapter "Language Diffusion."

language, in which language is everyone communicating? Is everyone beginning to learn Korean because of their love of the Korean culture? There may be some who choose to learn and adopt the Korean language because of their desire to emulate the culture, however, this language still does not carry the same advantages as the English language.

2.3 LANGUAGE DIFFUSION

Mufwene (2010) claims that by the middle of the 20th century, there were a few languages that were spoken as lingua francas in countries where it was not their native language and the locals had no ethnic or nationalistic ties to them. These languages included Spanish, English, French and Russian. Since the collapse of the Soviet Union and the association of the French language to "high culture," along with the rise of economic and military strength in the U.S., English has gradually surpassed the other languages in its usage around the world (Mufwene, 2010). This subsection is a continuation of the existing literature review, but has a specific focus regarding the expansion of the English language. Included below are sections, which will include the colonial legacy of the language, new forms of diffusion through soft power, the answer of who actually perpetuates the learning of English, and a conclusion that English does not destroy local cultures or languages.

2.3a Colonial Legacy

Kachru (1996a) affirms that, "the sociolinguistic reality is that much of the worlds verbal communication takes place by means of languages which are not the users' mother tongue, but by their second, third or *n*th language, acquired one way or another and used when appropriate." He further states that the diffusion occurred through a history of colonization and contact between nations and cultures (Kachru, 1996b). This concept is parallel to that of transformational globalization because it sheds light on a historical process, which led to a change in either the lingua franca or the working language of government offices (Bolton et al., 2011; Kachru, 1996b). According to Kachrus theory, the constant interaction between foreigners and natives via colonization led to the

eventual imposition of English upon the locals. The "inner circle" is the native English speaking circle, the "outer circle" consists of colonized countries by the inner circle and finally, the "expanding circle" consists of the countries which were not necessarily colonized, but continue to show an increasing amount of interaction among outer and inner circle speakers through globalization in the 20th and 21st centuries (Kachru, 1996b, 1997). See Chapter 1 for Kachrus Concentric Circles.

The transformationalist school of thought contends that the process of globalization is not a new phenomenon, historically, there has always been economic and cultural exchange but it is the *speed* with which the globe is transforming through improvements in ICT and transportation that is novel (McGrew, 2010; Mufwene, 2010). With the progress made in transportation technology through centuries of long-distance trade, the transfer of language and culture inevitably came with it, "Technology enabled the traders to go and their respective languages to travel with them" (Mufwene, 2010). Pakir reaffirms a similar point, that technology and globalization are the drivers of value and use of English in the Southeast Asian countries, claiming that both of these concepts impact the need for ASEAN nationals to "engage with and in English, which is the official language of the ASEAN group and the global language" (Pakir, 2010).

Ricento (2010) has a somewhat cynical view of the expansion of the English language stating that English has been regarded as the language of imperialism and hegemony and historically, he is not wrong, but he also gives recognition to the fact that the adoption or absorption of the language gives opportunity and access into the world market (Ricento, 2010). Colonization and globalization have historical ties as most of the transfusion of languages and cultures had to do with migration of people in colonial settlements, exploitation of colonized countries, international trade, travel, as well as free relocation (Mufwene, 2010). Although trade happens globally, it is not to say that it happens equitably. Language diffusion is typically an example of hard power, the power of one country's economic or military force and ability to impose its language and culture

upon another, states Ricento (2010), and gives the cases of the conquests of the British, Greeks, Romans, Moors, Spanish, Portuguese and French to impose their languages across Europe, Africa, Asia and the Americas. There is truth and evidence to support that the more economically, militarily or politically dominant country will have a stronger influence on the weaker, therefore having an impact on the culture and language. This is the case with so many languages before English such as: Greek, Aramaic, Malay, Quechua, Portuguese, Latin as well as many more (Mufwene, 2010; Ostler, 2005). However, they do not take into consideration the recent social impacts made through soft power and influence.

2.3b Soft Power

In an interview with Joseph Nye (2011), he gives great detail on the definition of "soft power", which he himself coined more than 20 years ago. Nye, in the interview, does not discredit the need for military strength, but instead, conveys that in an information age, there are several other issues that require the use of non-military tactics, such as climate change or cyber terrorism (UCBerkeleyEvents, 2011). He states that there are typically only two forms of power: conventional hard power, through the use of military force or coercion, and also through payments, this exemplifies the "carrots and sticks" model, however, he gives a third domain of power, the ability to 'make you want what I want, through attraction and persuasion', which he calls "soft power" (UCBerkeleyEvents, 2011). Examples of soft power can be things which were mentioned before such as movies, TV, music, fashion and attitude all of which have an alluring draw, depending on what a person likes and what is available.

The USA is home to Hollywood, well known for its dominant movie and music industry. Hollywood produces films that are exported to all parts of the world such as Titanic, Pirates of the Caribbean, Batman and James Bond among many others and the music industry has given rise to several world famous musicians such as Brittany Spears, Justin Timberlake, Miley Cyrus, Hilary Duff etc. There is no doubt that movies and

music, which were *not* made or produced in Hollywood, can also be found in the developing world, but it can be assumed that through the sheer volume of what is produced in the US and exported through means of globalization like tourists or the internet, there will be more influence from the US worldwide. In order to be able to fully understand what the movies or lyrics are about, one must have a grasp of the English language, otherwise the content may not be completely understood, as there is usually a loss somewhere in translation. There are several possible ways in which languages and cultures disperse themselves to distant lands, some through agonizing histories of colonization and force, and others through modern methods of attraction and persuasion via methods of increased access through technology and globalization. History, though, proves that language is not stagnant, that it is constantly evolving and adapting to new cultures and generations of people (Mufwene, 2010; Ostler, 2005).

2.3c Preference and Perpetuation of English

An interesting fact that Mufwene (2010) and Kachru (1997) mention, however, is that the number of outer and extending circle English speakers far outweighs the number of inner circle speakers, and the perpetuation of the language is done mostly by deliberate effort of the outer and extending circle speakers, not the inner circle speakers as one would imagine (Kachru, 1997; Mufwene, 2010). In a study conducted by Yun Kyung Cha and Seung Hwan Ham (2008) (cited in Lo Bianco, 2009) they identify the rapid and distinct changes in first foreign language (FFL) choices by governments.⁸ The data compiled consisted of 7 phases over the span of 155 years and incorporated 12-15 countries in the first phase and up to 154 countries in the last phase. The table in the appendix shows the initial strength and dominance of the German language as a

⁸ First Foreign Language is the language of choice to learn as an often 3rd language. Many of the outer and extending circle speakers speak local, minority languages followed by a national language as a second language, the language of instruction in schools. Therefore, a "preference for a first foreign language" is the language which the government deems more valuable for its populace to obtain as a third language.

preferential foreign language to learn in the first phase (1850-1874) as it was considered the language of technology and science, however, the data also shows its eventual decline to nearly no preferential implementation in any education system from 1990-2005, the last phase.

French was also a prominent foreign language spoken and implemented in educational institutions around the world in the first phase but later, in the fourth phase (1920-1944), English had gained almost equal ground (Lo Bianco, 2009). After WWII (1945-1969), Russia was the main hegemon in its region and therefore led to an emergence of the Russian language within the region (7.8%), specifically in North Korea, Vietnam, Cambodia, China and Laos. The Russian language experienced a slight decline to 5.7% in primary education and 5.9% in secondary education from 1970-1989, but after the collapse of the Soviet Empire and China's eventual rise in economic status, the Russian language too, like German, began to decline to an eventual disappearance in preference of first foreign language learning (Lo Bianco, 2009).

The information provided shows that through the developments of the first and second World War, Germany's geo-political turmoil, the fall of the Berlin wall and the rise in the US and Chinese economy, Russian, German and French languages have all declined and English has increased as a valuable asset and as a preferential foreign language. The data claims that English had risen to 67.5% in primary education and 81.2% in secondary education implemented by outer and extending circle governments in the last phase, (1990-2005) (Cha & Ham, 2008; Lo Bianco, 2009).

