



**INVESTIGATION INTO THE SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL  
COMPETENCIES AND OPINIONS ON ENGLISH  
LANGUAGE LEARNING ACTIVITIES OF  
MIDDLE SCHOOL CHINESE STUDENTS**

**BY  
JIANFEI LIN**

**A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT  
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### Abstract

This study aimed to (i) assess the social-emotional competencies of middle school students in China and to (ii) understand their opinions regarding English learning activities. A mixed-methods approach was adopted, utilizing both the questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. From the total student population of 264 at Duyun Xiangcai School in Guizhou, 160 students were randomly chosen to answer the questionnaire. Additionally, 12 students voluntarily participated in interviews. The questionnaire, structured on a 5-point Likert scale, measured the students' social-emotional competencies across various activities and their preferences towards English learning activities. The interviews provided in-depth qualitative insights into the students' perspectives on English learning activities. The study revealed middle school students in China demonstrate notable skills in decision-making, relationship management, and social awareness, with less emphasis on self-awareness and self-management. Preferences for English learning activities leaned towards interactive elements like video watching and role playing, while activities such as cloze reading and pair work were less favored. The English language teachers are recommended to integrate more interactive English learning methods, focusing on enhancing self-awareness and self-management skills. A balanced curriculum that caters to diverse competencies and preferences is suggested to promote a holistic approach to learning and personal development.

(Total 134 pages)

Keywords: Social-Emotional Competencies (SEC), Opinions, English Learning Activities, Middle School Chinese Students

Student's Signature ..... Thesis Advisor's Signature .....

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# **Chapter 1**

## **Introduction**

The first chapter introduces a background overview of the social-emotional competencies and academic achievement in English language learning in the world and in the Chinese perspectives, statement of the problem, research objectives and research questions. In addition, it further provides the significance of the study, the scope of the research, the limitations and the definition of terms.

### **1.1 Background of the Study**

The global education systems have been emphasizing academic achievements as the key indicators for the student's excellence and future prosperity (Steinmayr, Meißner, Weideinger, & Wirthwein, 2014; Wen & Hu, 2019). As a result, many schools have shifted greatly to emphasize improving cognitive abilities while choosing subjects such as math, science, and languages. This has continued for years with some students emerging as successful learners, while some experiencing failures in their learning. With continuing research in education for factors that make students successful and unsuccessful (Gan, Humphreys, & Hamp-Lyons, 2004), the shift is now taking place.

Currently, educational scholars and psychologists have recognized in recent years that academic excellence is influenced not only by intellectual characteristics but also by a wide range of social and emotional competencies (Luthans, 2002). For instance, a research study by Brackett, Rivers, Reyes and Salovey (2012) highlighted the importance and significance of emotional intelligence in academic performance. They found that students with higher emotional intelligence exhibit better self-regulation, improved attention, and stronger interpersonal skills; this contributes positively to their academic outcomes. Durlak, Weissberg, Dymnicki, Taylor and Schellinger (2011) emphasized the impact of social-emotional learning (SEL) programs on students'

academic achievements. These programs which focus on enhancing intrapersonal skills such as self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making are associated with improving academic performance, reducing behavioral problems, and enhancing classroom engagement.

Social-emotional competencies (SECs) span a range of skills and behaviors essential for emotional regulation, self-awareness, and the management of interpersonal relationships (Elias, Zins, & Weissberg, 1997). Social-emotional competencies within this population (of middle school students) include skills and behaviors that are vital in influencing individual emotional mastery, self-awareness, other intrapersonal skills, and interpersonal relationships (Fults, 2019; Love, 2014). These competencies are increasingly acknowledged for their importance in shaping students' learning attitudes and motivations, thereby impacting their ability to navigate diverse social challenges and academic demands. SECs are additionally connected with several good outcomes, such as enhanced mental well-being, increased resilience, and general fulfillment in schooling and accomplishments (Durlak et al., 2011).

The five core SECs cover a wide range of necessary skills: Self-awareness entails recognizing how one feels, ideas, and principles and understanding how they shape actions, as well as assessing one's abilities and shortcomings (Elias, 1997). Elias (1997) defines responsible decision-making as the capacity to make ethical decisions that consider safety, social standards, and the happiness of himself and other people. Relationship abilities include creating and sustaining healthy connections, overcoming disagreements correctly, and getting assistance when required (Jones & Bouffard, 2012). Self-management is the control of thoughts, feelings, and actions in many settings, including stress management and goal planning (Zins, Bloodworth, Weissberg, & Walberg, 2004). Social awareness is defined as empathy for people from different origins and cultures, as well as a comprehension of cultural standards. (Payton et al., 2008). These abilities have an important role in forming one's ability to efficiently traverse both the educational and social worlds.

The middle school years reflect a crucial phase in a student's emotional

development and educational journey. As a developmental stage, students usually undergo rapid changes in physical, emotional, and cognitive growth, which makes it an ideal time to instill social and emotional competencies. In the pivotal middle school years, as students experience profound developmental transformations, integrating SECs into the curriculum is particularly beneficial. This period is characterized by heightened emotional sensitivity and social engagement, both of which significantly influence students' learning processes and outcomes (Eccles, 1999). It is within this stage that students' attitudes and perceptions towards language learning activities, particularly English learning in the Chinese context (Yunbao & Nicholas, 2008), begin to solidify.

In the context of English language learning, particularly in China, integrating SECs into classroom activities presents a unique opportunity to enhance learning outcomes. English learning activities that are designed to incorporate social-emotional competencies can offer rich, interactive experiences that do not just engage students cognitively but also emotionally and socially (Ferreira, Martinsone, & Talić, 2020). For example, collaborative projects, group discussions, role-plays, and peer-feedback sessions are classroom activities that can actively foster relationship skills and social awareness. These practices can lead to heightened engagement, a better understanding of cultural contexts, improved communication skills, and a supportive learning environment that encourages language practice and risk-taking—essential for language acquisition (Chen, 2021).

Moreover, when students are engaged in English learning activities that challenge them to negotiate meaning, express opinions, and offer feedback, they are not just learning a language; they are also exercising and enhancing their responsible decision-making and self-management skills. English language activities that require personal reflection or journaling can promote self-awareness by encouraging students to articulate their thoughts and feelings, further solidifying their grasp of the language through introspection (Thu, 2020).

Since the investigation can cover several areas, this study aimed to focus on

the relationship between English learning activities that the teachers brought into the lessons to enhance students' social-emotional competencies and their impacts on students' engagement, interaction, and, ultimately, their proficiency in English. Through a closer examination of these relationships, the research findings would provide insights that could guide educators in crafting learning experiences that are cognitively enriching and emotionally supportive, tailored to fit the cultural context of Chinese middle school students.

## 1.2 Statement of the Problem

Social-emotional competencies and English learning activities seem to be closely related when leaning development is discussed. On a global scale, it is evident that students often encounter multifaceted challenges in their pursuit of learning the English language (Aizawa, Rose, Thompson, & Curle, 2020; Ramzan, Mushtaq, & Ashraf, 2023; Zakarneh, Al-Ramahi, & Mahmoud, 2020). They may want to improve their English but find it hard because of a lack of social-emotional competence (Niehaus, & Adelson, 2014). The challenges can be found in all regions of the world - both the east and the west. However, it occurs with its nuances, which reflect different contexts, such as China and other regions in which English is taught as a foreign language (Wang, 2015). Studies have discovered that students often face several incidences of demotivation and tend to lose focus when engaging in English learning activities (Getie, 2020). They perceive English as a challenging subject and usually need help understanding its relevance and recognizing its broader importance in their lives (Setiyadi, 2020). This lack of understanding often hampers their motivation and engagement (Cents-Boonstra, Lichtwarck-Aschoff, Denessen, Aelterman, & Haerens, 2021). Data from diverse educational settings show that students tend to view English as merely another subject rather than an essential tool for global interaction, communication and opportunities (Al Hosni, 2014). Their perspective on English learning focuses mainly on passing tests and neglecting the inherent essence of language acquisition in their personal lives and professional growth. Thus, other factors that may be supportive to their learning may have been ignored by English language teachers - among these are social-emotional competencies.

In China, the challenge of learning the English language is accentuated further. The language barrier and cultural differences heighten the intricate process of learning the English language as a second language. Chinese middle school students face many unique obstacles when adapting to the linguistic nuances and diverse aspects of the English language, encompassing aspects like vocabulary, listening, speaking, reading, and writing (Pan et al., 2023). This rift between their native language and English usually creates a significant hurdle in their language acquisition process. This impacts their confidence and overall performance in various learning activities presented by their tutors. Recent research on SEC in China indicates that the prevalent social competencies are related to self-management and social interaction, which depend on the ability to understand self-identity, regulate individual actions, and express personal emotions (Chen & Yang, 2022). This meta-analysis involving 86 randomized SEC programs on over 8000 Chinese students found that these programs were effective in improving their social skills, such as social behavior, attitudes, and management of social distress. However, the study also showed no notable improvement in individual behavioral problems. Teaching English to Chinese faces a mixture of reactions as most Chinese largely maintain their Chinese cultural identities (Pan, Liu, Fang, & Elyas, 2021). In China, teaching English involves well-codified features of Chinese English, which supplement its learning. Several strategies enhance teaching English among Chinese students, such as the inclusion of interactive teaching activities (Wang et al., 2019).

The English performance of students has been one of the major challenges in teaching and learning in Guizhou Province. The region is less developed, with teacher shortages and relatively low teaching quality (Peng, 2015). Zooming into Duyun City, the average score is relatively low. The 7th graders had an average of 45.85%, the 8th graders had an average of 41.60%, and the 9th graders had an average English performance of 50.45%. According to the Duyun City government website (2022), the enrollment rate of junior high school students was quite high, with 5,692 students in 7th grade, 4,782 in 8th grade, and 4,736 in 9th grade. By comparing the average performance and the number of enrolled students, it is clear that many middle school students score below 50% of the total points. Student grades and performance data

illustrate a spectrum of struggles with English language learning. From the teacher's perspective, it is apparent that many students lack intrinsic motivation, which is reflected in their engagement and performance in English learning activities. While some educators are aware of these issues, addressing them effectively within the constraints of the curriculum remains a significant challenge. The interplay between socio-emotional competencies and performance in English learning activities remains the possible causality of these struggles in learning the English language among Chinese middle school students. This study aimed to examine the complex link and investigate the relationship between socio-emotional abilities and performance in English learning activities.

### **1.3 Research Objectives**

1.3.1 To assess the social-emotional competencies among middle school students in China

1.3.2 To study students' opinions on English learning activities

### **1.4 Research Questions**

1.4.1 What are the social-emotional competencies among middle school students in China?

1.4.2 What are the opinions of middle school students in China regarding their English learning activities?

### **1.5 Significance of the Study**

**1.5.1 To teachers:** Understanding the impact of social-emotional competencies can inform the development of effective teaching strategies that promote establishing social and emotional skills as they teach the English language. It is a benefit

to educators and education facilitators since interacting with students from the perspective of social-emotional competencies can improve teaching styles and explore other means that cultivate the development of personal attributes, hence improving aggregate performances.

**1.5.2 To students:** Social-emotional competencies can be helpful to students in their English language learning as it involves interaction and the sharing of ideas. By monitoring social-emotional skills, students can effectively understand their personal issues like self-awareness and decision-making, which are essential to their later development in careers and life. Generally, developing social-emotional skills among students can help them develop the best attitudes toward learning the English language.

## **1.6 Scope of the Study**

### **1.6.1 Research Type**

In this study, both quantitative and qualitative data were collected. One hundred and sixty (160) ninth-grade students first responded to a distributed questionnaire. Subsequently, semi-structured interviews with a total of twelve students were conducted for in-depth data about their opinions on their English learning activities.

### **1.6.2 Research Location**

This research was carried out at Duyun Xiangcai School, affiliated with Hunan Normal University in Guizhou, China. It is a model private boarding middle school where the researcher is working as an English teacher. More than 2500 students are studying in this school, from elementary school first to high school third grade. The school aims to help students to improve their English skills in as many ways as it can.

### 1.6.3 Research Population and Sample

The population of this study was 264 students in the ninth grade at Duyun Xiangcai School. One hundred and sixty (160) students were randomly selected to participate in the questionnaire, using Yamane' s formula with a 95% confidence level. A purposive sampling method was used to select twelve students for in-depth interviews.

## 1.7 Conceptual Framework

The study was designed to employ a single-group investigative approach. Ninth-grade students were assessed using a formatted social-emotional competence questionnaire to evaluate their social-emotional competencies and to collect their views on English learning activities. The study was structured around two primary types of variables: elements of social-emotional competencies, and the top ten English learning activities as identified by ninth-grade teachers. These activities were believed to be influenced by the students' social-emotional competencies. The conceptual framework, depicted in the figure below, illustrates the expected relationships between these variables.

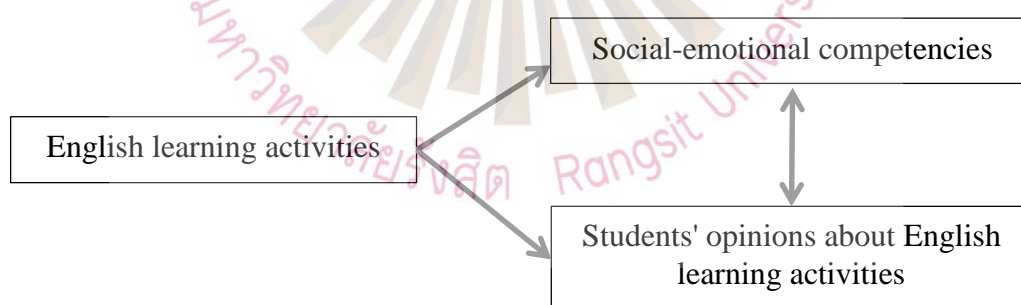


Figure 1.1 Conceptual framework for this research

## 1.8 Limitations of the Study

This research was confined to a specific sample size of 160 ninth-grade students from a single boarding middle school. The insights gained from this particular sample would be valuable for understanding their specific context. However, due to this limited sample scope, the findings should not be more generalizable to a broader

population of middle school students. It is important to approach the extrapolation of these results to a broader population with caution.

## 1.9 Definition of Terms

**Social-emotional competencies** in this study refer to students' capacity to comprehend, control, and express their emotions correctly, as well as to forge and sustain strong bonds with others. These competencies encompass a range of characteristics that enable individuals to successfully navigate social situations and regulate their emotions in both personal and professional contexts.

In this study, the term “social-emotional competencies” covers social awareness, self-awareness, self-management, responsible decision-making, and relationship skills. Social awareness involves recognizing and understanding others' emotions during interactions. Self-awareness describes a student's insight into their own emotions during English learning activities. Self-management pertains to controlling one's emotions and handling challenging situations in learning environments. Responsible decision-making involves making thoughtful choices after considering various factors. Relationship skills refer to building and maintaining strong connections with peers.

**Opinions** refer to middle school Chinese students' subjective perceptions and emotional responses towards English learning activities, reflecting a spectrum from positive to negative. Positive opinions are characterized by a sense of achievement, engagement, and confidence in different English learning activity settings, which foster interactive learning and social-emotional growth. Conversely, negative opinions arise from challenges and dissatisfaction with certain activities, manifesting as discomfort, a sense of exclusion, or critiques of teaching methods.

**English language learning activities** in this study refer to the most frequent activities that the ninth-grade teachers in Duyun Xiangcai School employ when teaching English. In teaching English, several activities are used to supplement classroom

instruction. These activities are essential for assessing students' understanding of the subject. This study chose English learning activities based on interviews with all five ninth-grade English teachers. These interviews focused on the activities they regularly apply, revealing the key activities as follows:

1) Listening comprehension - the teacher plays a recording or a video clip for students, and then has them answer questions about what they heard.

2) Pair work - the teacher has the students work in pairs to practice conversations.

3) Choral reading - the teacher encourages students to read a text aloud in unison, which promotes fluency and boosts confidence.

4) SEEWO games - students are allowed to use SEEWO software games for practicing vocabulary, restructuring sentences, and organizing text.

5) Cloze reading - this is a detailed examination of a short text or section of text, focusing on students' deeper comprehension, vocabulary, and author's craft.