The proportion of fluent English speakers in the extending circle, though, is far fewer than the outer circle and the absorption of the language is directly associated with its integration into the global economy (Mufwene, 2010). China can be used as an example for the policy implemented foreign language teaching programs throughout the country. The government realized that the material benefits and inflows into the country

would increase if the population was proficient in English, the international language, therefore, the government decided to implement English as a first foreign language in primary and secondary schools (Lo Bianco, 2009). Lo Bianco claims that this government implemented policy (shift from Russian as a FFL to English) may have also been intensified with China's accession into the WTO in 2001.

As stated before, the spread of languages has happened throughout history with several different languages preceding English, Latin being one of the dominant "global languages" of its time (Ostler, 2005). Latin was spread around the Mediterranean and North Sea due to the Roman Empire, but was only used as a vernacular in Southwestern Europe and Romania. When the Romans decided to abandon the western empire to come home to defend Rome against the invading Germanics, they hadn't left without 'Romanizing' the indigenous ruling class. Even after the fall of the empire, it was through these Indigenous rulers that a Roman-style economy and culture was adopted (Ostler, 2005). Ostler further states that in these cities, classical Latin was the lingua franca, however, in surrounding areas and especially in rural areas, vulgar Latin began to emerge as the dominant vernacular. This is very much comparable to the situation today. Just as classical Latin lost in dominance to its competitor vulgar Latin as a lingua franca, so has French, Russian and Spanish decreased in dominance to their competitor, English (David Crystal, 2003; McArthur, 1998; Mufwene, 2010).

2.3d English; not a killer language

Although globalization often diffuses culture and language from a more powerful entity to a weaker one, it is not to say that it destroys local heritage or kills local languages. "Language as a vernacular is dependent upon the usage in the home environment and its transmission through interaction with children and immigrants, not on teaching a scholastic or standard variety of English as a lingua franca in schools" (Mufwene, 2010). Mufwene states that, "cities filter cultural influence from outside and adapt it to local traditions. English has become 'indigenized' and it is changing its

structures to the previous communication habits of its speakers while meeting new communicative needs." Even though Ricento (2010) gives the tone of opposition to English as a positive phenomenon of expansion and development throughout the world, he does acknowledge the fact that English will probably not take over as a dominant vernacular because of the resistance of people and their desire to express themselves in a language which best represents them and their culture. He gives the example of the Tanzanian government in the 1960's when they tried to impress upon the local populace a language policy where the national language would be Swahili, which would represent a unified socialist state, but through the example, demonstrates that the local populace had not fully become ujamaa-socialists because of their choice in expression through other languages such as through the values of the bourgeois, who expressed themselves in English and also the pre-socialist locals, who continued to live their lives through expression of their local languages.

Another example of the improbability of English becoming a dominant world vernacular is given by Kachru when he exemplifies the adaptation of "English as an Asian Language" where he contends that, "once language establishes its autonomy, it is actually liberated... the language is free to be absorbed and molded, to be acculturated to the Asian context, on their terms" (Kachru, 1997). The example he gives is of an Indian national who gives English an equal status to Sanskrit and when asked, "Why write in English?" he responds:

Historically, this is how I am placed. I'm not interested in being a European but in being me. But the whole of the Indian tradition, as I see it, is in my work. There is an honesty in choosing English, an honesty in terms of history.

English language diffusion, like the spread of Latin, which then diversified into the romance languages and further into romance creoles, has begun to take root and evolve in Asian as well as African languages, creating new varieties of spoken and

written English (Kachru, 1996b, 1997). It can be viewed as internationalization, or even westernization, but has been shown through the examples mentioned above, that it does not necessarily undermine existing cultures or destroy local languages (Bolton et al., 2011; Kachru, 1996a, 1997). In fact, language diffusion viewed through a different lens, is a way to unite us all through mutual communicability, understanding, cooperation and integration into the world market with expanding benefits for all (Bagwati, 2004; Mufwene, 2010).

2.4 LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

Language Acquisition is a way to gain competence in a second or foreign language. There are several methods to acquiring or learning another language. One very effective method is immersion, through a study or period of living in the host country, which speaks the target language. Another way is to take private lessons, which aims to give an intense, usually one-on-one, or small group study of the target language and typically includes the use of textbooks or other learning materials in the target language. Unfortunately, these two methods tend to err on the more expensive side, which excludes many of those who are not so fortunate. Governments often try to implement a mandatory second or foreign language policy within the education system, sometimes proving effective but often times not, especially if the resources and budget are scarce.

China is one example of a formal, top down strategy, where the government has decided that the people would benefit immensely from learning the English language. As stated earlier in this thesis, the government of China plans to implement English learning in public schools in the next 5 years, beginning as early as Kindergarten. What was not mentioned earlier however, were the numerous obstacles that are facing the education system. Some obstacles include the lack of good English teachers and also the tendency (which is also policy) to gauge student performance in a foreign language by tests. This system of testing in schools for foreign language proficiency leads to increased

competence in reading and writing, but not necessarily speaking or listening (Andrews, 2011).

Although there are a variety of ways one can learn a new language, this subsection will concentrate on a hypothesis put forth by Stephen Krashen and investigate the formal versus non-formal methods, allowing the reader to judge which method they believe to be more beneficial. The findings along with a comparative analysis will be presented in Chapter 3.

2.4a Input Theory

Input theory is a manner of acquiring a second or foreign language. The theory states that someone learning a language (P1) will acquire a second or foreign language (TL/target language) by having interaction with someone who speaks the target language (P2) (not necessarily a native speaker) (Krashen, 1976, 1981, 1982). This is much the way a child learns their first language. They are being given "input" from their parents without being taught specific grammar rules, at best there will be error correction if the child produces incorrect *content*, but not necessarily incorrect *grammar* (Krashen, 1982). The acquisition of a language, however, must begin with "comprehensible input," that is, input which is understood (through means of gestures, realia, pictures etc.). After a foreign language learner understands the input being given, they can then build upon the existing foundation of information, vocabulary, expressions and structures by adding "new" content (information +1) (Krashen, 1982). The total formula is $P1+P2+TL+(information+1) = \text{natural acquisition}$. Mufwene (2010) gives an example of informal English acquisition when he claims that the school system played a less important role in the spread of English than the migrant workers on the potato plantations did in Ireland. He states that they (migrant workers + surrounding community) "learned it naturalistically, without the benefit of much school education" (Mufwene, 2010). "Acquired" competence and "learned" competence will be differentiated in this section.

2.4b Formal Methods

The formal environment, typically in a classroom, is characterized by error correction, rule isolation and feedback from the teacher (Krashen, 1976). Formal environments usually follow certain schedules and curriculums, for example, classrooms in most places around the world are from 8am until 2 or 3pm and implement a certain textbook which has been deemed appropriate by the government, namely the Ministry of Education. Krashen asserts that the use of formal environments can be useful in two ways, 1) as it provides a linguistic environment in which to practice the target language and 2) provides rules and feedback for the development of the learner. He notes that the extent to which the target language is used in the formal environment plays a large role in the conscious *learning* process. Therefore, language that is taught in a formal environment can be deemed 'learned', as the learner is consciously aware of what rules are taking place at a specific time. This, as Krashen states, can sometimes lead to 'non-fluency' in a language due to "over self-correction" or long pauses, as learners are thinking about which specific grammar rule applies to the current situation (Krashen, 1981). Another example, which characterizes a formal environment, is the seating arrangement. Typically, the students are seated behind desks, which face the teacher and the whiteboard, following a more teacher-centered set up.

2.4c Non-Formal Methods

Krashen mentions that the benefits of informal environments deal much with the "intake" of the recipients, that is, their desire or ability to absorb the information being given, focused on *content* rather than *correctness* (Krashen, 1976). Informal or non-formal learning can take place anywhere at any time, but typically non-formal learning happens during hours which are more flexible and prove more convenient to the learner, usually after school or work. Non-formal or informal environments are characterized by a relaxed environment for listening, responding, inquiring and interacting. Another characteristic of an informal or non-formal environment is the seating arrangement. The

arrangement follows a more egalitarian status where students are usually seated at a round table, or among a set up of chairs and tables, which produces a circular pattern.