6) Individual writing - Students work independently on a writing task.

7) Group work - the teacher divides the class into small groups and assigns discussion topics.

8) Show and tell - the teacher shows a picture, image, or item and asks students to describe it to the class.

9) Video watching - the teacher shows students video clips or short videos and then has them answer questions, share feelings, or discuss their understandings.

10) Role play - the teacher assigns roles to students based on real-life situations or fictional stories, letting them practice language in context.

**Middle school Chinese students** in this study refer to the ninth-grade students of Duyun Xiangcai School Affiliated with Hunan Normal University in Guizhou Province, China.



## **Chapter 2**

### **Literature Review**

This chapter presents the literature review encompassing previous scholarly works and discussions that have ventured into these topics. This chapter explores the significance of social-emotional skills, the worldwide and Chinese-specific status of English language proficiency, and other relevant studies.

#### **2.1 Social-Emotional Competencies**

Social-emotional competencies (SEC) are a set of skills and abilities that enhance understanding and management of personal emotions, provide avenues for establishing and cultivating positive interactions, and make constructive and impactful decisions. These include self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making. These competencies constitute a crucial role in developing the emotional intelligence, resilience, and perseverance needed to navigate challenges. They encapsulate the profound ability to comprehend, regulate, and articulate emotions adeptly while establishing and nurturing positive interpersonal connections. The importance of social-emotional competencies arises from their pivotal role in holistically nurturing individuals, enabling them to adeptly maneuver intricate social landscapes with a high degree of emotional acumen.

The relevance of SEC resonates deeply with personal maturation and overall well-being. The scholarly endeavors of Brackett and Salovey (2006) illuminate how SEC empowers individuals to identify and manage their emotions effectively, leading to an elevation in mental well-being and fortitude. Beyond the realm of mental health, SEC plays an instrumental role in fostering meaningful relationships. The insights offered by Jones and Bouffard (2012) underscore how individuals fortified with SEC

possess superior capacities for communication, empathy, and conflict resolution, thereby elevating the quality of their social interplays. SEC's influence transcends the confines of language acquisition. It equips individuals with the multifaceted tools required to evolve into well-rounded beings. The notions Goleman (2020) espoused assert that individuals endowed with a robust SEC exhibit a relatively high propensity for engaging in prosocial behaviors, displaying leadership prowess, and executing ethical and sound decisions. In a parallel, Lieber, Tissiere and Bialek (2017) accentuate how SEC aids in fostering a sense of belonging and active participation within diverse communities, ensuring seamless integration.

Within this context of education, social-emotional competencies have been increasingly perceived as a critical aspect of students' behavioral development and their ultimate academic achievement (Brackett et al., 2012; Durlak et al., 2011). As Elias et al. (1997) described, socio-emotional competence is composed of self-awareness, self-regulation, social awareness, relationship skills, and the ability to make sane decisions. This holistic mastery of emotional landscapes and interconnections holds pivotal importance, fostering harmonious interactions within educational environments and across the broader boundaries of society. The role played by the SEC in fostering academic accomplishment remains irrefutable. By cultivating self-awareness and self-regulation, individuals are primed to establish and achieve academic objectives with precision. Bandura's (1977) insights into the interplay of self-management competencies, goal realization, and academic success further accentuate the importance of SEC in this context. Moreover, the adeptness in interpersonal skills nurtured through SEC augments collaboration, communication, and teamwork—critical components for thriving in academic and professional milieus, as underscored by Weissberg, Kumpfer and Seligman (2003).

SEC empowers students to surmount language-related hurdles, thus enabling more meaningful engagements with peers and educators alike. The discernment of one's linguistic strengths and areas for improvement facilitated by self-awareness guides students' strategic learning pursuits. Moreover, the role of the SEC in fostering effective communication abates linguistic anxiety and bolsters linguistic self-assurance. SEC

remains a potent mitigator of the lingual stress typically associated with language learning for Chinese students navigating the intricate English acquisition.

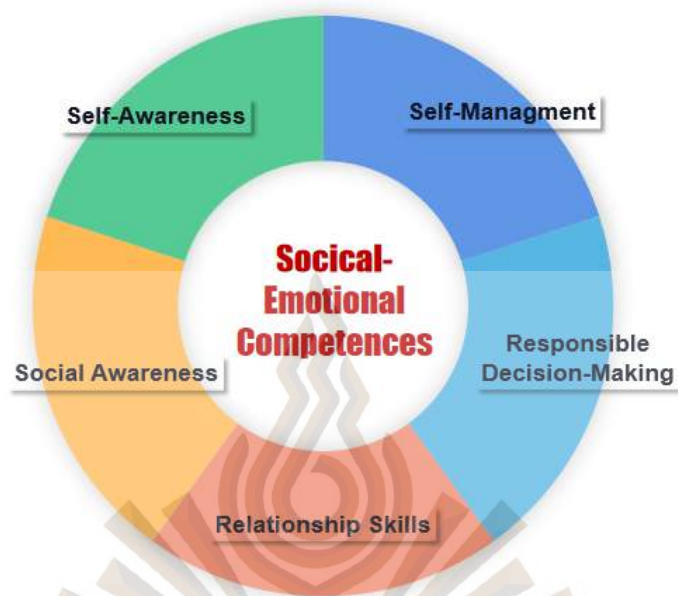


Figure 2.1 Social-Emotional Competence Dimensions

Source: Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL), 2023.

### 2.1.1 Self-Awareness

This is the profound capability to introspect and fathom the stretch of one's own thoughts, emotions, and driving motivations. Goleman (2020) casts a spotlight on the paramount role of self-awareness in the enhancement of emotional intelligence, empowering individuals to make well-informed choices that resonate with their core values and aspirations.

According to Strahan and Poteat (2020), a large percentage of students desire to achieve academic success; nevertheless, various obstacles prevent them from being able to exert optimal effort. In the same year, Kreibich, Hennecke and Brandstätter (2020) concluded that when individuals strive to achieve their objectives, they occasionally encounter barriers that can impede the successful realization of their ambitions. The recognition of a hindrance impeding the achievement of a predetermined objective necessitates the possession of self-awareness. Individuals with a high capacity

for self-awareness are more likely to recognize obstacles when pursuing personal goals. Scholarly investigations have underscored that individuals with an elevated sense of self-awareness are inclined towards more efficacious self-evaluation and establishing well-defined objectives (Dunning, Heath, & Suls, 2004). Arabsarhangi and Noroozi (2014) discovered a positive correlation between self-awareness, a facet of Emotional Intelligence (EQ), and reading comprehension. This finding affirms the idea that self-awareness significantly contributes to students' reading skills. Self-awareness, in this context, is considered an emotional competency, emphasizing the emotional aspect of learning rather than the cognitive aspect. By emphasizing self-awareness, learners can more accurately assess their strengths and weaknesses, fostering a deeper understanding of their abilities and limitations during the learning process. According to the researchers, developing an awareness of one's own learning processes is essential in the journey towards becoming an independent learner.

In the context of gaining expertise in English, cultivating self-awareness prompts learners to acknowledge their linguistic competence levels, empowering them to customize their learning methodologies in consonance with their distinct requirements. This metacognitive prowess is a cornerstone, underpinning both academic triumph and the expansive landscape of social-emotional maturation. It allows students to reflect on their language learning process, identifying areas where they need improvement, such as vocabulary acquisition or grammatical structure (Amirkhanova, Ageeva, & Fakhretdinov, 2016). This introspective capability is particularly valuable in activities like journal writing or reflective essays, where students can articulate their thoughts and emotions in English, thus strengthening their language proficiency (Prasanti, Muzammil, & Widiastuti, 2020; Ali, Zaman, & Khan, 2018).

### **2.1.2 Self-Management**

Mastering self-management involves controlling one's emotions, time, and exertion in order to attain individual and academic objectives. Duckworth and Gross (2014) underscore the pivotal role of self-discipline in academic accomplishments, illustrating how resilience in the face of challenges can be a determining factor.

Research endeavors have attested that those individuals endowed with robust self-management skills manifest a higher degree of resilience, concentration, and adaptability attributes that possess a constructive influence on academic attainment (Duckworth & Gross, 2014).

According to Tangney, Baumeister and Boone (2004), we can determine that people with high self-management had higher grades than those with low self-control, indicating that high self-management promotes academic excellence. Al-Abyadh and Azeem (2022) determined that a favorable connection exists between self-management, self-efficacy, and academic achievement in students from both the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Egypt. Furthermore, empirical research has shown that the enhancement of self-management skills has a significant effect on an individual's self-efficacy, which subsequently has a substantial impact on their academic success. Blume, Irmer, Dirk and Schmiedek (2022) investigated the relationship between self-regulation and academic performance in adolescents as they transitioned from primary to secondary education. Research has revealed that consistent self-regulation on a daily basis has a substantial influence on achieving academic success, underscoring the crucial role of setting and pursuing daily mastery goals. The study produced noteworthy results concerning the influence of self-regulation on academic success.

In the context of mastering the English language, the essences of self-management extend valuable assistance to learners in the sustenance of disciplined study routines, mitigation of language-induced anxieties, and astute navigation of impediments. This social-emotional competence skill facilitates a consistent trajectory of linguistic advancement and comprehensive academic triumph. In English language classrooms, self-management skills are essential for students to maintain motivation and focus, especially in mastering challenging aspects of the language (Gardsten et al., 2018). For instance, setting goals for improving specific skills, such as speaking or listening, and regulating study habits to achieve these goals is crucial (Çakıroğlu & Öztürk, 2017). Activities like timed reading exercises or structured speaking drills can significantly benefit students' self-management abilities, enhancing their overall language proficiency (Perry, VandeKamp, Mercer, & Nordby, 2023).

### 2.1.3 Social Awareness

Social awareness extends the focus beyond oneself, encompassing an empathetic understanding of the emotions and perspectives of others. It involves reading social cues, accurately interpreting nonverbal communication, and appreciating the feelings and needs of those around us. The existing studies have expounded on the propensity of individuals with a heightened sense of social awareness to engage in empathetic interactions, which engender more enriched interpersonal connections (Eisenberg & Miller, 1987).

According to Marsay et al. (2021), good social awareness can help students to better integrate into society in the future. Skills that help students integrate into society include developing good relationships, certain social skills, tolerance, empathy, and others that can help students know how to better their career development in society. A study conducted by Baek and Falk (2018) showed that persuaders who demonstrate better social awareness in different contexts are more likely to be successful influencers. This is because they can publicize their ideas more effectively, i.e., they successfully get others to adopt their views. An examination of 71 university administrators found a robust and positive correlation between the social awareness of managers and their leadership effectiveness. Additionally, the capacity of leaders to exert influence over others was linked to their degree of social awareness (Mwania, 2023).

In English language learning, social awareness serves as a catalyst, enhancing effective communication and collaboration with peers and educators. This skill, honed through activities such as group discussions and collaborative projects, allows students to engage more empathetically and effectively, fostering a more inclusive and productive English learning environment (Altemueller & Lindquist, 2017). As students navigate diversified language practices, exchange peer feedback, and develop a cross-cultural appreciation, they not only improve their communication skills in English but also contribute synergistically to academic achievements (Malikovna, Mirsharapovna, Shadjalilovna, & Kakhramonovich, 2022). Cultivating social awareness is thus essential,

as it leads to stronger interpersonal connections, a remarkable ability to collaborate within groups, and, consequently, better academic outcomes.

#### **2.1.4 Relationship Skills**

Effective relationship skills form the connective tissue of any thriving learning community. Jones and Bouffard (2012) emphasize that adeptness in communication, empathy, and conflict resolution fosters an environment where collaboration and mutual support flourish. These skills contribute to enhanced socio-emotional competence and empower students to engage constructively with diverse perspectives.

Konishi and Wong (2018) found that good relationship skills with peers, parents, and teachers can assist adolescents in maintaining their emotional well-being, which can positively affect their academic performance. Good communication (Khan, Khan, Zia-Ul-Islam, & Khan, 2017), cooperation (Arslan & Zengin, 2015), and listening skills (Owca, Pawlak, & Pronobis, 2003) are the fundamental requirements for achieving academic achievement among students. Denham and Brown (2010b) noted that developing strong relationship skills within the classroom setting offers numerous advantages. It enables individuals to engage in mutually satisfying interactions with peers and adults, leading to enhanced academic performance. These benefits include increased attention to academic tasks, improved planning abilities, and greater resource allocation for learning. Moreover, individuals with strong relationship skills are more likely to benefit from teachers' instructions, engage effectively in academic information exchange with peers, share academic resources, and model valuable learning skills from their peers.

Within the realm of English language learning, the quality of teacher-student relationships and peer interactions plays a paramount role (Lu, 2022). Effective relationship skills are key in English learning environments, especially in activities that require teamwork and communication. These relationship dynamics serve as conduits for fostering fruitful interactions among students, educators, and classmates. For example, during group projects or paired activities, students with strong relationship

skills can better navigate discussions, offer constructive feedback, and resolve any conflicts that arise, thus creating a harmonious learning atmosphere (Oxford, 1997). They establish a conducive learning atmosphere that promotes the cultivation of students' self-efficacy and enhances their capacity to acquire English as a second language (Ma, Du, Hau, & Liu, 2017). In the context of teacher-student relationships, a positive and supportive connection empowers students to explore language, seek guidance, and actively engage in their learning journey (Krane, Ness, Holter-Sørensen, Karlsson, & Binder, 2016). Simultaneously, peer relationships facilitate a sense of camaraderie and cooperation, encouraging students to practice language skills together, provide valuable feedback, and mutually support one another's language development (Washington-Nortey et al., 2020). These teacher-student and student-student interactions collectively propel the enhancement of English language proficiency, ultimately contributing to students' academic achievements and holistic growth.

#### **2.1.5 Responsible Decision-Making**

This entails taking careful consideration of individuals' choices about the potential impacts on others. It involves taking into account the impacts on short-term and long-term consequences when deciding the point of individual values and principles that contribute positively to other social welfare. According to Mahoney et al. (2021), responsible decision-making includes the personal ability to make decisions considering their effect on others.

Sever and Ersoy (2019) stated that teachers should provide a democratic climate for their students because the researcher believes a democratic environment where students can express their opinions is essential for developing their decision-making skills. The contribution of an environment where ideas are freely expressed and opportunities for decision-making are created to develop a child's decision-making skills is evident. Kasim, Yaakob and Rahman (2020) believed that making high-level, valuable, and responsible decisions, such as choosing the right research topic, mentoring, and appropriate research tools, can help students avoid making disastrous decisions.

Eventually, these skills will enable students to successfully cope with academic and personal challenges, fostering their academic growth and overall development.

Responsible decision-making is crucial when participating in English learning activities requiring learning and mastering English. Responsible decision-making is integral to mastering the English language, guiding students in making well-considered choices throughout their language-learning endeavors (Elias et al., 1997). The process involves the careful selection of suitable English educational materials, active participation in a variety of language environments, and the ability to make informed choices in English language-related tasks. It also fosters problem-solving skills when faced with language challenges and ultimately results in holistic growth, enhancing language proficiency, cultural awareness, and adaptability in diverse language situations. These determinations crystallize into optimized language learning odysseys, thereby engendering a holistic elevation in language acquisition and experiences.

Moreover, responsible decision-making becomes particularly significant during English learning activities that demand ethical reflection and complex reasoning, like debates or thematic essay compositions (Nurakhir, Palupi, Langeveld, & Nurmalia, 2020). Students who can make thoughtful decisions about their viewpoints and arguments in English, considering both ethical implications and the perspectives of others, demonstrate a higher level of language proficiency and critical thinking skills (Larsson, 2017). This ability also aids in understanding the cultural nuances of language use, an important aspect of language learning.

#### **2.1.6 Examples of the Questionnaire in Use**

Many questionnaires have been suggested and created to test social and emotional skills and abilities. Various questionnaires target various concerns depending on the research study's goal; hence, their usefulness is confined to a specific topic.

The first questionnaire that has been in use is the Social Emotional Competence Questionnaire (SECQ). It was designed and used by Zhou and Ee (2012) in studying

fourth-grade pupils using confirmatory factor analysis. It contained 25 items covering the five SEC dimensions. It was further replicated in high schools, and the results implied a significant internal validity and correlations with academic performance.

The Delaware Social-Emotional Competency Scale (DSECS-S) is a reliable and valid self-report assessment tool that Mantz, Bear, Yang and Harris (2016) use to measure students' social-emotional competencies. Thirty-two thousand four hundred fourteen (32,414) students in grades 3 through 12 in 126 Delaware public schools voluntarily completed the questionnaire. There are 12 items in the questionnaire, with three items assessing each of the four factors - responsible decision-making, interpersonal skills, self-management, and social awareness. Self-awareness was derived from the DSECS-S as it concerns the need for parental approval, ethical considerations related to identifying students with low self-esteem or depression, and the limited impact of self-esteem on academic and social outcomes. Positive correlations with student involvement and school-level academic success and negative associations with suspensions/expulsions support the scale's criterion-related validity.

The Emotional and Social Competency Inventory - University Edition (ESCI-U) is a self-evaluation tool intended to measure emotional and social competencies in university students ("Emotional and Social Competency Inventory (Self-assessment Questionnaire)," n.d.-b). It is grounded in the emotional intelligence framework restructured by Boyatzis and Sala (2004). The ESCI-U is a tailored version of the Emotional and Social Competency Inventory (ESCI) explicitly designed for use with university students. The ESCI-U typically includes a set of questions or items that assess various aspects of emotional and social competence, such as responsible decision-making, relationship management, self-management, self-awareness, and social awareness. Respondents rate themselves on these items, providing a self-assessment of their skills and abilities in these areas. The ESCI-U aims to help students better understand their emotional and social strengths and areas for improvement. It can serve various purposes, including personal development coaching or as an integral component of university programs designed to enhance students' emotional and social competencies.

The Wong and Law Emotional Intelligence Scale (WLEIS) is a self-report assessment tool researchers Wong and Law (2002) developed. This scale assesses an individual's self-perceived emotional intelligence in four primary domains. It includes self-emotion appraisal, emotion appraisal of others, emotion usage, and emotion management. Participants evaluate each item using a 7-point Likert scale, expressing the degree to which they agree or disagree with statements associated with these dimensions of emotional intelligence. The WLEIS is widely used in research and applied settings to assess an individual's self-perceived emotional intelligence. It can provide insights into an individual's perceived emotional strengths and areas for improvement. Researchers and professionals often use the scale to explore the connection between emotional intelligence and various outcomes, including performance at work, leadership effectiveness, and overall well-being.

Social-emotional competencies are a group of attributes that vary in areas of effect but collectively lead to self-discovery and self-acknowledgment. These attributes encompass self-awareness, interpersonal and communication skills, self-efficacy, social awareness and responsibility, and the aspect of making informed decisions. Self-awareness involves identifying one's emotions and understanding how they influence behavior. Self-regulation entails the explicit ability to control these emotions and reactions internally. Social awareness is the attribute of showing empathy and compassion from understanding others' emotions and behaviors. Relationship and interaction skills cover all aspects of effective communication, effective conflict resolution, and the capacity to create and sustain healthy and impactful interpersonal connections. Making responsible decisions refers to the capability to make not just decisions but thoughtful choices informed by ethical considerations (Greenberg et al., 2017; Mayer et al., 2008).

Alongside these competencies, integrating English learning activities into the curriculum enriches students' language acquisition process. Activities like interactive speaking sessions, role-playing, and creative writing exercises enable students to apply their social-emotional skills in real time. They promote not only linguistic proficiency but also a deeper understanding of the socio-emotional aspects of communication. In

essence, the link between social-emotional competencies and English learning activities leads to a more rounded and effective educational experience.

In this research, the original Social Emotional Competence Questionnaire (SECQ) by Zhou and Ee (2012), comprising 25 items across five dimensions, was extensively modified and expanded to create a more detailed and context-specific tool. The adapted version consisted of 40 items, offering a deeper and more nuanced assessment by including eight items in each of the five dimensions of social-emotional competencies. This questionnaire ensures a thorough evaluation of students' self-awareness, social awareness, self-management, relationship management, and responsible decision-making within the context of English learning activities.

Additionally, the questionnaire introduced a new section dedicated to understanding students' preferences for different English learning activities. This section not only enriched the data on students' social-emotional development but also provides valuable insights into their learning preferences and styles, enabling a more holistic understanding of their educational experience and needs. The modification of the questionnaire marked a significant enhancement from the original SECQ, making the adapted questionnaire a robust tool for examining the intricate relationship between language learning and social-emotional competencies.

## **2.2 English Language Education**

English language education is a dynamic conduit, fostering global communication, cultural exchange, and multifaceted growth. Its purpose extends beyond linguistic proficiency, encapsulating a gateway to interconnected opportunities in an ever-evolving world (Ilyosovna, 2020). The world over, English's universality transcends borders, facilitating diverse interactions and enabling access to an expansive repository of knowledge and experiences (Rao, 2019). In China, the pursuit of English language education mirrors its international significance. China's admission to the World Trade Organization in 2001 drove an elevated need for individuals proficient in effective English communication (Pang, Zhou, & Fu, 2002). Amidst China's rapid

socioeconomic growth and heightened global involvement, English proficiency is recognized as a catalyst for enhanced academic, professional, and interpersonal interactions. English language education aligns with this trajectory, offering Chinese students a passport to international collaboration, information sharing, and competitive advantage.

Measuring English language achievement encompasses more than grammar and vocabulary mastery; it encompasses comprehensive language skills - reading, writing, listening, and speaking (Arens & Jansen, 2016). English is more than just a subject; it symbolizes adaptability, global citizenship, and cross-cultural engagement (Lee & Drajiati, 2019). In China, being deemed proficient in English resonates with effective spoken communication, coherent writing, comprehension of complex texts, and active participation in international discourse. Criteria for assessing students' English proficiency encompass these dimensions, along with standardized testing, evaluation of language application in diverse contexts, and students' ability to navigate real-world interactions. Proficiency in English signifies not only linguistic prowess but also the ability to thrive in an interconnected world.

### **2.2.1 English as a Global Language**

In the tapestry of global communication, English emerges not merely as a language but as an emblem of globalization, embodying a medium that prioritizes effective communication over linguistic precision. This conceptual shift underscores the role of English as a versatile and inclusive global lingua franca, facilitating interactions across an array of linguistic backgrounds and cultural spectra. Crystal (2003) illuminates this paradigm, emphasizing English's role as a unifying bridge, enabling diverse individuals to navigate the complexities of global discourse. The evolution of English into a global language is a testament to its adaptability and ubiquity, catering to the communicative needs of a rapidly globalizing world.

The prominence of English in the global arena is multifaceted, extending its influence across economic, informational, and socio-cultural domains. Rao (2019)

articulates the significance of English as a universal language pivotal in sustaining international relations across various sectors, including business, technology, and education. This linguistic ascendancy is evident in the preference for English within multinational corporations, international organizations, and higher education institutions, where it serves as the de facto medium of communication and knowledge dissemination (Rixon, 2013). The burgeoning dominance of English in the digital space further cements its status, with a significant proportion of online content available predominantly in this language, thereby granting learners unparalleled access to a wealth of information and learning resources (Crystal, 2003).

The evolution of English language education is intricately linked with the notion of world Englishes, a concept introduced by Kachru (1985) that acknowledges the pluralistic and dynamic nature of English usage worldwide. This perspective recognizes the diverse iterations of English that have emerged, each embedding unique cultural and linguistic nuances. The proliferation of world Englishes signifies a departure from traditional norms, emphasizing the fluidity and adaptability of English in catering to global communicative demands. It underscores a movement towards acknowledging and embracing the diversity of English expressions, aligning with the contemporary understanding of English as a tool for global engagement rather than a rigid linguistic standard.

In light of these developments, English language education is no longer confined to the realms of linguistics or literature; it has transformed into a conduit for cultural exchange, international collaboration, and professional advancement. As global dynamics evolve, so does the perception of English proficiency, increasingly associated with broader educational and career prospects. Proficiency in English transcends linguistic mastery; it embodies a bridge to a world of opportunities, fostering connections, understanding, and collaboration on a global scale (Ilyosovna, 2020; Macaro, Curle, Pun, An, & Dearden, 2018).

### 2.2.2 English Language Education in China

China's English language education has witnessed a transformative journey driven by rapid economic expansion, globalization endeavors, and participation in international markets (Zhang, 2019). Beyond Zhang's insights, more scholars emphasize that English proficiency's importance in China extends to both individual (Wang et al., 2017) and national levels (Li, Teng, Tsai, & Lin, 2022). On an individual level, English proficiency significantly enhances global employability, a sentiment echoed by researchers such as Wang et al. (2017), who argue that English proficiency can have a positive income return. Furthermore, as China plays an increasingly prominent role in international diplomacy and trade, proficiency in English becomes a strategic asset for advancing the country's global involvement. English language proficiency has a significant impact on national economic development (Li et al., 2022).

Within China's rapidly evolving economic landscape, sectors like finance, technology, and tourism have experienced substantial growth. The transformation is significantly influenced by the recognition that English proficiency transcends linguistic knowledge; it embodies a crucial skill set for global participation and employability. Zhang (2019) underlines the pivotal role of English language skills in these industries, asserting that English proficiency is not only advantageous but often essential for professionals working in these sectors. Consequently, the demand for English-language education has permeated all levels of the Chinese educational system, ranging from primary schooling to higher education (Gil & Adamson, 2011).

The shift towards English for communicative purposes is evident in the evolving objectives of language education. Initially rooted in grammar-translation methods, the focus was predominantly on the mechanical aspects of language learning. However, as China's engagement with the global arena intensified, fueled by economic growth and a drive to establish international connections, the approach to English education underwent a profound metamorphosis (Zhang, 2019). In China nowadays, institutions are increasingly prioritizing functional language ability, aiming to equip students with the skills necessary for active engagement in international discourse and

professional settings (Jiang, Zhang, & May, 2016). This orientation highlights the importance of practical language use over theoretical knowledge, aligning education with the communicative demands of the global landscape.

However the focus of most English language teaching practices in China has also been the significance of accuracy. The assessment of English proficiency in China has adapted to reflect these educational priorities. Standardized tests such as the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), the College English Test (CET), the International English Language Testing System (IELTS), and the Test for English Majors (TEM) serve dual purposes: they provide a quantifiable measure of English proficiency and underscore the importance of linguistic accuracy and practical communication skills. These assessments are pivotal in academic and professional contexts, often serving as benchmarks for academic pursuits abroad and in the hiring processes within the dynamic Chinese job market. Moreover, the prominence of these tests underscores the importance of English in facilitating international mobility and opportunities, aligning with China's strategic global objectives (Zhang, 2019).

In essence, English language education in China is emblematic of the nation's transformative journey. Economic necessity, global aspirations, and the desire for competitiveness on a global scale all influence English language education in China. It has evolved into a fundamental component of the country's educational landscape, and the importance of English proficiency resonates both within China and on the global stage. English, in this context, is more than a language; it is a conduit to global connectivity, professional advancement, and international competitiveness.

### **2.2.3 English Language Education from the Learners' Perspective**

As for the Chinese learners, they have not changed radically; the majority still learn English for higher scores as a result. Some students can demonstrate outstanding achievement, while others fail. Thus, in the panorama of English language education in China, learner confidence in using English emerges as a pivotal facet. While Chinese learners may acquire substantial linguistic skills, their confidence in deploying these

skills in communicative contexts can vary widely. Scholars like Liu and Jackson (2020) have observed that despite achieving proficiency in grammar and vocabulary, learners often exhibit reticence in conversational settings, a phenomenon attributed to a traditional education system that emphasizes passive learning and accuracy over communicative fluency. This educational backdrop may lead to a competence-confidence gap, where learners possess the skills but lack the self-assurance to apply them effectively in real-life scenarios (Xu, 2011). The confidence to communicate in English is not merely a reflection of linguistic ability but also a product of psychological, pedagogical, and socio-cultural factors. The fear of making errors can significantly inhibit spoken fluency and spontaneous language use (Wu, 2019). In contrast, learners who perceive a supportive and less judgmental learning environment are more likely to take linguistic risks, thereby enhancing their communicative competence (Liao & Wang, 2015). Furthermore, exposure to authentic language use through media, technology, or interaction with native speakers can bolster confidence by providing relatable and real-world contexts for language application (Li, 2017; Tudini, 2003; Wu et al., 2011).

The evolving prominence of China on the global stage has propelled English language proficiency's importance to the forefront of the country's educational agenda. The recognition of English as a pivotal skill for international communication, business endeavors, and academic pursuits has resulted in a widespread integration of English language education within China's formal curriculum (Hu & McKay, 2012). The confluence of cultural and economic dynamics underpinning this emphasis shapes the attitudes and experiences of Chinese learners. Chinese learners embarking on the journey towards English proficiency face a spectrum of challenges. These challenges span from the intricate intricacies of the English language, encompassing its non-phonetic nature and distinctive grammatical structures, to socio-cultural factors such as the apprehension of making errors and limited exposure to genuine English-speaking environments (Liu, Ma, Huang, Xiong, & He, 2018). Furthermore, the intense focus on examinations and standardized testing can inadvertently cultivate a culture of rote memorization, impeding the cultivation of effective communication skills (Li et al., 2021). For numerous Chinese learners, proficiency in English translates to augmented

career prospects, unfettered access to global information, and the capacity to interact with international media and technology (Yuan, Li, & Yu, 2019).

Technology has engendered a paradigm shift in the domain of language learning for Chinese students. Online platforms, language learning applications, and immersive virtual experiences have ushered in opportunities for more interactive and self-directed learning endeavors (Pan, 2022). These technological tools have opened avenues for authentic language utilization, potentially bridging the chasm between classroom instruction and real-world application. The significance of English language education invites contemplation of its ramifications on the identities of Chinese learners. As they navigate the intricate contexts of language acquisition and cultural exposure, Chinese learners are ensconced in the process of identity negotiation, whereby they reconfigure their relationship with their native culture while concurrently embracing facets of English-speaking cultures (Williams & Springerlink, 2017).

As teachers employ a variety of activities to enhance understanding of the language, students tend to get along with their colleagues, which influences their actions and overall social interaction. Although these activities do not directly influence social-emotional competence, their significance in shaping social-emotional aspects is worth noting. When students engage in learning activities, their personal beliefs and attitudes are tested, which results in improved interactions. As a subject that involves reading and communication, students improve their language proficiency and conversation skills. Activities such as role play and group work can have positive outcomes in developing individual character and social interaction behaviors. The English language plays a vital role in international communication and interaction, which emphasizes social interactions within English learning activities.

According to Hu and McKay (2012), English plays a significant role in cross-border business and professional advancement, hence its recognition as an essential skill in the Chinese formal curriculum. The confluence of cultural and economic dynamics underpinning this emphasis shapes the attitudes and experiences of Chinese learners. English learning activities are perceived as a hybrid to enhance language mastery and

collaboration in learning the language. It shapes how these learners approach normal language challenges, such as social understanding and acting under pressure to perform. Chinese learners aspiring to improve their English proficiency face a spectrum of challenges. These challenges span from the intricate intricacies of the English language, encompassing its non-phonetic nature and distinctive grammatical structures, to socio-cultural factors such as the apprehension of making errors and limited exposure to genuine English-speaking environments (Liu et al., 2018). Furthermore, the intense focus on examinations and standardized testing can inadvertently cultivate a culture of rote memorization, impeding the cultivation of effective communication skills (Li et al., 2021).

Cultural influence and technological appreciation also hold significance for the impact of learning activities on personal social interaction. As students are differently oriented, their preferences for certain activities differ significantly. For instance, you may find that student A prefers SEEWO games more than group discussion, while another student (B) highly likes Vidoe-watching activities. This shapes their emotions when interacting with others. Engaging in activities one does not like can cause negative emotions when participating in such activities. This is usually notable for arguments and provocations among students. How they perceive these activities with respect to their emotions and experiences affects their understanding of and proficiency in the subject. For numerous Chinese learners, proficiency in English translates to augmented career prospects, unfettered access to global information, and the capacity to interact with international media and technology (Yuan et al., 2019). Technology has engendered a paradigm shift in the domain of language learning for Chinese students. Online platforms, language learning applications, and immersive virtual experiences have ushered in opportunities for more interactive and self-directed learning endeavors (Pan, 2022). The significance of English language education invites contemplation of its ramifications on the identities of Chinese learners and their interactions when engaging in English learning activities. As they navigate the intricate contexts of language acquisition and cultural exposure, Chinese learners are ensconced in the process of identity negotiation, whereby they reconfigure their relationship with

their native culture while concurrently embracing facets of English-speaking cultures (Williams & Springerlink, 2017).