Since both of these methods have their distinct advantages and will be addressed later in Chapter 3. The next subsection will highlight some important facts and reviews regarding tourism and culture, to give the reader more context for the findings and recommendations which conclude this paper. Tourism and culture are important to understand more profoundly because tourism will help to develop the non-formal educational exchange within Laos, especially Luang Prabang, which is a heavily visited tourist destination with many locals from other provinces and districts coming to the city to take part in the growing employment and benefits that the service sector provides. Culture will be one of the most valuable assets affected by the tourism industry, therefore, the reader should know more about other tourist destinations, specifically those which were deemed "World Heritage Sites."

2.5 TOURISM AND CULTURE

2.5a Tourism

Laos is one of the world's least developed countries but has recently acceded into the WTO on February 2, 2013, adopting policies, conditions and ideals which help to render the country more competitive in the world market (WTO, 2013). How does English relate to the global market? One of the products, which is incorporated into the world market as a commodity, is tourism, and tourism very plainly, accelerates and disperses the English language to all parts of the world. Referring back to the previous question mentioned in the introduction, "Why is English important for the development of Laos, specifically Luang Prabang?", in 2003, it was the second most visited tourist destination after Vientiane, the Capital (UNESCO, 2004). According to this study, its relative isolation has served as its shield from globalization, but after UNESCO had named this historically authentic destination a world heritage site in 1995, it sparked a

tourism influx, bringing with it the advantages and complications of rising numbers of foreigners.

According to a dataset by the Laos government for the year 2011, the total number of foreigners was over 2.7 million people, accounting for about 406.2 million dollars (Tourism Development Department, 2011). Friedman claims that tourism is one of the world's largest multinational economic manifestations which means that any country with marketable products or locations for tourism may partake in the benefits, which this type of commerce will bring (Friedman, 2005). Fayed and Fletcher also agree that tourism is economically one of the most dominant industries in the world and many countries depend on the income which tourism generates, in fact, the authors claim that tourism is incredibly vital, that it ranks in the top five export industries for 83% of countries worldwide (Fayed & Fletcher, 2002). Reisinger states that tourism is the most evident expression of globalization which exists because of its role on a global scale including flows of goods, services and people (Reisinger, 2008). So what does Laos have to offer the world, with regards to tourism?

Luang Prabang is situated in northern Laos at the confluence of two rivers, the Nam Khan and the Mekong. Historically, Luang Prabang was part of the French colonial territory as stipulated in the Franco-Siamese treaty in 1893, transferring a vast region to the French administration (UNESCO, 2004). The borders that demarcate Laos today were negotiated between the French, Siamese, Great Britain and China between 1893-1907 (Jerndal & Rigg, 1998; UNESCO, 2004). The city of Luang Prabang has had a tumultuous history of social, political and cultural exchange, making it one of the most interesting places in Laos. Laos is one of the few remaining communist countries, and was directly influenced by the cold war and Russia's ideologies, depending on assistance, governance and protection from Russia until the fall of the Berlin Wall (Mufwene, 2010). When Laos could no longer depend on assistance from Russia, they began to look to alternatives in their development strategy. In 1989 Laos opened up the country to tourism to help generate economic growth, and this circumstance led to the revitalization

and restoration of the town to its former elegance (Luang Prabang Tourism Department, 2012). Today, the town of Luang Prabang remains the political, administrative and trading center for the province, bringing locals from other provinces to its center to reap in the expanding benefits of globalization, tourism, and employment (UNESCO, 2004).

The direct contribution from the tourism industry in Laos is about 5.8% of GDP for the year 2011, but in total, including the indirect (investment spending, purchases from suppliers) and induced (food, entertainment, accommodation, transport etc.) spending, the contribution to GDP in 2011 was 18.2% and is expected to rise in the coming years (WTTC, 2012). Based on the tourism development strategy, tourism has and will continue to directly generate foreign currency for the country, support related investments such as travel, hotels, restaurants, transport and also create employment for people in the service sector. This strategy also states that tourism will "contribute to foreign currency accumulation and will facilitate the domestic financial liquidity and in turn be able to distribute the income to more rural or remote areas" (Lao PDR Tourism Strategy, 2006-2020). The Tourism strategy asserts that the development of infrastructure and further facilitation of the tourism industry in Laos will be necessary in order to maintain the growth of GDP brought about by increased flows of travelers and foreign capital. Tourism, however, is not solely comprised of economic capital, but includes a global, dynamic and social phenomenon (Salazar, 2005). The dynamic and social phenomena induced by tourism, which occurs in Luang Prabang, takes place in the form of cultural exchange, language exchange and expanded knowledge of geography, ethnicity, technology and literature (just to name a few).

2.5b Culture

The Merriam Webster dictionary gives several definitions of the word "culture." Some of these include phrases like: "customary beliefs of religious, social or racial groups", "characteristics of everyday life shared by people in the same place or time", "set of values, attitudes, goals", "social practices, societal characteristics, and conventions

passed down to the succeeding generation" (Merriam-Webster, 2013). So why is this important to understand, and how is it relevant to this thesis?

As mentioned before, culture will be one of the major assets affected by tourism, so the awareness of other World Heritage Sites will be useful in order to have an idea of how tourism has affected them and therefore, how it might also affect Luang Prabang. Salazar (2005) gives an insight into "Jogja," Indonesia by exemplifying a case where the global and local intersect, in a term referred to as "glocalization."

The author is studying the tour guides specifically, with particular attention to who they are, where they are from, and some of the methods used to portray Jogja as an "authentic" destination (World Heritage Site). He claims that there are some tour guides who are genuinely interested in telling tourists about the history, cultural background and lifestyle of the local people, but that there are others who are more business-like, selling knowledge, ideology, culture as well as taking them to souvenir shops to make a commission (Salazar, 2005). These particular tour guides often portray the village lifestyle as something which is more common than it really is. Salazar states that these tour guides will often wear the straw hats, which villagers wear during planting season, but only to give a more authentic touch to the village and tour itself. This is an unfortunate deception, which can happen in all places that have been highly commodified by tourism.

As Salazar notes, the global marketing strategy for tourism is that "diversity sells," and the last thing a tourist from Europe wants, is a tour guide showing them around modern places which might be similar to places they could see around Europe. They are looking to see, hear and understand more about the primitive or exotic lifestyle of a small village (Salazar, 2005). Salazar is painting a picture that tourism destroys local cultures and traditions by "over exaggerating" the lifestyle which used to be everyday practice. He claims that the tour guides, tourists and many of the Indonesian populace

living in Jogja often watch the spectacle of traditional dance, art and advertisements for exotic Indonesian destinations on TV, attributing tourism to the decline of authenticity. In fact, Lao officials also denounce the capitalist excesses which are prevalent among neighboring countries such as Thailand, which has a high rate of commercial traffic, tourism and exchange, stating a "moral decline" among the youth who are enamored with current pop culture (Soukamneuth, 2006).

So what will the locals in Luang Prabang think about tourism and the effects it has upon their culture? What are the advantages and disadvantages? Will they choose to learn English, if so, which method proves most beneficial? The next chapter will provide all of the findings from the field, and give details about the educational exchange, cultural and linguistic, as well as their influence and impacts upon the lives of those who are studying the English language.

CHAPTER III

THE FINDINGS

The findings of this research will be divided in order as they have been presented throughout the paper. First, the findings which deal with English as a development issue will be addressed, followed by a subsection on culture and how English affects local communities and then the responses by interviewees regarding their opinions of tourism to the culturally authentic World Heritage Site, Luang Prabang. A review and description of the facilities visited will be given as well, to enable the reader to have a better understanding of the institutions and the methods implemented therein. The main findings of this research will be presented in the final sections regarding formal versus non-formal methods of language acquisition, which will provide the comparison needed in order to make recommendations and a final conclusion.

3.1 FINDINGS TO SUPPORT WHY ENGLISH IS A DEVELOPMENT

CONCERN

As stated before by the President of the Lao Women's Union, English is vitally important and has become a necessary criterion for promotion. This statement is supported by the statistics revealed in the survey conducted in Luang Prabang as well as several semi-structured interviews. The study in Luang Prabang shows that 48.3% of people support the statement made by the President of the Lao Women's Union, stating that the main reason English was important for their life was to obtain a job, to earn a higher salary, or to be promoted within their job. The survey revealed two other reasons for the importance of English in the lives of local people, which were for communication and cultural exchange (31%) and making new friends (20.70%). This indicates that English is important for various reasons subjective to those who choose to learn it, but also indicates that those who have command of it will have a better opportunity for success.