### **2.3 Related Studies**

The study titled "Do students notice stress in teachers? Associations between classroom teacher burnout and students' perceptions of teacher social-emotional competence" by Oberle, Gist, Cooray and Pinto (2020) aimed to explore the link between burnout experienced by elementary school educators and how students perceive teachers' competence on social-emotional dimensions. Six hundred and seventy-six (676) students in grades 4 through 7, in 35 grades, provided SEC assessments of their teachers. Furthermore, the instructors indicated current levels of burnout in their professional duties, including feelings of detachment and emotional tiredness. Using analyses that take into account multiple influence levels, it was determined that there were notable grade-level differences (accounting for 34% of the total difference) in students' ratings on the teacher's SEC. Research results demonstrated that teacher burnout had a significant predictive relationship with how students rated their teacher's SEC. This phenomenon was noted even after accounting for significant individual student-level variables, such as their self-perception within the school setting and their perception of independence within the classroom. Furthermore, the analysis also considered contextual variables such as teachers' age and the school sector's socioeconomic status. The study's findings revealed a significant association between elevated levels of teacher burnout and decreased student socioemotional competence (SEC) scores.

Ahmed, Hamzah and Abdullah (2020), in their study titled "Effect of Social and Emotional Learning Approach on Students' Social-Emotional Competence," examine the impact of socio-emotional learning methods on students' socio-emotional competence. A quasi-experimental design was conducted in the third grade of a middle school, employing a near-equivalent pre-test and post-test design. The 207 student participants were allocated into two groups: experimental and control groups. The experimental group received instruction utilizing socio-emotional learning techniques,

whereas the control group received instruction employing conventional teaching methods. The researchers assessed the social-emotional competence of the students before and after the instructional session. The analysis of covariance yielded findings indicating that students enrolled in the Emotional and Social Learning (Emotional and Social Learning - RULER) classroom exhibited notably elevated levels of social-emotional competence compared to students in the conventional teaching group. As a result, using RULER strategies has yielded significant methodologies for students to incorporate and employ these techniques to augment their social-emotional proficiency. The consequences of incorporating a behavioral and emotional learning strategy into learning and instruction were examined.

Another study by Cho, Wang and Christ (2019) entitled "Social-emotional learning of refugee English language learners in early elementary grades: Teachers' perspectives" explored how young refugee English language learners' (ELLs) social-emotional learning (SEL) fit into the American school setting. The researchers interviewed six teachers in elementary school and examined how teachers describe the social-emotional skills of refugee ELLs and the teaching methods they employ to develop these skills. The study also assessed the extent to which teachers' views on refugee ELL learners' SEL and self-identified pedagogy align with their acknowledgment of refugee ELL learning. Furthermore, it explores teachers' growth in culturally sustainable pedagogy and their use of their influence to advance equality and equitable treatment in the classroom. Teachers have highlighted a variety of socio-emotional abilities, including social awareness and relationship skills, as essential for the development of ELL migrants. To support the learners, teachers employ different teaching strategies, such as clear and personalized guidance, establishing a pleasant classroom environment, fostering collaboration, and providing coaching.

Wallender, Hiebel, PeQueen and Kain (2020) carried out a study to know the influence of Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) in various educational domains, employing techniques and curricular programs to enhance students' competencies in this region. The study specifically examined the influence of an SEL curriculum called "Moment Step" on the domains of problem-solving skills, self-awareness, and self-

regulation among elementary and secondary school students in a rural area of the Midwest. In order to evaluate the proficiency levels of the students, a self-assessment was conducted at the commencement of the academic year 2018-2019. Following that, the students were provided with explicit guidance on social-emotional learning (SEL) subjects by the school counselor, utilizing the "Moment Step" curriculum. At the conclusion of the academic year, they proceeded to undertake an identical self-assessment. Using dependent t-tests, elementary school students exhibited a significant change in their self-perception regarding self-regulation and problem-solving skills, although notably, these changes were negative. The researchers noticed slight differences in the students' self-perception of self-awareness. No statistically significant differences were observed among middle school students in terms of self-regulation, problem-solving, or self-awareness in this study. It is important to note that the negative outcomes for primary students may not necessarily indicate a decline, as these students originally rated themselves quite highly. Given the limitations of self-reporting measures, particularly with younger learners, school districts should take into consideration the costs and the positive outcomes of implementing SEL curricular programs carefully.

Piqueras, Mateu-Martínez, Cejudo and Pérez-González (2019) conducted a research study titled "Pathways into psychosocial adjustment in children: Modeling the effects of trait emotional intelligence, social-emotional problems, and gender." The primary objective of this research was to investigate potential mechanisms leading to psychosocial adaptation in children by examining the collective impacts of Trait Emotional Intelligence (EI) and emotional and social difficulties. Additionally, the study sought to evaluate the potential mediating influence of gender on this association. Two hundred and sixty-eight (268) Hispanic children aged 8-12 years participated in this study (mean age = 10.09, SD = 1.32, 45.10% male). The implementation of specific measures was conducted using a web-based survey platform known as DetectaWeb. The findings from the regression and mediation/moderation analyses supported the assertion that psychosocial adjustment in children is influenced by Trait EI both directly and indirectly through emotional and social problems. Collectively, these three variables accounted for 46% of the variance in psychosocial adjustment, with EI traits emerging

as the strongest predictor (44%), demonstrating a progressive effect on social and emotional issues. Notably, gender was also considered in the analysis.

Blalock, Lindo and Ray (2019) conducted a study titled "Individual and group child-centered play therapy: Impact on social-emotional competencies" to investigate the relationship between inter-group play therapy and social-emotional competencies. The study was conducted involving a sample of 56 elementary school students, aiming to evaluate the efficacy of 16 sessions of individual and group child-centered play therapy (CCPT) in enhancing empathy, social competencies, specifically self-regulation/responsibility and social-emotional assets. Parental reports indicated a prominent positive connection between treatment in both CCPT conditions and improvements in overall socio-emotional assets, and in social capacity and self-regulation/responsibility.

Numerous scholars have explored the relationship between social-emotional competencies and academic performance, with consistent findings highlighting a significant connection between socio-emotional factors and students' academic achievements (Cristóvão, Candeias, & Verdasca, 2017; Roy & Giraldo-García, 2018; Kaya & Erdem, 2021). To illustrate, a comprehensive meta-analysis conducted by Durlak et al. (2011) on 213 empirical studies investigating socio-emotional learning (SEL) initiatives demonstrated substantial benefits of these interventions on academic performance, social behavior, and the emotional well-being of participating students. When it comes to English language learning and teaching, Guilloteaux and Dörnyei (2008) examined the relationship between South Korean students' academic success and their English language proficiency, suggesting that SEL programs led to advanced classroom behavior and significantly enhanced academic outcomes. Furthermore, a study by Jones, Destin and McAdams (2018) showed that students displaying high levels of social-emotional competence can consistently achieve higher academic success, including in the English language (Li et al., 2020). This research, conducted with primary school students, emphasizes the significance of targeting students' social-emotional skills as a major factor in improving academic performance at all educational levels.

Several studies have delved into the impact of school-based programs designed to enhance students' social-emotional skills, with their findings consistently highlighting the significant influence of SEC on academic achievement. For example, Sonnenschein, Stapleton and Metzger (2014) conducted research on socio-emotional educational interventions and the learning effects on students' academic performance. They discovered that interventions aimed at improving academic performance had a substantial influence on students' social-emotional skills, ultimately contributing to improved academic outcomes. Similarly, a study published in *Frontiers* emphasizes the growing body of evidence supporting a beneficial relationship between academic achievements and social-emotional competencies among students (Dom énech-Betoret, Abell án-Rosell ó, & Gómez-Artiga, 2017), suggesting that a positive correlation between elevated levels of socio-emotional skills and improved academic performance. Furthermore, psychological and social research has affirmed that social and emotional competencies can effectively be nurtured through intentional and coordinated instruction, such as academic learning (Zins & Elias, 2007). These results highlight the significant role that SEL plays in fostering the growth of these skills and enhancing academic achievement.

Chen and Zhang (2022) studied the connections between Chinese and American students' academic outcomes, their personality traits, and the influence of emotional competence. The findings identified that emotional competencies are more strongly connected and related to academic success among Chinese students than it was identified from American ones. When examining the connection between students' social-emotional abilities and their academic achievement, this research stresses the need to take cultural variations into consideration. In their study, Santos, Wang and Lewis (2018) proposed that emotional self-efficacy mediates the relationship between emotional competence and academic excellence. They claim that students with high emotional self-efficacy possess a greater chance to use their emotional skills and positively influence their academic performance. According to research by Von Der Embse et al. (2018), students with greater self-esteem performed much better on English exams than their classmates with inadequate levels of self-esteem. Xiao and Qiu (2022) identified the same impact that high levels of self-esteem were connected with students'

proficiency in English communication because these people were more willing to engage in discussion and convey their ideas with assurance.

These studies have emphasized the significant impact of social-emotional competence on student academic performance. By nurturing students' social and emotional skills alongside cognitive abilities, schools can better equip individuals to navigate academic challenges, foster resilience, enhance self-regulation, and ultimately promote overall well-being. The implications of these studies extend beyond the classroom to emphasize the need for a paradigm shift in educational systems worldwide. Recognizing the profound impact of SEC on academic success underscores the importance of creating environments that support the holistic development of students, preparing them not just for academic excellence but also for success in their personal, social, and professional lives.



## **Chapter 3**

### **Methodology**

This study assesses social-emotional competencies among middle school students in China and understands their opinions on English learning activities. This study used a combination of qualitative and quantitative research methods. The chapter is subdivided into sections as follows.

#### **3.1 Research Design**

For this study, a mixed-method approach was used as the research strategy. The mixed-methods research technique combined both the qualitative and the quantitative aspects of research in one study. The approach provided a deeper understanding of a research topic by capturing both the numerical data and the richness of contextual insights from opinions and respondent perceptions. By integrating both quantitative data collection and analysis with qualitative exploration, researchers could achieve comprehensive and robust insights and findings about the topic of interest (Creswell, 2014). This approach allows for the collection of data from a large number of middle school students in China at a single point in time, facilitating an understanding of their social-emotional competencies and perceptions of English learning activities (Shkoler, 2018). A mixed-methods research approach encompasses the use of both qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection to ensure that the data collected is inclusive of the necessary information sufficient to give trustable insights about the issues being studied.

The data were gathered from a broad sample of middle school Chinese students at Duyun Xiangcai School in Guizhou province, including only grade nine students. The data from the filled-out questionnaires were quantitative and were assigned a measurable score (Larsson, 1993). In addition, insights into the students' views regarding English learning activities were collected by semi-structured interviews.

## **3.2 Research Site, Population and Sample**

### **3.2.1 Research Site**

The research was conducted at Duyun Xiangcai School Affiliated with Hunan Normal University (Duyun Xiangcai School) in Guizhou Province in China. Duyun Xiangcai School is a private boarding school. It is the first and only model boarding school among all private schools in Duyun City. There are more than 2500 students in this school. It is the school where the researcher works as an English teacher.

### **3.2.2 Research Population**

The ninth-grade students at the middle school, Duyun Xiangcai School, contribute to the study's population. Two hundred and sixty-four (264) students are divided into eight classes in the ninth grade for males and females aged 13 to 17.

Middle school students are chosen as the study population because they represent a crucial developmental stage. In this stage, these students' social and emotional skills are actively developing, and their academic development becomes more crucial for future schooling. The ninth grade marks a crucial stage in their academic journey, where social and emotional skills are actively evolving. This specific grade level is crucial as it marks the final year of junior high school, a critical juncture for these young individuals.

### **3.2.3 Research Sample Selection Approach**

This study utilized a blend of simple random sampling and purposive sampling to garner a comprehensive understanding of the ninth-grade students' social-emotional competencies and their preferences for different English learning activities.

For the selection of questionnaire participants, the study employed simple random sampling to ensure that every student had an equal opportunity to be chosen. This approach guarantees an unbiased representation of the entire ninth-grade cohort

(Israel, 1992). To determine a sufficient sample size from the study population, the Taro Yamane sampling formula (1974) was utilized, with N designated as 264, representing the total number of ninth-grade students.

The formula is expressed as follows:  $n = N / (1 + Ne^2)$  (3-1)

Where N is the population and e is the sample error. The marginal error was maintained at 5%. Substituting the values in the formula, the following is the computed sample size.

$$n = 264 / (1 + 264 * 0.05^2)$$

$$n \approx 159$$

$$n = 160 \text{ students}$$

For the interview participants, purposive sampling (Creswell, 2011) was refined to select participants from a pool of volunteers. This approach involved carefully choosing 12 students who expressed willingness to participate and whose academic performance spanned the entire spectrum of English proficiency levels. The selection criteria were directly tied to their English exam scores, meticulously grouping them into three categories: A (70-100), B (50-69.9), and C (0-49.9). This strategy ensured a representative sample from each performance tier, allowing for an in-depth exploration of the diverse experiences and perceptions related to social-emotional competencies in English learning. By selecting volunteers across these stratified groups, the study aimed to capture a broad range of insights, enriching the qualitative depth and relevance of the findings.

### 3.3 Research Instruments

This study employed two primary instruments: a questionnaire and a set of semi-structured interview questions. The questionnaire was used to collect quantitative data, while the interviews served as a supplementary source of qualitative information.

### 3.3.1 The Questionnaire

The questionnaire was used to measure students' scores on social-emotional competencies and English learning activities comprising a total of 54 items. It was divided into three parts: 1) demographic information (items 1-4); 2) social-emotional competencies (items 5 – 44); and 3) English learning activities (items 45 – 54).

The first part of the questionnaire was the demographic for the participant's name, class, gender and age.

The second part measures students' social-emotional competencies under various classroom learning activities incorporated in English language learning. In the second part, the items were rated using a 5-point Likert scale, with 1 indicating 'strongly disagree,' 5 signifying 'strongly agree,' and 3 representing 'neutral.' The items were a modification of the Social Emotional Questionnaire (SECQ), which originally had 25 items (5 items per element), by adding three items per element and twisting the item to address social-emotional competencies and English learning activities.

To ensure cultural appropriateness and validity, careful consideration has been given to various measures for assessing students' social-emotional skills. These options encompass the Delaware Social-Emotional Competency Scale (DSECS-S) (Mantz, Bear, Yang, & Harris, 2016), the Emotional and Social Competency Inventory—University Edition (ESCI-U) ("Emotional and Social Competency Inventory (Self-assessment Questionnaire)," n.d.), the Wong and Law Emotional Intelligence Scale (WLEIS) (Wong & Law, 2002), and the Social Emotional Competence Questionnaire (SECQ) (Zhou & Ee, 2012). The final questionnaire used in this study was the Social Emotional Competence Questionnaire (SECQ) (Zhou & Ee, 2012), thoughtfully integrated with elements specific to English learning. This integrative approach not only ensured a comprehensive evaluation of the social-emotional competencies of middle school students but also contextualized these competencies within the framework of English language learning. To provide a clear visual reference, Table 3.1 illustrates the specific items and their integration with English learning elements.

## Part II Social-emotional Competencies

Table 3.1 Illustration of the Social-emotional Competence Questionnaire

Items	Scale				
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	5	4	3	2	1
<b>Self-awareness:</b>					
5. I know what I am thinking and doing while describing the picture or image to the class.	5	4	3	2	1
6. When I encounter unfamiliar words or phrases during listening comprehension, I can accurately recognize my feelings of confusion or curiosity.	5	4	3	2	1
7. I recognize my strengths in understanding specific types of content during listening comprehension activities.	5	4	3	2	1
8. In a dialogue in pair work, compared to my partner, I can identify what my strengths are.	5	4	3	2	1
9. In a discussion in group work, compared to my peers, I can identify what my strengths are.	5	4	3	2	1
10. I understand why I choose certain vocabulary or grammar structures in my English writing.	5	4	3	2	1
11. During English listening exercises, I'm aware when I'm feeling frustrated or confused.	5	4	3	2	1
12. I understand how I feel when I'm writing independently.	5	4	3	2	1
<b>Social Awareness:</b>					
13. While participating in choral reading, I respect the reading pace and tones of my peers, acknowledging that everyone has their unique style.	5	4	3	2	1
14. When doing pair work, I understand that some classmates may have difficulty speaking fluently due to nervousness or lack of confidence.	5	4	3	2	1
15. If a classmate is sad, angry, or happy while we are playing SEWO group competition games, I know what they are thinking.	5	4	3	2	1

Table 3.1 Illustration of the Social-emotional Competence Questionnaire (Cont.)

Items	Scale				
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	5	4	3	2	1
16. I understand that in role-play activities, different people have varying interpretations and reactions to the content of a dialogue.	5	4	3	2	1
17. If a friend is upset about their individual writing activities, I can understand why they have this kind of feeling.	5	4	3	2	1
18. When watching English videos, I can tell how the characters are feeling by the way they look.	5	4	3	2	1
19. If a classmate is frustrated with an individual writing task, I can tell the reason why.	5	4	3	2	1
20. If a classmate is upset during an English cloze reading practice, I have a pretty good idea why.	5	4	3	2	1
<b>Self-management:</b>					
21. When doing listening comprehension exercises, even if I don't understand, I can still try to control my feelings, such as frustration or sadness.	5	4	3	2	1
22. In pair work, even if my friend says something I think is wrong or I disagree with, I stay calm and talk nicely.	5	4	3	2	1
23. When competing with others in SEEWOW games during English class, I can stay calm.	5	4	3	2	1
24. When I am reporting in front of the whole class after a group discussion, I try my best to stay calm and try to control my nervousness.	5	4	3	2	1
25. When I encounter challenges in individual writing, I can stay calm and overcome anxiety.	5	4	3	2	1
26. I can stay calm during challenging English-speaking exercises, such as describing a picture in front of the class.	5	4	3	2	1

Table 3.1 Illustration of the Social-emotional Competence Questionnaire (Cont.)

Items	Scale				
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	5	4	3	2	1
27. I stay calm when I make mistakes in English presentations.	5	4	3	2	1
28. I can control my feelings when receiving unexpected feedback on my English group assignments.	5	4	3	2	1
<b>Relationship Management:</b>					
29. I will always apologize if I unintentionally hurt a classmate's feelings during an English group discussion.	5	4	3	2	1
30. I always try to comfort my classmates when they struggle with English listening comprehension.	5	4	3	2	1
31. I try not to criticize my classmates when we have disagreements about assignments in English group work.	5	4	3	2	1
32. I am tolerant of my classmates' mistakes in English pair work discussions.	5	4	3	2	1
33. I stand up for myself in English class without putting others down while having discussions in English group work.	5	4	3	2	1
34. I can always calm down quickly when I am very angry.	5	4	3	2	1
35. I am able to control my temper and handle difficulties during English group discussions.	5	4	3	2	1
36. When I evaluate others' performances, I think before I talk.	5	4	3	2	1
37. When my answers represent my group, I think carefully before responding to ensure I maximize points for the group.	5	4	3	2	1
38. I can vote for the representative who will best present our group's work for a higher score in the group activities.	5	4	3	2	1

Table 3.1 Illustration of the Social-emotional Competence Questionnaire (Cont.)

Items	Scale				
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	5	4	3	2	1
<b>Responsible Decision-Making:</b>					
39. When it's my turn to assign tasks for group activities, I will allocate tasks based on the strengths and weaknesses of different students.	5	4	3	2	1
40. In group discussions, I weigh different opinions and support what's best for the group.	5	4	3	2	1
41. In group work, I actively listen to all viewpoints and weigh the pros and cons of each before giving the opinion most beneficial for the group's score.	5	4	3	2	1
42. When picking a group for English class tasks, I choose one where we can learn and get along well.	5	4	3	2	1
43. When suggesting a story or topic for class discussion, I consider what most students might find interesting.	5	4	3	2	1
44. When doing an independent writing assignment, I will consider what would be better for me, such as what vocabulary or sentences to use that would allow me to complete the task more successfully.	5	4	3	2	1

The third part of the questionnaire identified students' preferences for English learning activities. In this part, the 10 items related to English learning activities were also rated on a 5-point scale, ranging from 1 ('Not at All Appealing') to 5 ('Extremely Appealing'). A significant aspect of the questionnaire's design involved incorporating findings from the "9th Grade English Teacher Teaching Activities Survey: Classroom Activity Frequency Checklist." This survey gathered input from all the five ninth-grade English teachers, who rated the frequency of various teaching activities they employed. The top ten activities, listening comprehension, pair work, choral reading, SEWO

games, cloze reading, individual writing, group work, show and tell, video watching, and role play, were selected based on the mode pattern of these ratings. They represented the most popular and frequently used practices in ninth-grade English language teaching. For instance, if an activity received the highest frequency rating of '5 - always' most often among the teachers, it was included in the top ten.

The survey also sought recommendations for additional activities. Although only one teacher suggested "self-correcting," this activity was not included in the questionnaire due to its selection criteria based on the predominant mode frequency rating, ensuring a focus on the most common instructional practices. Further details of the survey can be found in Appendix A. Table 3.2 below details part three of the questionnaire - English learning activities.

Table 3.2 Illustration of the English Learning Activity Preference Questionnaire  
**Part III English Learning Activities**

Items	Scale				
	Extrem ely Appeali ng	Quite Appeali ng	Neutral	Slightly Unappe aling	Not at All Appeali ng
45. Listening comprehension	5	4	3	2	1
46. Pair work	5	4	3	2	1
47. Choral reading	5	4	3	2	1
48. SEEWo games	5	4	3	2	1
49. Cloze reading	5	4	3	2	1
50. Individual writing	5	4	3	2	1
51. Group work	5	4	3	2	1
52. Show and tell	5	4	3	2	1
53. Video watching	5	4	3	2	1
54. Role play	5	4	3	2	1

### 3.3.2 Semi-structured Interview

The semi-structured interviews were crafted to gather insights into students' opinions and experiences with different English learning activities. This interview format was chosen for its flexibility, allowing for spontaneous exploration of the students' perspectives and facilitating an adaptable dialogue based on their individual responses. The format allowed for both the exploration of predetermined areas of interest and the flexibility to adapt the conversation in real-time based on the responses of the participants (Adams, 2015).

The interviews were methodically structured to probe into students' in-depth reflections on their English learning journey. Questions were crafted to capture both general sentiments and specific emotional responses within English learning contexts. This flexible interview design encouraged an organic dialogue where students could share openly and interviewers could explore emergent themes. For a detailed view of the interview design, see Table 3.3 below.

Table 3.3 Illustration of Interview Questions

No.	Interview Questions
1	How do you generally feel about different English learning activities?
2	Can you tell me about a time when you felt happy in an English class?
3	Can you share with me an experience when you felt unhappy during an English class?
4	Can you recall a challenging experience you had during an English class?
5	Can you describe a time when you were particularly proud in English class?

### 3.4 Validity and Reliability

Three experts were invited to review the questionnaire items and the interview questions in this study. They validated the research instruments using the index of item-objective congruence (IOC) measure to assess whether the research instrument matched

the research objectives. The experts were from different universities in Thailand. The IOC score ranges from -1 to +1, which was used to mark the surety and confidence of the instrument. A score of +1 implies the experts are sure and the instruments match the objectives, while a -1 implies experts find the item does not match the objectives. The formula for calculating IOC is given where  $r$  is the individual expert score, and  $n$  is the total number of experts. If the IOC score is less than 0.67 (2/3), the instruments need to be revised, while a higher score implies satisfaction, and they can be reserved (Jusoh , Zubairi, & Badrasawi, 2018).

The reliability of research instruments is primarily concerned with the stability and consistency of the collected results and the repeatability of the research results. The measurement scales are tested for internal consistency reliability to assure the researchers that the scale measures the same variable construct. Cronbach's Alpha coefficient was utilized for reliability since the survey questionnaire is inscribed on a Likert scale measurement. The reliability test on the pilot study was informed as follows: if the alpha coefficient is greater or equal to 0.6, then the instrument is considered reliable. Values below 0.5 denote low reliability, and those above 0.9 imply excellent reliability.

### **3.5 Data Collection Methods**

Data on Chinese middle school students' social-emotional skills, English learning activities, English proficiency scores, and demographic background was collected using a comprehensive approach as part of this research study. In the procedure, structured questionnaires and interviews were administered.

Following the consent from the appropriate authorities of the selected school, Duyun Xiangcai School. The goal and methodology of the study were explained to school officials and related lead teachers. Data collection was administered at the set time with the help of the lead teachers from the target school.

### **3.5.1 Questionnaire Data Collection**

A culturally appropriate and validated testing method was used. The questionnaire provided in Appendix C was used to collect data on social-emotional competencies and English learning activities among students. The researcher made necessary revisions to fit this study's objectives and the Chinese cultural context. A thorough cultural adaptation process was carried out when the selected scale had to be adjusted to the Chinese cultural environment. This entailed back-translation and linguistic translation to ensure that the scale's elements and language would be acceptable for the intended audience and simple for them to understand.

A sample of 30 middle school students from a public middle school was selected to pilot the modified scale before the main data collection phase. This pilot study aimed to assess the questionnaire's clarity, comprehensibility, and dependability. Based on feedback from pilot participants, it was confirmed that the questionnaire aligned with cultural requirements and was well-adapted to the Chinese context, requiring no further amendments. With the help of the lead teachers, the questionnaires were distributed to 160 ninth graders in Duyun Xiangcai School during the evening self-study sessions. The lead teachers took photos of the questionnaires and sent them to the researcher for further action.

### **3.5.2 Interview Data Collection**

The researcher conducted one-on-one face-to-face interviews with students with the consent of the lead teachers and the students. The interviews were recorded on cell phones, and the researcher meticulously transcribed the recordings into the written texts. Following transcription, the researcher organized and summarized the transcribed data to create a comprehensive document that was securely saved for analysis and reference purposes.

### 3.5.3 Students' English Grades Data Collection

Regarding English language performance, the semester final examination score data were collected from the WeChat faculty group with the school's permission, as the researcher is an employee at this school and has access to this score data through faculty channels.

The most recent English examination scores, divided into three levels - A (70 to 100 points), B (50 to 69.9 points), and C (0 to 49.9 points) - derived from the English examination administered in July 2023, served as the foundational data set for evaluating English academic success (See Table 3.4).

Table 3.4 English Grades Classification

Grade Level	Score Range
A	70 - 100
B	50 - 69.9
C	0 - 49.9

This examination was organized centrally by the Duyun City Education Bureau, and all middle schools within the city needed to participate. The examination papers were meticulously crafted by experts in English education fields invited by the Education Bureau. This examination is considered a valuable source of objective and comparative data on students' English learning outcomes. The examination across the city is assumed to provide consistent and reliable information for evaluating students' English language proficiency to ensure a comprehensive assessment. Furthermore, as part of our commitment to fairness and accessibility, measures were implemented to accommodate the specific needs of students with individual requirements or linguistic barriers. In this study, these scores were used to group the volunteer interviewees only and the students were aware of the reason why.

### 3.5.4 Data Collection for English Learning Activities in Use

Taking advantage of WeChat's widespread use and convenience, the survey form was distributed to all five ninth-grade teachers. This approach guaranteed a quick and effective distribution and collection process. Upon receipt of the survey, the teachers were instructed to tick the relevant frequency scores based on their experiences. After completing the form, they promptly returned it to the researcher via WeChat.

Table 3.5 Approaches Used to Collect Data

Data Collection Methods				
Data	Questionnaire Data	Interview Data	English Grades Data	Survey Data Collection
Methods	Lead teachers distribute and collect paper questionnaires in class.	The researcher conducts interviews via WeChat.	The researcher collects grade reports from the WeChat faculty group.	The researcher distributes and collects survey forms via WeChat.

## 3.6 Data Analysis

The quantitative data from the social-emotional competency questionnaires were analyzed using statistical software. The data were analyzed as follows.

### 3.6.1 Questionnaire Data Analysis Procedures

The gathered data was processed before the analysis was conducted. This procedure includes cleaning the data set, addressing missing data, and ensuring all the data is there. The correction of any mistakes or discrepancies will guarantee the correctness and dependability of the data.

Step 1. Descriptive Statistics - The data gathered from the demographic questionnaire, language proficiency tests, and social-emotional competency assessment was summarized using descriptive statistics (Kaliyadan & Kulkarni, 2019). Means, standard deviations, and frequency distributions were computed in order to provide

participants with a complete picture of their social-emotional skills and English learning activities.

Step 2. SEC Analysis - The study's evaluation of Social-Emotional Competencies (SEC) among middle school students involved two key analytical steps. Firstly, overall competency levels were gauged using means and standard deviations for each of the five competency elements. Secondly, a detailed examination of individual items within each element was conducted using mode analysis, offering specific insights into the various aspects of students' SEC in English learning contexts.

Step 3. English Learning Activities Preference Analysis - The mode was employed to identify the most frequently selected preference level for each activity. This approach was chosen as it effectively highlights the most common student preferences, providing clear insights into which activities are most and least favored. Second,

### 3.6.2 Interview Data Analysis Procedures

To quantify the extent of qualitative data amassed through interviews, Table 3.6 details the duration and corresponding transcript length for each interviewee. The interviews varied from a concise four minutes to an elaborate six minutes, with the transcribed material generally equating to one page, and exceptionally two pages for the most extensive dialogue.

Table 3.6 Interview Duration and Transcript Length

Student No.	Interview Time Duration	Pages of transcript
1	05:05	1
2	04:19	1
3	05:13	1
4	04:04	1
5	03:49	1
6	05:05	1

Table 3.6 Interview Duration and Transcript Length (Cont.)

<b>Student No.</b>	<b>Interview Time Duration</b>	<b>Pages of transcript</b>
7	03:48	1
8	04:16	1
9	04:13	1
10	03:42	1
11	04:18	1
12	05:44	2

Step 1. Data Preparation - Transcription of the audio recordings was the primary step, ensuring a textual representation of the verbal exchanges. This allowed for the synthesis of the participants' verbal responses with their demographic and questionnaire data, facilitating a holistic view of each individual's perspectives. The transcripts were reviewed multiple times to capture initial interpretations and to acquaint the researcher with the data's depth.

Step 2. Coding and Creating the Analysis Framework - An open coding technique was applied using digital tools to identify emergent themes and sentiments. This step involved a meticulous examination of each transcript, highlighting recurring phrases, sentiments, and narratives. These initial codes were aggregated into broader categories that formed the analytical framework, illustrating the interconnectedness of individual insights with overarching themes.

Step 3. Data Reduction and Thematic Analysis - The central themes were refined through a process of data reduction, prioritizing the most significant and representative elements of the narratives. This stage entailed the extraction of poignant quotes and exemplars that effectively demonstrated the themes' essence, providing tangible illustrations of the participants' experiences.

Step 4. Interpretation and Synthesis - Interpretation of patterns and themes according to frequencies in reporting, reflecting on their implications and contradictions. Then, the findings were discussed in relation to the research objectives.

### 3.7 Ethical Considerations

Prior to commencing the research and any data collection activities, ethical approval was sought and subsequently granted by the Ethics Review Board of Rangsit University. The certificate of approval (number: COA.No.RSUERB2023-188), as presented in Appendix B, ensured adherence to ethical standards and allowed for the formal initiation of data collection.

The consent statement is a crucial component of conducting empirical research. It informs the study participants about the general objectives, benefits, and potential risks of the research prior to the commencement of the study and the data collection exercise. Participants were free to enroll or opt out at any moment without penalty. All data were securely stored, accessible only to approved researchers, to preserve participant confidentiality. To safeguard the identities of the participants, personal identifiers were removed or pseudonyms were utilized. Data were stored in password-protected electronic files, while physical documents were kept in secured cabinets.