A semi-structured group interview reveals, "if we both work in a bank, but he can speak English and I can't, then at first we will make the same salary, but he will move up quicker than me, and will have a higher salary than me at the end."⁹ This semi-structured interview reveals that the more knowledge of English one has, the more income they can potentially make. So with the issues of access, quality, dedication, along with other inadequacies, which the Lao public school system faces when teaching English, how can local people, who come from modest backgrounds aim to achieve a skill, which will render them more competitive in the job market?

Globalization can be seen as a useful tool for the incorporation and inclusion of those who were previously marginalized without any knowledge or access to foreign cultures and languages. According to the survey conducted in Luang Prabang, 100% of all foreigners surveyed, stated that when they traveled (anywhere in the world), the medium through which they communicated was English. The locals also supported this statement, claiming that the number one most heard foreign language in Luang Prabang was English. So Globalization, with its most evident expression through tourism, allows for easy and effective dispersion of English throughout the country and especially in Luang Prabang, providing unintended¹⁰ but beneficial language skills to the local populace.

3.2 IDENTIFYING THE NON-FORMAL INSTITUTIONS

The charity organization S.M.I.L.E Project, is directed and managed by an expatriate who has lived in Luang Prabang since 2008. Although the education takes

⁹ (Gary, Sam, & Finn, 14.6.13)

¹⁰ The choice of wording, "unintended," aims to signify that tourists who are traveling in the area do not necessarily mean to spread the English language, but that English serves as an impartial link language, allowing both parties to communicate and be understood. This provides powerful and favorable language skills to the locals who interact with the foreigners.

place in the English language, usually *about* the English language, sometimes, a more diversified subject material is taking place, incorporating themes of health, hygiene, geography, culture, and even profound conversations about life. The goal of the project is to:

"Offer free education, nutritional aid and healthcare assistance to impoverished, abandoned, orphaned and underprivileged youth, as well as



Figure 1. Temple Class

Buddhist monks

and novices, all of whom lack the funds and resources for quality education and nourishment, and are desperate to learn English language and computer skills in an effort to break their cycle of poverty and create economic mobility for themselves, their families and indeed whole communities." (S.M.I.L.E Project, 2013)

The students within the project are at varied levels of English, but all students are genuinely interested and they tend to help one another in explaining what is said if a student doesn't completely understand. This project is held at a local temple, 5 nights per week.

The Luang Prabang Public Library is supported by both the Lao government as well as several foreign charities (The Language Project, 2013). It manages a reading program, which provides multi-lingual books to rural villages to promote reading and

understanding. The director of the Library states that English has helped her create an NGO, which enabled her to communicate with foreigners interested in assisting with the program, and as an end result, has helped her to help the rural village children to read and reach their dreams.¹¹ This facility, upon observation and volunteer services, also provides a place for informal communication between locals of all ages and foreign volunteers from all countries as well as free internet access. Many of the participants interviewed and surveyed also attended this facility on a regular or semi-regular basis (3x per week). The Children's Cultural Center is the same building with a separate room, which provides the same facilities and amenities as the Luang Prabang Library, but offers it to younger children.

Another non-formal facility, which was established in 2006, was Big Brother Mouse. It is primarily a publishing company that aims to improve the literacy rates among the Lao people by making reading fun and accessible to all (Big Brother Mouse, 2012). These books are



Figure 2. Non-formal, student-centered setup

published in several languages, usually incorporating an ethnic minority language as well as the national Lao language or English or both, which makes reading interesting and sometimes a challenge. The center in Luang Prabang also has a downstairs "dinner-table" type set up, where foreign volunteers can come to interact with locals who wish to improve their language skills. This is not

¹¹ (Sarah, 13.6.13)

limited to English, but there have also been German, Japanese and Korean volunteers as well (just through one daily observation), and with these volunteers, the students attending the not-for-profit project, Big Brother Mouse, often ask questions and learn several words or phrases in different languages. They provide a free space twice a day, morning and evening, for those wishing to volunteer or practice a foreign language.

The last non-formal institution visited was @ My Library, which differs from the other two previously mentioned institutions with regards to their recent incorporations of the arts into the learning process. This library was established in 2003 as a listening library with primary focus on English (The Language Project, 2013). It is now a place where locals can go to read, use the internet for free, interact with foreigners from different countries, play games in English or utilize other thinking/problem solving games, learn problem solving skills and also learn about photography and recording music (The Language Project, 2013). This has proven to be an experiment in the making, allowing for the changes of student demand and has been proven an efficient method of improving the lives of those who have attended the informal classes and utilized the English reading materials (The Language Project, 2013).

All of these organizations, projects and facilities have provided an informal type of environment, by the times they are open and available to the methods they utilize. They have demonstrated high success and attendance rates. Of the total students surveyed, 75% utilized the informal environments listed above, and the success of these institutions can be determined by the percentage of students (80%) who attribute their acquisition of new information (language, culture, photography, geography etc.) to the specified institutions listed above.

This research highlights the importance of volunteers as well as informal environments where there can be an exchange of knowledge without the fear of reproach from teachers. In this informal environment, students are able to 'save face' and ask

questions and simply communicate, which is not necessarily the case in a formalized environment in Asia, as the narrative by a Lao national portrays in section 3.5 of this chapter. Although West is describing a US school setting and explaining the cultural differences between the Southeast Asian students and the Americans, 'saving face' remains a cultural characteristic of Southeast Asian students, even while abroad (West, 1983).

3.3 FINDINGS ON FORMAL METHODS

Part of the research conducted in Luang Prabang incorporated the in-depth interviewing of 5 teachers, one teacher of university, 3 from a private school, and one from a charity organization, all of whom stated that the Lao government does not allow any foreign teachers to teach in the public school systems.¹² This type of protectionism is understandable, however, the teachers themselves are often speakers of 2 or 3 languages before English, so the characteristics of a formal environment, with specified advantages of error correction, feedback, grammar, and pronunciation for the students, is arguably decreased.

The students surveyed claimed that English forms a part of the secondary school curriculum (7 years), but only with 99 classes per year, if that many. In the research, the average years of English class for students surveyed was 4 years, but within the span of 4 years, students claimed that the average days per week they had English class was 1.6. They claimed that even though they were supposed to have class 2-3 times per week, sometimes the teacher would have to leave to return to their home village to assist their family in agricultural work, which means that the students were left without a teacher and sometimes without any notice. The average duration of the English class was 1.7 hours per week and sometimes, as stated by students, "it just depends," due to the sporadic attendance and need for supplementary income of teachers which come from more rural areas.

¹² (Brian, 18.6.13; Mitchell, 19.6.13; Philip, 27.6.13; Thomas, 9.6.13; Tim, 23.6.13)

In a private school where a one-month observation had taken place, there were 3 separate classes, one for beginner, intermediate, and advanced students. This is the typical formal set up of a classroom where all of the students face the teacher and the whiteboard, following a teacher-centered model.



Figure 3. Formal learning environment

The particular institution was funded by the Vatican Church

of Italy, and was established specifically for those who were disabled from unexploded ordnances from the Lao Civil War. There are three branches of this institute, one in the Capital, Vientiane, one in Luang Prabang, and one in Champassak. The school in Luang Prabang, however, did not cater to those who were disabled from UXO's, but instead catered to average students with sufficient means to pay for extra English or computer classes.¹³

In this school, there were no placement tests and students were allowed to choose the class in which they wanted to be placed. In the advanced class, there had been 3 teachers, all from differing ethnic backgrounds. The first teacher left after 12 days of teaching to go back to his home village to help his family plant rice (as June is the

¹³ 250,000-350,000 LAK equivalent to approximately 32-45 USD for 3 months

*Prices differed according to class and time

**Rate 1 USD = 7,809.45 LAK (converted Aug 5, 2013)

beginning of the wet season and the agricultural crop for Laos in this particular season is rice). The second teacher left after only 4 days of teaching, stating the same reason. The third teacher was there for the remainder of the one-month observation, being 4 days (Classes were Mon-Fri, 20 days of classes for the month of June 2013). The lack of consistency of teacher/teaching method and dedication along with the grammatical errors and mispronunciations made, raises the question of whether or not they were experienced enough to be teaching English and instructing in a formal, paid-institution with a classroom of 30+ students.