The data collected in this study were used exclusively for research purposes. To protect the identity of specific participants, any published conclusions or reports only used aggregated and anonymized data. The anonymity and privacy of the participants were rigorously protected throughout the data presentation process.

## **Chapter 4**

### **Research Results and Findings**

The chapter delineated the empirical findings from the quantitative and qualitative research. Initially, it outlines demographic profiles and questionnaire statistics. Subsequently, it examines the social-emotional competencies of Chinese middle students and their perspectives on English learning activities. The chapter culminates with a concise synthesis of the key outcomes.

#### **4.1 Descriptive Statistics of the Research Results**

A modified SECQ questionnaire was utilized to collect data about the social-emotional competencies among middle school students when engaging in English learning activities. The study included a sample of 160 middle school students who were randomly selected. The questionnaire investigated students' age and gender and asked for previous performance in English tests. The response rate was 100% since the data collection was controlled to ensure every participant filled out and returned a fully answered questionnaire. The total responses collected were 160 (N) from a sample of 160 students. Demographic data were restricted to include only student's age and gender since other demographic data were not relevant to this study. In addition, it also ensured that the study adhered to the anonymity of participants. The results of the age and gender of the grade 9 students who were included in the study were presented in Table 4.1 below.

Table 4.1 Demographic Data

Age	Total No. of Participants	Male Students	Female Students	Percentage
13	8	4	4	5.00%
14	37	17	20	23.10%
15	75	43	32	46.90%
16	39	26	13	24.40%
17	1	1	0	0.60%
Total	160	91	69	100%
		56.90%	43.10%	

Table 4.1 shows that among the participants, 56.9% were male students and 43.1% were female students. Most of the respondents were aged 15 years and above, accounting for 71.9% ( $46.9\% + 24.4\% + 0.6\%$ ) of the total respondents. The gender composition for each age is also presented. The majority of participants were male students aged 15 years. The demographic data show that the majority of grade 9 students in this school were between 14 and 16 years old. The minimum age was 13 years, while the maximum age was recorded as 17 years.

Students' grades collected showed how Chinese middle school students performed in the English language, which would inform their preference for certain activities over others. Table 4.2 below presents the results on average grades for middle school students.

Table 4.2 Description of Students' Grades in English Examination (Previous Exam)

Details	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Grades	160	49.66	17.24

Table 4.2 shows that the average scores for the previous examination were 49.66/100. This shows that most students perform below average in English exams. On average, the results show that most students score less than 50% on the final English test. The standard parameter implies significant gaps in scores from the average value.

Performance in English language exams was found to differ across genders. Table 4.3 presents the performance average for each gender.

Table 4.3 Description of Students' Grades According to Gender

	<b>1=male, 2=female</b>	<b>Mean Grade</b>
<b>Gender</b>	1	47.8
	2	52.1

Based on gender performance, the table above shows the mean grades for female and male students. Female students had a mean of 52.1, while male students had a mean of 47.8. This implies that female students were more proficient in the English language compared to male students in Chinese middle schools.

English learning activities' preference data were collected on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being never and 5 being always preference of the learning activity. The summary of the results about students' preferences is presented in the following table.

Table 4.4 Summary of Results on English Learning Activity Preference by Students

<b>Activities</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>
1. Listening comprehension	3.00	0.95
2. Pair work	2.79	1.14
3. Choral reading	3.29	1.13
4. SEEWO games	3.65	1.15
5. Cloze reading	2.88	1.02
6. Individual writing	3.11	1.11
7. Group work	3.13	1.16
8. Show and tell	3.18	1.26
9. Video watching	4.28	1.04
10. Role play	3.53	1.29

Table 4.4 above presents the summary of activity preferences among middle school Chinese students. This research selected ten activities based on what the teachers used frequently and included these activities in the formatted SECQ. These ten activities included listening comprehension, pair work, choral reading, SEEWO games, cloze reading, individual writing, group work, show and tell, video watching and role play. Among these games, video watching was the most preferred among middle school students, with a Likert score average of 4.28, followed by SEEWO games and role play. Activities such as pair work and cloze reading were least preferred by Chinese middle school students, with means of 2.79 and 2.88, respectively. The results also show that other activities like choral reading, show and tell, individual writing and group work are moderately preferred, with average scores of 3.29, 3.18, 3.11, and 3.13, respectively. Activities with low mean values indicate that their preferences are significantly low in affecting their social-emotional competencies.

## **4.2 Results of Research Question 1: What are the social-emotional competencies among middle school students in China?**

The main section of the questionnaire included eight items for each of the five emotional competence elements. These items were designed to collect information about the students' understanding of their social-emotional awareness when engaging in English learning activities. The data were collected on a 5-parameter scale, with 1 implying strongly disagree and 5 indicating strongly agree. The results from the questionnaire are presented in the following section in two distinct sections, with the first one presenting the overall means for each of the five social-emotional competence elements and the second part presenting results for each item per element.

Table 4.5 Social-Emotional Competence Results

Item	Mean	Standard Deviation
Self-awareness	3.45	0.65
Social Awareness	3.52	0.56
Self-management	3.29	0.61
Relationship Skills	3.58	0.54
Responsible Decision-making	3.66	0.60

Table 4.5 shows that, on average, most students were aware of their social-emotional competencies, although at low levels. The means for all elements are above the average level, with responsible decision-making being the most comprehended social-emotional competence among Chinese middle school students, with a mean of 3.66 (0.60). Relationship skills and social awareness come second and third, with means and standard deviations of 3.58 (0.54) and 3.52 (0.56), respectively. These results show that self-management and self-awareness were least developed by middle school students in China. Self-awareness comes fourth in this order with a mean of 3.45 (0.65), while self-management seems to be a problem with a mean of 3.29 (0.61). These findings imply that middle school Chinese students were always aware of their social emotions when engaging in English learning activities.

The specific results of each element in English learning activities are presented in the following sections. To accurately identify the most frequent response, mode was included as a key statistic as it explain the most responded choice on the Likert scale (1 stands for strongly disagree, 2 for disagree, 3 for neutral, 4 for agree, and 5 for strongly agree). By identifying the mode, the specific aspects of English learning activities that resonate most with the majority of students can be identified. This approach simplifies the interpretation of data, allowing for clear insights into student preferences and tendencies, which are essential for tailoring educational strategies and interventions.

### 4.2.1 Self-awareness

The influence of self-awareness when engaging in English learning activities was investigated on 8 items. The results and summaries of each item are presented in the following table.

Table 4.6 Results on Self-Awareness

Item	Mode	Frequency and Percent Distribution
1. I know what I am thinking and doing while describing the picture or image to the class awareness	3	1 = 3 (1.9%) 2 = 13 (8.1%) 3 = 68 (42.5%) 4 = 56 (35.0%) 5 = 19 (11.9%)
2. When I encounter unfamiliar words or phrases during listening comprehension, I can accurately recognize my feelings of confusion or curiosity.	4	1 = 4 (2.5%) 2 = 14 (8.8%) 3 = 52 (32.5%) 4 = 59 (36.9%) 5 = 31 (19.4%)
3. I recognize my strengths in understanding specific types of content during listening comprehension activities.	3	1 = 5 (3.1%) 2 = 22 (13.8%) 3 = 69 (43.1%) 4 = 45 (28.1%) 5 = 19 (11.9%)
4. In a dialogue in pair work, compared to my partner, I can identify what my strengths are.	3	1 = 3 (1.9%) 2 = 26 (16.3%) 3 = 68 (42.5%) 4 = 44 (27.5%) 5 = 19 (11.9%)
5. In a discussion in group work, compared to my peers, I can identify what my strengths are.	3	1 = 6 (3.8%) 2 = 28 (17.5%) 3 = 70 (43.8%) 4 = 43 (26.9%) 5 = 13 (8.1%)
6. I understand why I choose certain vocabulary or grammar structures in my English writing.	3	1 = 11 (6.9%) 2 = 38 (23.8%) 3 = 63 (39.4%) 4 = 35 (21.9%) 5 = 13 (8.1%)

Table 4.6 Results on Self-Awareness (Cont.)

Item	Mode	Frequency and Percent Distribution
7. During English listening exercises, I'm aware when I'm feeling frustrated or confused.	4	1 = 1 (0.6%) 2 = 5 (3.1%) 3 = 44 (27.5%) 4 = 59 (36.9%) 5 = 51 (31.9%)
8. I understand how I feel when I'm writing independently.	3	1 = 3 (1.9%) 2 = 15 (9.4%) 3 = 60 (37.5%) 4 = 54 (33.8%) 5 = 28 (17.5%)

In Table 4.6, the mode serves as a crucial indicator of the predominant level of self-awareness among students in various English learning activities. Items 2 and 7, with a mode of 4, suggest that a significant portion of students agreed or strongly agreed with their awareness in specific contexts. Specifically, 36.9% of students agreed that they could recognize their feelings of confusion or curiosity during listening comprehension. Similarly, 36.9% of students were aware of their feelings of frustration or confusion during English listening exercises, with an additional 31.9% strongly agreeing to this sentiment. These responses indicate a high level of self-awareness in auditory learning activities.

Items 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 8 have a mode of 3, indicating a general neutrality among students regarding their self-awareness. For instance, 42.5% of students sometimes recognized their thoughts and actions while describing pictures, suggesting a moderate level of self-reflection in visual and descriptive tasks. In pair work dialogues, group discussions, and understanding specific content during listening comprehension, a similar trend was observed with modes of 3. These results reflect an average self-awareness level in collaborative and content-specific activities. In individual writing tasks, both understanding vocabulary choices and recognizing feelings during writing show a mode of 3. This implies that while students were somewhat aware of their linguistic choices and emotional states, there is room for growth in developing deeper self-awareness in solitary academic tasks.

In conclusion, Table 4.6 reveals that students generally exhibit a moderate to high level of self-awareness across different English learning activities. Higher awareness is particularly evident in activities involving listening comprehension, while a moderate level of awareness was observed in visual, descriptive, and individual tasks.

#### 4.2.2 Social-Awareness

The results of how English learning activities shape student social awareness are provided as follows.

Table 4.7 Results on Social-Awareness

Item	Mode	Frequency and Percent Distribution
1. While participating in choral reading, I respect the reading pace and tones of my peers, acknowledging that everyone has their unique style.	4	1 = 1 (0.6%) 2 = 4 (2.5%) 3 = 54 (33.8%) 4 = 70 (43.8%) 5 = 31 (19.4%)
2. When doing pair work, I understand that some classmates may have difficulty speaking fluently due to nervousness or lack of confidence.	4	1 = 5 (3.1%) 2 = 2 (1.3%) 3 = 46 (28.7%) 4 = 68 (42.5%) 5 = 39 (24.4%)
3. If a classmate is sad, angry, or happy while we are playing SEEW O group competition games, I know what they are thinking.	4	1 = 4 (2.5%) 2 = 15 (9.4%) 3 = 42 (26.3%) 4 = 63 (39.4%) 5 = 36 (22.5%)
4. I understand that in role-play activities, different people have varying interpretations and reactions to the content of a dialogue.	4	1 = 2 (1.3%) 2 = 5 (3.1%) 3 = 51 (31.9%) 4 = 75 (46.9%) 5 = 27 (16.9%)
5. If a friend is upset about their individual writing activities, I can understand why they have this kind of feeling.	3	1 = 2 (1.3%) 2 = 7 (4.4%) 3 = 67 (41.9%) 4 = 53 (33.1%) 5 = 31 (19.4%)

Table 4.7 Results on Social-Awareness (Cont.)

Item	Mode	Frequency and Percent Distribution
6. When watching English videos, I can tell how the characters are feeling by the way they look.	3	1 = 4 (2.5%) 2 = 15 (9.4%) 3 = 73 (45.6%) 4 = 47 (29.4%) 5 = 21 (13.1%)
7. If a classmate is frustrated with an individual writing task, I can tell the reason why.	3	1 = 12 (7.5%) 2 = 37 (23.1%) 3 = 78 (48.8%) 4 = 25 (15.6%) 5 = 8 (5.0%)
8. If a classmate is upset during an English cloze reading practice, I have a pretty good idea why.	3	1 = 9 (5.6%) 2 = 26 (16.3%) 3 = 72 (45.0%) 4 = 43 (26.9%) 5 = 10 (6.3%)

Items 1, 2, 3, and 4 in Table 4.7 have a mode of 4, indicating that most students agreed they exhibit social awareness in various English learning activities. Specifically, during choral reading, 43.8% of the students respected the unique reading styles of their peers, suggesting a high level of empathy. Similarly, in pair work, 42.5% of the students understood their classmates' difficulties in speaking fluently, demonstrating awareness of others' emotional states. In SEWO group competition games, 39.4% of the students could discern classmates' emotions such as sadness, anger, or happiness, indicating a robust understanding of peers' feelings in a competitive setting. Additionally, in role-play activities, 46.9% of the students recognized that different people had diverse interpretations and reactions, showcasing an appreciation for varying perspectives.

Items 5, 6, 7, and 8, with a mode of 3, reflect a moderate level of social awareness. 41.9% of the students sometimes understood the reasons behind their friends' feelings about individual writing tasks. Similarly, 45.6% of the students could interpret characters' emotions in English videos, and 48.8% understood classmates' frustrations with individual writing tasks. For students upset during cloze reading practices, 45.0% had a fair idea of the reasons, suggesting a developing sense of social insight in these scenarios.

In summary, the data from Table 4.7 shows that students generally exhibit strong social awareness in group-based activities, with an understanding of peer emotions and communication styles. However, there is room for growth in individual tasks where students show moderate awareness.

### 4.2.3 Self-management

Table 4.8 Results on Self-Management

Item	Mode	Frequency and Percent Distribution
1. When doing listening comprehension exercises, even if I don't understand, I can still try to control my feelings, such as frustration or sadness.	4	1 = 4 (2.5%) 2 = 16 (10.0%) 3 = 46 (28.7%) 4 = 68 (42.5%) 5 = 26 (16.3%)
2. In pair work, even if my friend says something I think is wrong or I disagree with, I stay calm and talk nicely.	4	1 = 0 (0%) 2 = 10 (6.3%) 3 = 62 (38.8%) 4 = 64 (40.0%) 5 = 24 (15.0%)
3. When competing with others in SEEWo games during English class, I can stay calm.	3	1 = 5 (3.1%) 2 = 16 (10.0%) 3 = 77 (48.1%) 4 = 46 (28.7%) 5 = 16 (10.0%)
4. When I am reporting in front of the whole class after a group discussion, I try my best to stay calm and try to control my nervousness.	3	1 = 16 (10.0%) 2 = 15 (9.4%) 3 = 63 (39.4%) 4 = 53 (33.1%) 5 = 13 (8.1%)
5. When I encounter challenges in individual writing, I can stay calm and overcome anxiety.	3	1 = 8 (5.0%) 2 = 22 (13.8%) 3 = 65 (40.6%) 4 = 49 (30.6%) 5 = 16 (10.0%)
6. I can stay calm during challenging English-speaking exercises, such as describing a picture in front of the class.	2	1 = 11 (6.9%) 2 = 75 (46.9%) 3 = 34 (21.3%) 4 = 30 (18.8%) 5 = 10 (6.3%)

Table 4.8 Results on Self-Management (Cont.)

Item	Mode	Frequency and Percent Distribution
7. I stay calm when I make mistakes in English presentations.	2	1 = 10 (6.3%) 2 = 72 (45.0%) 3 = 40 (25.0%) 4 = 34 (21.3%) 5 = 4 (2.5%)
8. I can control my feelings when receiving unexpected feedback on my English group assignments.	3	1 = 1 (0.6%) 2 = 15 (9.4%) 3 = 76 (47.5%) 4 = 51 (31.9%) 5 = 17 (10.6%)

Table 4.8 highlights middle school students' self-management skills in English learning contexts, showing notable emotional regulation variations. Items 1 and 2 have a mode of 4, indicate that most students agreed they can manage their emotions effectively during listening comprehension exercises and pair work. Specifically, 42.5% of students in listening exercises and 40.0% in pair work agreed that they maintain composure, even in potentially frustrating or disagreeable situations.

Items 3, 5, and 8, with a mode of 3, reflect a more neutral stance towards self-management. In competitive SEEWO games, 48.1% of students felt neutral about their ability to stay calm. Similarly, 40.6% of students exhibited an average level of confidence in managing anxiety during individual writing challenges. When receiving unexpected feedback on group assignments, 47.5% of students showed a moderate level of emotional control, suggesting balanced resilience and adaptability.

Items 6 and 7, which have a mode of 2, reveal a lack of confidence in self-management during speaking activities and handling mistakes. A notable 46.9% of students disagreed that they stay calm during challenging speaking exercises, and 45.0% felt the same about maintaining composure when making mistakes in presentations. This points to areas where students might benefit from further support and strategies to build resilience and self-regulation skills.

In conclusion, while students display strong self-management skills in some areas, like listening comprehension and pair work, challenges remain in managing emotions during speaking activities and responding to errors. These insights can inform targeted educational strategies to enhance students' self-management capabilities, particularly in high-pressure or public speaking scenarios.

#### 4.2.4 Relationship Skills

Relationship skill items were found to be highly influenced by English learning activities, with the only challenge being calming down when they are very angry. The summary of the results is shown in the following table.

Table 4.9 Results on Relationship Skills

Item	Mode	Frequency and Percent Distribution
1. I will always apologize if I unintentionally hurt a classmate's feelings during an English group discussion.	4	1 = 2 (1.3%) 2 = 7 (4.4%) 3 = 43 (26.9%) 4 = 61 (38.1%) 5 = 47 (29.4%)
2. I always try to comfort my classmates when they struggle with English listening comprehension.	4	1 = 3 (1.9%) 2 = 13 (8.1%) 3 = 59 (36.9%) 4 = 63 (39.4%) 5 = 22 (13.8%)
3. I try not to criticize my classmates when we have disagreements about assignments in English group work.	4	1 = 1 (0.6%) 2 = 3 (1.9%) 3 = 62 (38.8%) 4 = 68 (42.5%) 5 = 26 (16.3%)
4. I am tolerant of my classmates' mistakes in English pair work discussions.	3	1 = 0 (0.0%) 2 = 12 (7.5%) 3 = 65 (40.6%) 4 = 59 (36.9%) 5 = 24 (15.0%)

Table 4.9 Results on Relationship Skills (Cont.)

Item	Mode	Frequency and Percent Distribution
5. I stand up for myself in English class without putting others down while having discussions in English group work.	4	1 = 1 (0.6%) 2 = 8 (5.0%) 3 = 56 (35.0%) 4 = 71 (44.4%) 5 = 24 (15.0%)
6. I can always calm down quickly when I am very angry.	3	1 = 8 (5.0%) 2 = 27 (16.9%) 3 = 69 (43.1%) 4 = 40 (25.0%) 5 = 16 (10.0%)
7. I am able to control my temper and handle difficulties during English group discussions.	3	1 = 2 (1.3%) 2 = 11 (6.9%) 3 = 76 (47.5%) 4 = 53 (33.1%) 5 = 18 (11.3%)
8. When I evaluate others' performances, I think before I talk.	3	1 = 1 (0.6%) 2 = 12 (7.5%) 3 = 71 (44.4%) 4 = 47 (29.4%) 5 = 29 (18.1%)

Table 4.9 shows different outcomes of relationship skill competencies among middle school Chinese students. Items 1, 2, 3, and 5, each with a mode of 4, indicate that most students agreed they possess strong relationship skills during English learning activities. Specifically, 38.1% of students agreed they always apologize if they hurt a classmate's feelings in group discussions. When classmates struggled with English listening comprehension, 39.4% of students tried to comfort them. In disagreements during group work, 42.5% of students strove not to criticize their classmates. Lastly, in the context of self-advocacy during group work, 44.4% of students stood up for themselves while respecting others. These responses suggest that a significant number of students are empathetic and considerate in their interactions, valuing positive and supportive communication with their peers.

Items 4, 6, 7, and 8, with a mode of 3, reflect a more moderate stance on relationship skills. For example, 40.6% of students felt neutral about being tolerant of

classmates' mistakes in pair work discussions. In managing anger, 43.1% of students were neutral about calming down quickly. Similarly, 47.5% of students felt they moderately control their temper during group discussions, and 44.4% were neutral about thinking before evaluating others' performances. These items indicate that while students generally maintain positive interactions, there is a noticeable variability in their ability to manage emotions and respond thoughtfully in challenging situations. The neutrality suggests an area for potential growth in emotional regulation and reflective communication skills.

In conclusion, the data from Table 4.9 highlights that students generally exhibit strong relationship skills, particularly in showing empathy and maintaining positive interactions. However, the moderate responses in some areas suggest the need for further development in emotional self-regulation and thoughtful communication, especially in emotionally charged or challenging situations.

#### 4.2.5 Responsible Decision-Making

The finding on the ability of students to make responsible decisions when engaging in English learning activities shows that students always make informed decisions. The results are shown in the table below.

Table 4.10 Results on Responsible Decision-Making

Item	Mode	Frequency and Percent Distribution
1. When my answers represent my group, I think carefully before responding to ensure I maximize points for the group.	4	1 = 0 (0%) 2 = 13 (8.1%) 3 = 56 (35.0%) 4 = 64 (40.0%) 5 = 27 (16.9%)
2. I can vote for the representative who will best present our group's work for a higher score in the group activities.	4	1 = 2 (1.3%) 2 = 5 (3.1%) 3 = 55 (34.4%) 4 = 65 (40.6%) 5 = 33 (20.6%)

Table 4.10 Results on Responsible Decision-Making (Cont.)

Item	Mode	Frequency and Percent Distribution
3. When it's my turn to assign tasks for group activities, I will allocate tasks based on the strengths and weaknesses of different students.	4	1 = 0 (0%) 2 = 15 (9.4%) 3 = 56 (35.0%) 4 = 64 (40.0%) 5 = 25 (15.6%)
4. In group discussions, I weigh different opinions and support what's best for the group.	3	1 = 1 (0.6%) 2 = 10 (6.3%) 3 = 61 (38.1%) 4 = 60 (37.5%) 5 = 28 (17.5%)
5. In group work, I actively listen to all viewpoints and weigh the pros and cons of each before giving the opinion most beneficial for the group's score	4	1 = 0 (0%) 2 = 6 (3.8%) 3 = 63 (39.4%) 4 = 69 (43.1%) 5 = 22 (13.8%)
6. When picking a group for English class tasks, I choose one where we can learn and get along well.	4	1 = 2 (1.3%) 2 = 7 (4.4%) 3 = 51 (31.9%) 4 = 65 (40.6%) 5 = 35 (21.9%)
7. When suggesting a story or topic for class discussion, I consider what most students might find interesting.	3	1 = 4 (2.5%) 2 = 18 (11.3%) 3 = 62 (38.8%) 4 = 49 (30.6%) 5 = 27 (16.9%)
8. When doing an independent writing assignment, I will consider what would be better for me, such as what vocabulary or sentences to use that would allow me to complete the task more successfully.	4	1 = 4 (2.5%) 2 = 8 (5.0%) 3 = 57 (35.6%) 4 = 63 (39.4%) 5 = 28 (17.5%)

Table 4.10 shows how different items of responsible decision-making competency during English learning activities are perceived by middle school students in China. Five items have high modes of 4, which implies most students agreed to be

socially conscious when engaging in English learning activities. Items 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, and 8 reveal that a majority of students agreed that they make informed and responsible decisions in various group-based English learning activities. For instance, 40.0% of students carefully considered their responses to maximize group points, and 40.6% selected group representatives thoughtfully for higher scores. Similarly, 40.0% assigned tasks based on the strengths and weaknesses of peers, and 43.1% actively listened and weighed opinions before expressing the most beneficial viewpoint for the group's score. When choosing groups for English class tasks, 40.6% prioritized learning and harmony, and 39.4% considered the best vocabulary and sentences for independent writing assignments. These results suggest that students are largely conscientious and deliberate in their decisions, aiming to enhance both group dynamics and task outcomes in English learning environments.

Two items have mode values of 3. Items 4 and 7, with a mode of 3, indicate a more moderate level of agreement regarding decision-making. For item 4, 38.1% of students sometimes weighed different opinions to support the group's best interests. Similarly, for item 7, 38.8% of students moderately considered the interests of most students when suggesting class discussion topics. These responses indicate that while there is a general tendency towards responsible decision-making, there is room for improvement in consistently applying thoughtful consideration to all group activities.

In conclusion, the data from Table 4.10 indicate that middle school students generally exhibit strong responsible decision-making skills in the context of English learning activities. They tend to make informed decisions that benefit the group and contribute positively to their learning environment. However, the moderate responses in some aspects suggest potential areas for enhancing consistency in decision-making, especially in scenarios requiring a balance of diverse opinions and individual preferences.

### 4.3 Results of Research Question 2: What are the opinions of middle school students in China regarding their English learning activities?

#### 4.3.1 Results of the Questionnaire: Preference for English Learning Activities

The data in Table 4.11 shows the preferences of middle school students in China for different English learning activities, interpreted through a 5-point Likert scale where 1 represents 'Not at All Appealing', 2 represents 'Slightly Unappealing', 3 represents 'Neutral', 4 represents 'Quite Appealing', and 5 represents 'Extremely Appealing'.

Table 4.11 Preference of English Learning Activities Among Middle School Students in China

Activity	Mode	Frequency and Percent Distribution
5. Listening comprehension	3	1: 8 (5.0%) 2: 37 (23.1%) 3: 73 (45.6%) 4: 31 (19.4%) 5: 11 (6.9%)
6. Pair work	3	1: 20 (12.5%) 2: 49 (30.6%) 3: 50 (31.3%) 4: 26 (16.3%) 5: 15 (9.4%)
7. Choral reading	4	1: 8 (5.0%) 2: 35 (21.9%) 3: 45 (28.1%) 4: 46 (28.7%) 5: 26 (16.3%)
8. SEEWo games	3	1: 7 (4.4%) 2: 16 (10.0%) 3: 52 (32.5%) 4: 36 (22.5%) 5: 49 (30.6%)

Table 4.11 Preference of English Learning Activities Among Middle School Students in China (Cont.)

Activity	Mode	Frequency and Percent Distribution
9. Cloze reading	3	1: 13 (8.1%) 2: 44 (27.5%) 3: 62 (38.8%) 4: 31 (19.4%) 5: 10 (6.3%)
10. Individual writing	3	1: 12 (7.5%) 2: 32 (20.0%) 3: 63 (39.4%) 4: 32 (20.0%) 5: 21 (13.1%)
11. Group work	3	1: 13 (8.1%) 2: 36 (22.5%) 3: 51 (31.9%) 4: 37 (23.1%) 5: 23 (14.4%)
12. Show and tell	3	1: 19 (11.9%) 2: 25 (15.6%) 3: 57 (35.6%) 4: 26 (16.3%) 5: 33 (20.6%)
13. Video watching	5	1: 5 (3.1%) 2: 6 (3.8%) 3: 21 (13.1%) 4: 35 (21.9%) 5: 93 (58.1%)
14. Role play	5	1: 15 (9.4%) 2: 16 (10.0%) 3: 50 (31.3%) 4: 27 (16.9%) 5: 52 (32.5%)

Based on the results in Table 4.11, the activity that stands out as the most highly preferred was video watching. With a mode of 5, "Always Appealing," and an overwhelming 58.1% of students selecting this frequency, it's clear that video watching captivated the majority of students, holding a special place as the top preferred English learning activity. The second most preferred activity, role play, also demonstrates

significant popularity, with a mode of 5, indicating "Extremely Appealing." The data show that 32.5% of students found role play to be consistently engaging, highlighting its effectiveness as an interactive and dynamic part of the English learning experience.

Choral reading exhibits a positive trend with a mode of 4 (Quite Appealing), where a substantial proportion of students (28.7%) found it often appealing, and 16.3% viewed it as extremely appealing. This suggests that choral reading is generally well-received and enjoyable for many students.

Activities like listening comprehension, pair work, SEEWO games, cloze reading, individual writing, group work, and show and tell were moderately appealing, with a mode of 3 (Neutral). Notably, SEEWO games and show and tell had a considerable percentage of students (30.6% and 20.6%, respectively) finding them extremely appealing, indicating pockets of higher engagement within these activities.

It's noteworthy that both pair work and cloze reading, despite having a neutral mode, showed a combined higher percentage of students leaning towards finding them unappealing (43.1% and 35.6%, respectively). These figures highlight a considerable portion of students who seldom found these activities engaging, indicating potential areas for pedagogical enhancement.

In conclusion, middle school students in China showed a clear preference for engaging activities like video watching and role play. While activities such as choral reading, SEEWO games, and show and tell also enjoyed popularity, pair work and cloze reading were less favored, suggesting areas for pedagogical improvement. This diverse range of preferences highlights the need for a varied English learning curriculum that caters to different interests and enhances student engagement.

#### **4.3.2 Results of the Interview: Thematic Analysis Results**

Structured one-on-one interviews were conducted to collect qualitative data about students' opinions of English learning activities and investigate different opinions of middle school students about English language learning activities.

These qualitative responses were analyzed using thematic analysis to identify key themes and subthemes in student opinions about the learning activities. The results are presented in the table below.

Table 4.12 Thematic Analysis of the Interview Responses

Themes	Subthemes	Frequency	Examples of Actual Interview Words
Opinions on English Learning Activities	Preference for certain activities such as Video watching.	10	<p>"Video watching is always the best." – S06</p> <p>"I prefer some activities to others, like video watching. Other activities are hard to do, like cloze tests." – S05</p> <p>"Role playing and video watching are usually exciting. I feel engaged and happy to be participating." – S09</p>
	Discomfort in specific activities such as cloze reading and role-playing.	10	<p>"Role-playing makes me nervous all the time." - S09</p> <p>"Cloze reading makes me unhappy. Some words are difficult to speak, and the teacher is always correcting me." – S11</p>
	Mixed feelings toward various activities	7	" They are usually tiresome and some boring. I usually find it hard to relate to what is being taught. Others are cool to learn." – S02
	Enjoyment in engaging activities like listening and video-watching	11	<p>"I love listening and doing group works and also videos." - S08</p> <p>"Role playing makes me nervous all the time. I love videos as they make the class enjoyable." -S09.</p>

Table 4.12 Thematic Analysis of the Interview Responses (Cont.)

Themes	Subthemes	Frequency	Examples of Actual Interview Words
Positive Influence on Social-Emotional Competencies	Enjoyment in successful class presentations	4	"When I was able to make a good presentation... everyone clapped for me." - S01
	Confidence boost in successful role plays	6	"I felt proud one day when we were doing role plays and I did my part very well." - S11
	Happiness in engaging activities	4	"Games are usually the best." - S12  "I really enjoyed doing pair work with my partner. I felt happy when the teacher kept complimenting me on my reading skills." – S04.
Challenging Experiences	Difficulty in pronunciation and reading	4	"When doing read-outs and... everyone was looking at me." - S01
	Ridicule and embarrassment during activities	4	"Some students laugh at you... it's really annoying for me." - S05
	Feeling left out or not understood	4	"I don't usually understand what's going on." - S03

Table 4.12 is a tabulation of the thematic analysis findings on students' opinions about the English learning activities. Four major themes were identified: students' opinions of English learning activities, the positive influence of English learning activities on social-emotional competencies, and challenging experiences.

#### 4.3.2.1 Theme 1: Different Opinions Regarding English Language Learning Activities

The results show middle school students have different opinions concerning different English learning activities. As indicated in Table 4.11, one of the subthemes is the preference for certain activities over others. Most of the students responded that they prefer watching videos and role-playing. The frequency of this subtheme was 10 out of the 12 respondents. Other opinions that emerged were in the direction of mixed reactions when engaging in English learning activities. An example of a quote from the interview is below:

"Some activities make me nervous as they are not easily understandable, and others are awesome, especially when you understand new things."

(Student 01, Personal Communication, 9 December, 2023)

"They are usually tiresome and some boring. I usually find it hard to relate to what is being taught. Others are cool to learn."