One of the more notable mistakes made by a teacher in this institution was when he wrote, "I am very interesting in the education system..." on the whiteboard. One observant student (who worked in a hotel) asked if the teacher meant to write "interested" instead of "interesting", but the teacher replied "no, it is in the present tense, so it must be like this... (followed by an explanation in Lao)."¹⁴ The advanced class had no real discernible level of English ability as some students were very clever, having worked in hotels, guesthouses or restaurants and were mixed with others, who could not read or write basic sentences in English, as they had only ever had experience with English in secondary school from their Lao instructor.

In the survey, although 100% of those surveyed had attended school, only 16.67% claimed that they spoke some English with their Lao teacher in public school or a private institution, and with further inquiry about the nature of this use, the participants responded that it was simply short answers or repetition of phrases initiated by the teacher. This is an example of a formal institution where error correction, rule isolation, feedback and target language were not especially useful or prevalent as Krashen (1976,

¹⁴ The actual explanation in Lao could not be understood by the researcher and when the researcher asked a student what the teacher had said, the student simply stated that it was the same thing in English, that it was in the present tense, because now you are currently showing an interest in education, therefore the present continuous must be used.

1981, 1982) claims that a formal environment should be. Although Krashen is discussing second language learners in his published works, if we apply this formal method to the case of 3rd and 4th language learners, we can see that the benefits of the formal environment begin to diminish.¹⁵

3.4 FINDINGS ON NON-FORMAL METHODS

It is shown through the survey conducted in Luang Prabang, that 90% of students surveyed stated that they were highly motivated to learn English. This level of motivation provides the optimal environment for informal language acquisition to take place. One question in the survey, "How/Where did you learn English?" was asked with the possibility of 6 different answers, but, as learning happens in several different ways and sometimes simultaneously with mixed methods, the students were allowed to choose more than one answer. The frequency with which the students chose informal conversations with English speakers as the best tool for acquiring English was 36%, followed by private tutoring, 29%, and then public school classes with 22%. This finding suggests that an *acquired* manner of competence in another language provides the most benefit to the students by giving them the opportunity of practice without the conscious effort to produce "correctness." However, as the second method, private tutoring, is only 7% less than the first, the explicitly *learned* grammar and rule isolation also play a role in knowing when or how to use the language when engaging in conversation, but this method is only useful if the student has sufficient means to pay for extra, private classes. Although 36% stated that the best tool for learning English is through conversations with English speakers, there is an obvious advantage to having a Lao teacher explain the rules and grammatical structures in a language that students can

¹⁵ The benefits of the formal environment begin to diminish when the teacher, as well as the students, become learners of 3 or 4 languages before English, and use of the target language is not common in the classroom. Also, a teacher who speaks 3 languages before English may not necessarily have the best grasp on the grammar rules, pronunciation or error correction that are necessary for the formal environment to be truly functional.

understand completely. This supports Krashen's theory by indicating that acquisition is more central and learning is slightly more peripheral in terms of *how* to gain competence in a language (Krashen, 1976, 1981, 1982).

In an observation of one of the non-formal classes given by the S.M.I.L.E. Project, a new student had arrived who was in town just for the summer (2 months). She was from a rural village approximately 4 hours from Luang Prabang and was the English teacher in the village. She, however, did not speak any English. She could produce lower-intermediate level grammar when she had sufficient time to produce it, but this was only portrayed through her writing. She could not hold a basic conversation and did not speak throughout the entire duration of the class. She had minimal interaction with foreigners due to her relative isolation from anything commodifiable by tourism and her English knowledge was limited to the formalized classes provided by the government while in secondary school. This highlights two particularly important facets: 1) the inadequacy of a formalized method of instruction and 2) the desire for non-formal methods via interaction with student-led classes and foreign facilitation.

An interesting fact to mention is that when participants in the survey were asked, "when or where do you speak English?", 42.42% of students in the survey stated that they attended the free, informal classes or conversational centers with English speaking volunteers, in places like the Luang Prabang Library, Big Brother Mouse, @ my library and the small charity organization, The S.M.I.L.E. Project. Some, 33.33% of students, utilized English skills at work in hotels, restaurants, guesthouses, massage shops and other service oriented positions catering to tourists and the remaining 24.25% said they spoke English at the tourist destinations where they would visit in their free time, such as Phousi Mountain, the night market and the temples etc. There was no mention at all about using English in their classroom at school.

As stated before, the frequency with which those surveyed stated that informal conversations with English speakers was the best method to acquire a language is 36%, however, a total of 66.67% of students attributed their *use* of English to practicing with those who were volunteering in the various centers in Luang Prabang, or with travelers enjoying the sites around the town. The remaining 33.33% used their English for work in guesthouses, hotels and other service oriented places, which means that the majority of their use was also with tourists and foreigners. This means that 100% of the local use of English in Luang Prabang is with communication with foreigners.

3.5 TESTIMONY OF NON-FORMAL INTERACTION AND COMPREHENSIVE INPUT

The survey conducted also revealed that, the number one most difficult aspect about learning English was grammar, followed by pronunciation and then listening. A teacher at Souphanavong University confirmed this by stating that many of his students inquired about free places or classes with foreigners to practice their pronunciation, and learn more "practical or useful" English phrases, outside of the classroom and textbook.¹⁶ The university teacher himself, along with 2 other teachers in a private English language school had worked in a guesthouse and restaurant after their first year in Luang Prabang, all claiming that they learned the most useful English while working in these places and interacting with foreigners, and not inside the classroom. For example, one teacher states:

"I learned English by sometimes by myself, or at my university, or reading a book, but in the first year I learned English by asking my friend. If I didn't know some words or how this word means, then I ask my friends. For the first year I could not communicate with foreigners, but the second year, I think if I stay like that, in the narrow places like the university or the dormitory, it's not enough. I'm

¹⁶ (Tim, 23.6.13)

*going to find some experience at a hotel, guesthouse or restaurant. At first i'm going to train to interview and work in a restaurant at the Mekong River, and I worked there for almost 2 years. My friends and I speak English to each other and we need to speak English with the foreigners at the restaurant. There was a teacher that came to the restaurant and he told us if we want to speak English well, we must be active and speak more and more with the foreigners. Now I am confident to speak English with anyone, anywhere. But in class, I cannot speak English well, I don't know what's wrong, but anywhere else, I can, in class I feel nervous, but outside it's ok, I feel relaxed, I don't care about grammar."*¹⁷

This account gives mention to the fact that in a non-formal, or informal environment, he feels more comfortable communicating. There is no need for worry about correct grammar as long as he can communicate and be understood, this is what Krashen describes as 'comprehensive input', or input that can be understood from one speaker to another, using gestures, simple explanations etc. When participants in the survey were asked, "if you cannot understand a foreigner, or they cannot understand you (accents, language barrier etc.), how do you communicate?", 56.67% stated that they would use gestures, hand signals or realia to explain what they meant (comprehensive input), another 30% would have them repeat what was said but using different or simpler words, not necessarily in a grammatically correct or complete sentence (mutual intelligibility), and the remaining 13.33% would find a pencil and paper to have what was said written down, so they could see and try to understand what was said. These statistics support Krashen's theory that comprehensive input is vital to progressing further in another language and also that as long as people can communicate and be understood, even if at a very basic level, and it still proves sufficient for interaction and exchange (Krashen, 1982; Pakir, 2010).

¹⁷ (Thomas, 9.6.13)

Another example of comprehensive input or mutual intelligibility was through an observation in the local night market. One vendor was selling textiles, which appeared to be of the "backpacker" nature, meaning loose-fitting pants and several 'souvenir-type' T-shirts. A group of 3 travelers stopped at the vendor's shop and one girl from the group picked up a pair of pants, spoke to her group of friends in their native language, then asked the vendor, "can I try it on?," but the vendor, having a limited knowledge of English vocabulary, did not understand "try it on," she may have understood "put on," "wear" or just the word "try," but the prepositional phrase "try on" could have caused some confusion. The vendor gestured that she did not understand while also stating "no understand," so the potential buyer answered back with a gesture of lowering the pants to the ankles, then raising them up to the waist, all the while saying "try on", "can I try on?" The vendor may not have understood what was being said, but she clearly understood the gesture and repeated back: "try on, try on, okay." Now, this is not to say that the vendor will remember this phrase and be able to understand it or reproduce it in the future, but at the moment, this was a pure example of Krashen's "comprehensive input" or input that was understood. Sometimes simple phrases followed by gestures can go a long way.

The teacher interviewed earlier, Thomas, also notes that in the first year of University, he could not speak English well enough to communicate with foreigners, but through building his confidence and utilizing the experiences and knowledge of his friends, he begins to branch out and speak English with other English speakers, this is the example of building on information that was already acquired and adding new information, (i+1), thus, providing more natural and useful English expressions which he would not have learned through rote memorization of grammatical rules and awkward expressions printed in a textbook, again, supporting the input theory proposed by Krashen. It begins with simple input that can be understood through any means necessary, from there, branches out to "new" information that hasn't been learned or acquired yet, but can be explained and added to the existing foundation.

3.6 THE PERSPECTIVES ON TOURISM AND CULTURE

As mentioned before, Luang Prabang is the political, administrative and trading center of the province, which brings locals from other provinces to the town center to gain access to the opportunities which it offers. The S.M.I.L.E. Project website claims that many students in Luang Prabang, including Buddhist monks and novices, come from very poor families in the countryside and are unable to educate or provide adequate care for their large families. The project further states that large numbers come to Luang Prabang with the hopes of being admitted into a temple as a novice to give them an opportunity for free food, shelter and education (S.M.I.L.E Project, 2013). This is supported by the research conducted where only 5 participants stated that they were actually from Luang Prabang town. The rest of the participants came from other districts or provinces to Luang Prabang to take part in the growing benefits of employment in the service sector, increase their knowledge of other languages, experience cultural exchange with foreigners or simply to continue their education in high school or university.

Souphanavong University, in Luang Prabang, is the only university in the northern part of Laos, and is one of three public universities in the country (Nouansavanh, 2009) (the study by Nouansavanh did not include the medical university in Vientiane or the newly opened university in Savanhnakhet-2009). In a semi-structured (group) interview of 3 advanced English speakers (aged 17, male), the question was posed, "What do you think about tourism in Luang Prabang?" All answered with a resounding, "it's good." They gave reasons of employment, higher salary as well as stating, "we can learn other languages, not just English, but we can use English to learn any language we are interested in by talking to other foreigners."¹⁸ This reaffirms McGrew's point that English can be useful as an impartial link language (McGrew, 2010). English does not have to impinge on local traditions or cultures, but is simply used as a medium to learn and understand differing cultures and interests.

¹⁸ (Gary et al., 14.6.13)

A case study by Salazar (2005) of Yogyakarta, Indonesia, also a World Heritage Site, gave some insight into the negative aspects of tourism upon local culture and the notion that tourism erodes local traditions and cultures and turns a local way of life into a spectacle may have validity in some places, but it was not necessarily evident in Luang Prabang through interviews and interactions with the local populace.¹⁹ Indeed, there were some negative aspects of tourism as stated by several of those interviewed, such as an increase in "rubbish" on the streets, increase of noise due to bars playing music later in the evening, as well as western style clothing, which influences the younger generations to adopt more of a western style and leave behind their traditional culture. However, this specific aspect of western clothing is subjective.

The semi-structured group of 3 mentioned above, claimed they would like to adopt "a little bit" of western culture with regard to clothing, stating, "foreigners have freedom to wear what they like, what they feel comfortable in if it's a hot day... if a Lao woman goes to the Mekong river and wears a swim suit, she must be insane... we would like to have freedom too, to wear short pants."²⁰ When the Lao officials claimed that the capitalist excesses and influence of pop culture had a negative effect on the Lao youth, they were speaking from a different generational perspective. The truth is that any generation may speak unsatisfactorily of the next, claiming a moral decline, but this does not mean that the newer generation is wrong or inept but simply different in their desires and actions from the previous generation. As Heraclitus, a Greek Philosopher stated, "There is nothing permanent, except change." He understood that change was inevitable and criticized those who would criticize the present, claiming that everything was in a state of change, like a river and there was no use in criticizing what was inevitable (Marvin & Sikernitsky, 1995-2000).

¹⁹ Only one tour guide was actually interviewed, however, his paper recognizes that there may be some difference with regard to education, opportunity and origin of "local" tour guides which differs from that of average locals. Locals represent the majority of the findings in this research. This may or may not represent a more authentic portrayal of Luang Prabang, as the tour guides job is often to "sell" authenticity as stated by Salazar.

²⁰ (Gary et al., 14.6.13)

Another semi-structured interview reveals much the same attitude, claiming that tourism, although having its "weak points" has many more benefits, and even though it changes Lao culture "a little bit" by "exposure to foreign lifestyles," it probably would have "happened eventually anyway, without the foreigners, but maybe at a slower pace, because that's what development is, and that's what our country is trying to do."²¹. Globalization is a process which is occurring. The local affects the global and vice versa. It is an inevitable change that one must come to accept. The idea that local villages or communities are homogenous and static and affected by a global force (change) represents "the billiard ball" model, and it is not entirely accurate as Wood (1980) claims. Even within local communities there exists no uniform homogeneity, a local culture is dynamic and merits analysis within itself as changes happen locally over time and not necessarily by influence from any outside force. In fact, there is more influence going from the local towards the global, as it is the local where the original trend begins, and from there resonates out into the rest of the world through popular culture and other means, which can then be filtered by cities and people (Mufwene, 2010; Wood, 1980).

One in-depth interview with a volunteer teacher and student of university reveals clearly that if you want to move forward, you must leave behind a little bit of Lao culture, for the sake of progress.²² No culture has remained intact since its origination. History has proved Heraclitus correct, that change is unavoidable, whether at a slower or quicker pace, it will happen eventually. Charles Darwin studied the process of physical evolution and came to the conclusion that those, which were more adequately adapted or equipped to change (to its surrounding environment), will be the ones who survive well into the future. This can be applied to humans with regard to a psychological and sociological evolution. Those who are well adapted to changes made for progress and development will be the ones who fare better in the modern world. This is not meant to sound

²¹ (Tim, 23.6.13)

²² (Thomas, 9.6.13)

malignant, but simply meant to portray that throughout history, cultures, languages, fashion and power changes, therefore, those who are most willing to accept the reality of globalization and change will be the ones best prepared for the future.

Tourism, as has been illustrated, has its positive and negative features, but overall, the people interviewed in the semi-structured and in-depth interviews had a positive reception of the English language as well as tourism and small changes, claiming that the "the good points are more than the bad points."²³ So, with tourism being accepted as an overall positive change in Luang Prabang, and English traveling with the tourist, what does that mean for the local populace? Has it changed their lives, and if so, how?

3.7 ENGLISH HAS IMPROVED LIVES: SUCCESS STORIES

The main reason that *non-formal* learning is important is because more people have access to it. The reason the English language is important, is because it is the number one most spoken foreign language in Luang Prabang, as well as the most international language of the world. People who come from rural villages, who do not have the luxury of foreign volunteers coming to their school, or have the opportunity to study English consistently in their school or even finish school due to lack of teachers, are presented with an opportunity to study English in the town of Luang Prabang for free. They do not have extra money to spend on private tutoring, internet cafes, or enough competence of the English language to work in a guesthouse or hotel, which could help them develop further. Tourism as well as places like Big Brother Mouse, Luang Prabang Library, @my library, Children's Cultural Center, S.M.I.L.E. Project and other non-formal institutions provide the necessities of access, supply of volunteers, books, sometimes internet, and free use of space for anyone wishing to gain a more profound knowledge of the English language.

²³ (Brian, 18.6.13; Gary et al., 14.6.13; Thomas, 9.6.13; Tim, 23.6.13)

One semi-structured interview with a student utilizing several non-formal methods of English language acquisition answered of the question: "How has English changed your life?"

"English has helped me open my mind. Before I could speak English and talk to foreigners, I only knew the world as Laos. Now I know where many countries are and about many different cultures. I use English to learn Japanese. There are many Japanese tourists who come here and they don't speak Lao language, so we can communicate in English, and they teach me words and phrases in Japanese but explain what they mean in English. It's not only English that I'm interested in, I can say 'I love you' in 11 different languages." -Gary, 17 years old²⁴

This particular student can speak 3 languages fluently, has an advanced grasp on the English language (4th) and is currently working on Japanese, his 5th language. How, one might ask, did he learn all of these languages? His native language is Hmong, followed by Lao, which he learned in primary school and is the national language of Laos. His third language is Thai, where he claims that he learned it through listening to music, TV, movies (self-taught) and especially because it's very similar to Lao language and he could understand it very easily. English, although his fourth acquisition, was one of the most advanced students interviewed for this study, and when asked how he acquired it, he replied, "on the street." He meant that he had very limited formal education learning English as he came from a rural village, which currently does not have electricity, contact with foreigners or adequate schooling. He came to Luang Prabang to attend high school and improve his life. He gradually learned to say basic things, like "hello, how are you", "how old are you" etc., and from there, by overcoming his shyness, began to build upon his vocabulary and emulate speakers of the English language in formulating sentences, conversations and jokes. Although he now attends high school in Luang Prabang, he attributes most of his knowledge of the world and English language

²⁴ (Gary et al., 14.6.13)

through his experiences with foreigners. Through the S.M.I.L.E. Project, Gary has access to shelter, clothing, food, healthcare and sponsors, all of which contribute to the betterment and development of his life. High motivation, along with a relatively stress free, relaxed learning environment were key necessities for learning his 3 foreign languages, Thai through TV, English through foreigners and volunteers and Japanese through tourists, as this study shows. This particular interviewee now has the possibility for various career fields. The knowledge he has gained of the world, his high ambition, as well as his affinity for languages makes him a perfect candidate for work or study abroad.

Another success story of English improving the life and livelihood of an individual is of a lady called Nancy. Nancy is over the age of 35, and comes from a very poor district in Pakse, in the southern province of Champassak. She has 4 other siblings and her father died when she was just a toddler. She stated that her mother did not know how to farm, so they moved to Vientiane. Sometimes her older siblings and mother would not eat, while she and her younger sister would have small amounts of sticky rice with sugar, bought with the little money her mother earned selling souvenirs. Nancy recalls thinking to herself, even at such a young age, "why aren't the rest of them eating?"²⁵ This gloomy story was initiated when an observation was made of 3 young children, approximately 6-8 years old, 2 boys and one little girl, walking up and down a tiny alley where there were several food vendor stalls. It must have been a tourist attraction because the vendors were set up on one side of the alley, and tables directly across from them on the opposite side, all lined with foreigners. These three children were barefoot, dirty, without a chaperone, and obviously hungry. They each had a small plastic bag, and through closer observation, had remnants of fish, sticky rice and chicken bones. They had waited for the foreigners to get up and leave the table, and would take the food, which had been left behind. Ms. Nancy claimed that it was a tragedy, what these little kids were experiencing, but gives thanks to her mother for being a dedicated

²⁵ (Nancy, 21.6.13)

woman, and knitting small stuffed animals to sell as souvenirs in order to be able to feed her children. Ms. Nancy never had to beg on the street or eat leftover food from strangers.

She had worked in several different places in Pakse and Vientiane. She worked as a waitress in a restaurant, she sold DVD's, movies and CD's in a small shop and also worked in a hotel. She eventually worked in a shop which sold a little bit of everything, called the "walkman shop" and at this point spoke very little English, as she claims it was not necessary for her previous jobs. She decided that she needed a life change, knew there were many foreigners in Luang Prabang because of the World Heritage Site status, and also that there was a "walkman shop" there too. She moved to Luang Prabang in 2006, where she worked in the store for 5 years. Nancy claimed that in the walkman shop she never spoke English, and in fact, because it was owned by a Chinese person, she would need to communicate and try to learn Mandarin. She stated that she was not interested in learning Mandarin, that she wanted to communicate with more people and that more people spoke English when they traveled to Laos.

It was in 2011, in Luang Prabang that she found a job selling textile merchandise made from rural villages all around the country. At first she did not speak any English, but the fair trade organization that she worked for, sponsored 7 months of private lessons for her. She was very grateful and was then able to communicate at a basic level. After she felt that she had gained some knowledge of English, she had more confidence than before, and began attending all of the non-formal facilities that were mentioned in this thesis above, including the use of internet, which she utilizes for listening and pronunciation exercises. She continues to attend these free facilities on a regular basis, interacting with foreign volunteers from all over the world. Her grammar is far from perfect, but she is funny, inquisitive, sensitive and kind, all of which can be gathered

from a 30 minute conversation.²⁶ She had acquired enough of the language, though, that her place of employment recognized her achievements and moved her to the sales floor, where she would interact with foreigners on a daily basis and sell fair trade textiles. She claims that knowledge of the English language has changed her life because now she is able to work in a well-paying job, send money back to her family, and live in a town where she can learn continuously about language as well as so many other things which she would not have had access to in her village.

Although this research is not meant to argue that everyone *should* learn the English language, it is, however, meant to highlight the importance of it. The two life stories of people who had no knowledge of the English language gradually became proficient and in the first case, very advanced, leading both individuals to greater opportunities and improvements in their lives. The case for the English language has been made, that it will not take over as a dominant vernacular, it will not overtake local dialects or kill local cultures, but in fact, we will see an increase in hybridization and intermingling of cultures and languages.

²⁶ This conversation was held over dinner, in which a 30 minute interview took place, however, the interaction between the researcher and Ms. Nancy extended far beyond the conversation and included 1 month, everyday interactions, and also continued e-mail interactions after field research was concluded.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

To summarize this paper and respond to the questions and objectives presented, English is a development issue because in the reality of today, which has been shaped through historical processes and globalization, those who have a command of the English language have higher salaries, more opportunities for employment and increased access to information via the internet. As stated in the introduction and through the research conducted in Luang Prabang, English has become a necessary criteria for promoting employees and also for sheer employability in the service sector. When locals gain command of the English language, they are presented with opportunities to travel or study abroad through contacts made with foreigners from different countries, as well as gain employment and promotions within their field, therefore helping to improve their lives and livelihood. This explains how English has become a development issue for social as well as economic purposes.

English is also a tool for international mobility as all of the foreigners surveyed stated that the number one language used when traveling abroad was English. This indicates that foreigners, from any country, can travel to other places and still be understood, suggesting that if locals had command of it, they too, would be able to travel internationally. There are other reasons for why English is useful and important such as providing an impartial link language for locals to interact with foreigners for a cultural and educational exchange. English proves to be an instrument for communication, between locals and internationals from differing countries, allowing for mutual intelligibility, exchange and cooperation.

To address which methods were implemented in Luang Prabang, there were formal and non-formal methods observed. Non-formal education via tourism and volunteers proves important and extremely beneficial because, as explained earlier, it

provides a wider net of educational access to those who do not come from privileged backgrounds and cannot afford to pay for private classes, attend formal institutions, or relocate to major cities where the educational system is more effective. It has been shown that tourism is both directly and indirectly responsible for generating income for the country and providing jobs to numerous people, which allows for further development and redistribution of resources.

It has also been explained that globalization, through the expression of travel and tourism is a direct way of diffusing the English language without much need for change in the public education system of the host government. Through the developments of this paper, it can be concluded that an informal or non-formal type of education, through tourism and volunteers, provides the most benefits to those seeking to improve their life through education in not only the English language but also geography, culture and life skills.

This thesis has not meant to discredit the Lao government in any way by highlighting the advantages and importance of non-formal methods of education, but instead has meant to prove that parallel structures and outside investors and are also useful. It is the researchers recommendation that the government continue to support and facilitate the expansion of the education system, not only through formal classroom building in rural areas, but also through construction and support of non-formal centers, where people can access books, magazines and maps. Another possible idea for improvement within the formal institutions would be to adopt some of the methods utilized in the non-formal institutions such as seating arrangement, volunteer services from native as well as non-native speakers, use of realia and gestures instead of direct Lao/English translation and encouragement of students from a young age to read and ask critical questions of the teacher and subject material.

One way to bring volunteers further out into the rural areas and away from the urban cities of Luang Prabang, Vientiane and Pakse are to create awareness about the locations. Travel guides like "The Lonely Planet" and "Rough Guides" are examples of places to advertise an "off the beaten track" destination where tourists can go to experience a more authentic feel of life in a small rural village. A small building or location where tourists can go to volunteer their time and assist the rural Lao teachers in their classes would also be helpful. Multi-lingual books should be made available to every child in every village, through a small local library or school.

It is not the sole responsibility of the Lao government to implement and construct facilities where language and education can be taught, indeed there is a budgetary constraint on the extent to which the Lao government can contribute, which brings into account the importance of aid and investment by part of the international community and private organizations. It is the authors recommendation that the Lao government make the process of obtaining a license for construction and opening a school as uncomplicated as possible, to encourage foreign as well as domestic interest in investment in the education sector. It would also help if the government were to be flexible in the curriculum, which would be taught in these non-formal educational centers, which could give students a broader view of the world outside of national identity, helping to create not only Lao citizens, but global citizens.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

Questionnaire for FOREIGNERS or Travelers in Luang Prabang

(Background)

1. Where are you from?

2. How old are you?

- a. 14 or under b. 15-19 c. 20-24 d. 25-29 e. 30-34 f. 35+

3. Gender

- a. Male b. Female

(Language Acquisition)

4. Where/How did you learn English?

- a. Classroom (school)
 b. Paid private Lessons (tutoring)
 c. Informal conversations with English speakers (desire for interaction)
 d. Study Abroad (emersion)
 e. Travel (necessity)
 f. Self-taught from books, movies, music etc.

4. How long did it take to learn English?

- a. less than 1 year
 b. less than 2 years
 c. less than 3 years
 d. less than 4 years
 e. less than 5 years
 f. more than 5 years

*Level of proficiency:

- a. beginner
 b. lower-intermediate
 c. intermediate
 d. advanced
 e. fluent

5. What do you think is easy about learning English?

6. What do you think is difficult about learning English?

(Globalization)

7. What language do you use most when traveling abroad? If more than one language put in order from most used to least used.

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

8. What are the biggest obstacles you face while traveling abroad?

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

9. Do you think it is important to learn English? Why?

_____.

10. Classification of traveler:

a. backpacker (single) b. backpacker (group) c. guided tour group
d. couple e. vacationers (family)

****Who do you normally interact with?**

****How do you interact with locals in LPB? (gestures, basic vocab etc.)**

Appendix B

Questionnaire for LOCALS living in Luang Prabang

(Background)

1. Where are you from? (village, town etc) _____.
2. How old are you?
 - a. 14 or under
 - b. 15-19
 - c. 20-24
 - d. 25-29
 - e. 30-34
 - f. 35+
3. Gender
 - a. Male
 - b. Female
4. Why are you in Luang Prabang?
 - a. From here, have family here
 - b. Working or looking for job
 - c. School
 - d. Other. Please specify _____

(Acquisition of Language)

3. How/Where did you learn English?
 - a. Classroom (school)
 - b. Paid private Lessons (tutoring)
 - c. Informal conversations with English speakers (desire for interaction)
 - d. Study Abroad (emersion)
 - e. Travel (necessity)
 - f. Self-taught from books, movies, music etc.
4. Did you study English in school?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
5. How many years? days? hours?

| YEARS | DAYS PER WEEK | HOURS PER DAY |
|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| a. 1 year | a. 1 day per week | a. 1 hour per day |
| b. 2 years | b. 2 days per week | b. 2 hours per day |
| c. 3 years | c. 3 days per week | c. 3 hours per day |
| d. 4 years | d. 4 days per week | d. 4 hours per day |
| e. 5 or more years | e. 5 days per week | e. 5 hours per day |

6. How often do you use English?

- a. Never
- b. Rarely (not much)
- c. Sometimes
- d. Often (a lot)
- e. Always (everyday)

7. When (or where) do you use English?

8. How much did you want to learn English? (motivation)

- a. Did not want to learn (very low)
- b. Wanted to learn a little bit (low)
- c. Wanted to learn some (moderate)
- d. Wanted to learn a lot (high)
- e. Very excited to learn (very high)

9. Who do you speak English with?

- a. In the classroom at school (with your teacher)
- b. At home with family
- c. After school with friends
- d. With foreigners/travelers
- e. With volunteers

10. What is difficult about learning English?

11. What is easy about learning English?

12. Is it difficult or easy to understand different accents? What happens if you do not understand them and they do not understand you? How do you communicate?

(Importance for livelihood)

13. Are you confident to speak English?

- a. No
- b. A little
- c. Sometimes
- d. Mostly
- e. Yes

14. Is English important to your daily life? Why or Why not?

15. How has English changed your life? Is it good or bad?

(Globalization or Language Diffusion)

16. Do you speak any other languages? Which? How did you learn?

1. _____ 2. _____

3. _____

a.^ _____ b.^ _____

c.^ _____

17. In your opinion, which foreign languages are spoken the most in Luang Prabang?

1. _____ 2. _____

3. _____

Appendix C

First Foreign Language Preference by Percentage

Languages (First Phase- 1850-1874)

| | |
|---------|--------|
| German | 50% |
| French | 33.30% |
| English | 8.3% |
| Russian | 0 |
| Spanish | 0 |

Languages (Second Phase- 1875-1988)

| | |
|---------|-----------|
| German | 44.40% |
| French | not given |
| English | not given |
| Russian | 0 |
| Spanish | 0 |

Languages (Third Phase- 1900-1919)

| | |
|---------|--------|
| German | 24.30% |
| French | 45.90% |
| English | 27% |
| Russian | 0 |
| Spanish | 0 |

Languages (Fourth Phase- 1920-1944)

| | |
|---------|--------|
| German | 14.80% |
| French | 35.20% |
| English | 33.30% |
| Russian | 0 |
| Spanish | 0 |

Languages (Fifth Phase, Post WWII, 1945-1969)

| | |
|---------|--------|
| German | 0 |
| French | 28.10% |
| English | 59.40% |
| Russian | 7.80% |
| Spanish | 0 |

Languages (Sixth Phase- 1970-1989)

| | |
|---------|--------------------------------|
| German | not given |
| French | 16.4% primary, 17% secondary |
| English | 47.5% primary, 67.4% secondary |
| Russian | 5.7% primary, 5.9% secondary |
| Spanish | 0 |

Languages (Seventh Phase- 1990-2005)

| | |
|---------|--------------------------------|
| German | not given |
| French | 13.2% primary, 13.6% secondary |
| English | 67.5% primary, 81.2% secondary |
| Russian | not given |
| Spanish | not given |

Tables created by author, statistics cited from Lo Bianco, 2009.

*Primary- governments implemented policy for learning beginning in primary education

*Secondary- governments implemented policy for learning beginning in secondary education

*0- No preference for governments to implement language in Education system

Biography

Ms. Elizabeth May

The author, Elizabeth May, is from North Carolina, USA and comes from a military family. She has lived in several places in the United States and also Okinawa, Japan. The author studied Spanish/Linguistics in undergraduate and also studied abroad in Ecuador, South America, allowing for a highly proficient command of the Spanish language. The author took an interest in languages once she began to travel the world and communicate with locals in differing countries. She has spoken on panels regarding "social injustice", "building global citizenship" and more recently the importance of non-formal methods of education in the ICIRD conference regarding "Inclusive Development, Higher and Vocational Education in ASEAN."

The author of this paper has a background not only in language but also teaching. She has tutored Spanish in the US as well as Thailand and has taught English in Ecuador, Thailand and Laos. It is the author's ambition to continue learning different languages and experiencing unique cultures through interactions made at the local level. In the future, it is expected that the author will work for a not for profit organization assisting in the development of local communities through increasing the level and quality of education in the area.