(Student 02, Personal Communication, 9 December, 2023)

Other identified opinions about individual feelings on English language learning activities are discomfort with some activities and enjoyment of some activities. Cloze reading was listed as the most challenging and disliked activity in teaching the English language, with seven respondents stating they were *unhappy* with the activity. Video watching was ranked as the most preferred activity among middle school students in China, with almost everybody stating they enjoyed video watching, role-playing, and group discussions.

#### 4.3.2.2 Theme 2: Positive Influence on Social-Emotional Competencies

The results indicate that middle school students perceive English learning activities as a significant source of social-emotional competence. The theme of

positive influence on social-emotional competencies was observed in 12 instances, which gave out the following sub-themes.

1) Enjoyment in successful class presentations: Some students stated they felt happy after successful presentations in class.

"When I was able to make a good presentation... everyone clapped for me."  
(Student 01, Personal Communication, 9 December, 2023)

2) Confidence boosts in successful role plays: When students successfully participate in role-play, they feel confident, which improves self-awareness and self-management. This has been evident across different question responses. Some of the vital quotes are:

"I felt proud one day when we were doing role plays and I did my part very well." (Student 11, Personal Communications, 9 December 2023)

3) Happiness in engaging activities: Students have also highlighted that increased happiness in engaging in English Language learning activities. For instance,

"I really enjoyed doing pair work with my partner. I felt happy when the teacher kept complimenting me on my reading skills."  
(Student 04, Personal Communication, 9 December, 2023)

#### 4.3.2.3 Theme 3: Challenging Experiences

The results identified the other evident theme as the challenging experiences that students can remember. The result shows the student has had challenges in pronunciation and reading tasks, sometimes feeling embarrassed when engaging in learning activities and feeling misunderstood and left out. The following are quotes expounding this theme:

"When I was unable to pronounce some words correctly and the teacher kept on asking me to repeat. I felt really bad as they were hard to pronounce."

(Student 01, Personal Communication, 9 December, 2023)

"When doing reading comprehensions, some students laugh at you and it's really annoying for me." (Student 05, Personal Communication, 9 December, 2023)

"Being left out in a group work a certain day made me unhappy as I was the only one who did not understand what was going on."

(Student 10, Personal Communication, 9 December, 2023)

#### 4.3.2.4 Theme 4: Moments of Pride in English Learning Activities

Table 4.13 Theme 4: Moments of Pride in English Learning Activities

Moments of Pride	Success in presentations	"I was very composed and made no errors." - S09
	Achievement in role plays	"We were doing a role play and I was the best at it that day." - S05
	Pride in group work achievements	"When my group emerged the best in our group work." - S08

Thematic analysis of the interview results about the influential impact of English learning activities found themes of moments of pride among students. The results identified success in presentations, achievements in role plays, and pride in group work achievements as the key issues that positively influenced the students' social-emotional competencies.

## 4.4 Chapter Summary

This chapter effectively addressed the key research questions, providing insights into the social-emotional competencies and preferences regarding English learning activities among middle school students in China. The findings can be summarized as follows:

1) The predominant social-emotional competencies among the students include responsible decision-making, relationship skills, and social awareness. These competencies reflect a good understanding of interpersonal dynamics and effective decision-making in various contexts. However, competencies like self-awareness and self-management exhibited variations depending on the nature of the English learning activities, indicating a complex interplay between educational methods and emotional development.

2) The questionnaire findings for the preference of different English learning activities reveal a marked preference for interactive and engaging activities such as video watching, role play and choral reading. These activities are not only preferred for their enjoyment factor but also for their perceived positive impact on students' social-emotional skills. Conversely, activities like cloze reading and pair work were less favored, hinting at either their limited influence on social-emotional growth or a general lack of student engagement with these formats.

3) The thematic analysis of student interviews reveals distinct preferences for engaging activities like video watching and role playing, associated with positive emotions and confidence, enhancing social-emotional skills. However, activities like cloze reading and role-playing sometimes caused discomfort, suggesting the need for more supportive approaches. Challenges such as pronunciation difficulties and feelings of exclusion were also noted, impacting the overall learning experience.

In summary, this chapter has effectively addressed the research questions by shedding light on the social-emotional competencies prevalent among middle school

students in China and their preferences for English learning activities. The findings indicate a strong preference for interactive and engaging activities, which are also instrumental in enhancing social-emotional competencies. This understanding is crucial for educators and curriculum designers to tailor English learning activities that not only engage students but also support their social-emotional development.



## **Chapter 5**

### **Conclusion, Discussion and Recommendations**

This chapter presents the final thoughts, which are informed by the results and findings of this research project. The chapter is divided into three major sections: conclusions about the findings, discussion of the key findings in relation to research questions and existing findings, and recommendation and practical implication of the findings. The chapter ends with a highlight of the research's limitations and the direction for further research.

#### **5.1 Conclusion**

##### **5.1.1 Response to Research Question 1: Middle School Chinese Students' Social-Emotional Competencies**

The findings showed that middle school students are aware of their social-emotional competencies, although the results indicate that some of these skills are more developed than others. Specifically, the results underscored that most students, when engaging in English learning activities, usually understand social awareness and relationship skills and the importance of responsible decision-making.

Importantly, the findings from the SECQ questionnaire stressed that responsible decision-making is highly developed during group activities, and that students tend to make decisions that contribute to the group's success. Furthermore, the results indicated that students are usually mindful of others' opinions and viewpoints before expressing their own on the group's behalf.

In terms of individual English writing exercises, the results show that students make careful choices of vocabulary and grammar to successfully complete their tasks.

Regarding relationship skills, which were monitored through students' interactions in pair work, SEWO games, and English group work, it was found that middle school students were aware of their classmates' emotions, and they would apologize if they unintentionally hurt them. Additionally, the students generally try not to criticize classmates during group work.

Moreover, the findings also showed that middle school students were aware of their own emotional states when engaging in different English language learning activities. They were also observed to be socially aware, as evidenced by their respect for others' reading tones and acknowledgment of differences in choral reading. The results show that they understood variations in interpretation of various contexts and dialogues during games and recognized differences in speaking fluently among classmates in class reading exercises.

This research has discovered that social-emotional competencies among middle school students are highly developed in aspects of social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making. The average scores for social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making were 3.52, 3.58, and 3.66, respectively, implying a higher appreciation for self-related competencies.

However, self-awareness and self-management have average scores of 3.45 and 3.29, respectively. These results indicate that, among middle school students, responsible decision-making is most appreciated, followed by relationship skills and social awareness. Thus, it is clear that middle school Chinese students are highly aware of their social skills with other students.

On the other hand, the awareness of personal competencies among middle school students, though present, is at lower levels. Based on the descriptive analysis of questionnaire results, every emotional competence was found to be evident within and among middle school students, although self-related competence was less acknowledged and appreciated. The results imply that middle school students are sensitive to other students' emotions and act accordingly to ensure they do not cause

distress during English learning activities. Nevertheless, self-management among middle school students is less appreciated and acknowledged.

### **5.1.2 Response to Research Question 2: Students' Opinions on English Learning Activities**

The results of the investigation of the opinions students have about English learning activities indicated that students have different and varying opinions about these activities. The results have underscored the preference for certain activities over others. Middle school students liked watching videos, and role-play activities more than other learning activities. Specifically, pair work and cloze reading were least popular, as indicated by the higher combined percentages of 'Not at All Appealing' and 'Slightly Unappealing' responses (43.1% for pair work and 35.6% for cloze reading), suggesting a significant portion of students seldom find these activities engaging. This contrast in preferences underscores the need for a varied and balanced curriculum that both challenges and caters to the diverse interests of students.

Thematic analysis identified key opinions among middle school students that influence the development of social-emotional competencies. The findings indicate that students find some English learning activities interesting, while others are challenging. The results show that some students prefer video-watching activities ("students claim they do enjoy video watching more than other activities") to other activities, especially cloze reading.

In the quest to identify the positively influential activities on individual social-emotional competencies, both qualitative and quantitative analysis affirmed that video watching, role play, and group work activities are the most impactful activities on social-emotional competencies. The theme of moments of pride indicated that students' emotional states were positively influenced by the success or achievements in English learning activities, such as presentations and significant contributions to group work.

From the questionnaire findings, choral reading, pair work, SEEWO games, role play, listening comprehension and group work emerged as influential in the development of social awareness, self-management, and relationship skills. Group work was underscored as significant in influencing the development of responsible decision-making, with students highlighting that they will always consider classmates' opinions and viewpoints before making decisions about their groups. It has indicated that they will consider choosing the most fit group member to represent their group, which is anchored on understanding the vitality of being responsible in making decisions that affect their performance.

## 5.2 Discussion

The results have highlighted the prevalence of emotional competences among middle school students, stressing the higher awareness levels of social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making. These competencies dictate how students engage in a given activity and how they address social understanding with their peers.

Despite the strengths observed in social awareness, relationship skills, and decision-making, the study revealed that self-management and self-awareness, though present, are less developed in middle school students compared to other competencies. Self-management, which had the lowest mean values, is a critical competency that allows students to regulate their emotions and behaviors effectively. This includes managing stress, controlling impulses, and motivating oneself (Foster & McCloughen, 2020). The lower scores in self-management suggest that while students can interact with peers and make responsible decisions, they might struggle with regulating their internal states during challenging situations. This finding is significant as it points towards a potential area of improvement in educational strategies. Enhancing self-management skills in students could lead to better emotional regulation, improved focus, and a more resilient approach to learning and social interactions (Harris & Brown, 2013).

Similarly, self-awareness, which ranked second to last in mean values, is another area that requires attention. Self-awareness involves understanding one's own emotions, strengths, limitations, and values, and how these influence behavior (Carden, Jones, & Passmore, 2022). The somewhat lower scores in this domain suggest that students may not be fully aware of their emotional responses or may lack confidence in their abilities, which can impact their participation and engagement in learning activities. This gap in self-awareness can also affect how students perceive and relate to others, impacting their social interactions and learning experiences. Developing self-awareness is crucial as it forms the foundation for effective communication, empathy, and self-reflection, essential skills for both academic and personal growth (Cho et al., 2019). The results thus indicate a need for educational interventions that not only foster external social skills but also promote internal emotional understanding and self-reflection among students.

Significant interactions and engagement influence the development of social-related competencies among middle school students in social activities. When students engage in games such as role play and other class activities, they tend to understand emotional issues and other factors, such as differences in understanding of some subjects by their peers, which makes it effective in fostering strong relations and engagements. According to Cho et al. (2019), advances in English language learning are significantly influenced by the level of development of social-emotional competencies, such as relationship skills and social awareness. This research has found that students have higher comprehension levels of responsible decision-making, which aligns with Zhou and Ee's (2012) findings that students portraying these abilities are effective in navigating different educational environments. It is also a key determinant that defines how students perceive and behave when interacting with other students. Social awareness is essential for middle school students, as it defines how they react to their perceived opinions, emotions and thoughts (Frey, Hirschstein, & Guzzo, 2000). The findings underscore the abilities of middle school students to control their emotions and feelings when dealing with other students in English language learning. On the other hand, relationship skills are another developed skill among middle school students, defining social interaction and the ability to make friends. According to Williams and

Williams (2011), relationship management skills are highly developed when students are subjected to class activities that foster healthy interactions among them.

These findings imply that students at middle schools in China have excellently developed social-emotional competencies. Although the trend implies that middle school students have developed social competency, the findings have more implications for stakeholders. These findings are significant to educators who can leverage the development of social-emotional competencies in teaching. For instance, English teachers can incorporate a social-emotional learning (SEL) approach to foster the development of these competencies, which are essential for excelling in the language. Students, on their part, can utilize these developed social competencies to foster healthy relationships and enhance mastery of these competencies.

The findings about several opinions among middle school Chinese students identified that some English learning activities are more liked than others. The opinions provided by students show that they like and enjoy watching videos of all the English learning activities. According to Ozkan and Topsakal (2017), students tend to have positive opinions about engaging in English learning activities, which directly influences their understanding and comprehension of the subject. The findings indicated that the most engaging English learning activities are positively opinionated compared to self-designed activities like cloze reading. Students showed positive opinions on video-watching activities and role-playing English learning activities. This underscores the fact that video activities capture learners' attention and are sometimes thrilling and appealing when watching. According to Simonds and Brock (2014), senior students prefer video-watching learning activities such as pre-recorded tutorials more than young students, who are more oriented to more engaging learning activities. Video-watching activities are an essential component in social competency development. According to Mechling and Moser (2010), the impact of video-watching activities as instructional avenues has a significant influence on the development of social competencies among students with autism.

Generally, these findings on opinions of English learning activities indicate mixed opinions as some students have expressed liking role-play activities while others said they were unhappy with role-play. All respondents stated they preferred video-watching activities over the other. The implications of these findings align with educators who should leverage these opinions and implement learning approaches that utilize activities with positive opinions and incorporate technical concepts within them. For instance, since middle school students have a negative approach towards cloze reading, teachers can effectively improve the liking of cloze reading by blending cloze-reading concepts and approaches into videos. On the other hand, policymakers should also step into strengthen English language learning by designing a curriculum that prioritizes video-watching activities designed to teach and instruct as the core approach.

The findings have underscored the positive influence of these English learning activities - video watching, role play, and group work – on nurturing students' social-emotional competencies (Ahmed et al., 2020). These activities were identified as vital to enhancing social awareness, promoting healthy relationship-building and management skills, and fostering responsible decision-making abilities among middle school Chinese students. These insights highlight the potential for leveraging these activities to not only enhance language acquisition but also fortify essential socio-emotional skills crucial for their personal and academic growth. Engaging learning activities are highly impactful in the development of student's social and emotional competencies (Frey et al., 2019). English learning activities that enhance student interaction with their peers, such as group work, discussions, role play, and interactive videos, are vital in enhancing students' social-emotional competencies. The preferences for specific activities, notably video watching and role play, underscores the importance of incorporating engaging activities in English language activities. The positive influences of video watching, role play, and group work on social-emotional competencies emphasize their significance in shaping a well-rounded educational curriculum that enhances theoretical understanding and social consciousness.

The emerging issues in Chinese students' social and emotional competence in English learning activities have been influenced by various factors, such as poor

integration, as Chinese schools prioritize the merits of academic achievement over the development of social-emotional well-being (Jiang & Zhang, 2021). In China, the main focus is maintained on grammar and the development of diverse vocabulary. Aspects of social-emotional needs, such as interpersonal skills and social awareness, are neglected. Another notable rising instance is the growing anxiety and pressure to excel in the English language, which resulted in the frustration of many students (Ma, 2020). With the build-up of anxiety and frustration, learning motivation among students, especially in the interior, has significantly dropped. This calls for the designing of more adaptable English learning activities that foster the growth and development of social-emotional competencies.

Limited collaboration in learning activities, which emphasizes memorization, undermines the development of communication skills, conflict resolution abilities, and interpersonal interactions. Additionally, the effects of cultural differences between Chinese and Western cultures have significantly influenced the engagement of Chinese students in English learning activities (Xiao, 2021). Technology in the learning environment is another aspect that has played a significant role in influencing Chinese students' development of social-emotional competencies through learning activities, as seen with more preference of video watching activities.

### **5.3 Practical Implications and Recommendations**

#### **5.3.1 For Teachers**

The findings of this research study have crucial implications for educators. The identification of video-watching as the most preferred activity among students implies that teachers could utilize video-watching activities more effectively in teaching complex English concepts. This approach not only engages students but also enhances their social-emotional competencies, as they are more attentive to videos. Educators are encouraged to incorporate social-emotional competency-based learning within English learning activities. Teachers should adopt social-emotional competency-based learning in their class activities to ensure students acknowledge their social boundaries and

interactions. Encouraging group work could be effective in bolstering responsible decision-making and enhancing healthy relationship skills.

### **5.3.2 For Students**

For students, the findings of this study underscore the importance of mastering one's emotional competencies. These competencies significantly influence performance and outcomes in English learning activities. By understanding and managing their emotions effectively, students can enhance their learning experience, participate more effectively in preferred activities like video watching and role play, and improve their interpersonal skills. This mastery is not only beneficial for academic success but also for personal growth and development.

## **5.4 Limitations and Future Research**

One of the key limitations of this research was dependency on the Likert scale reported data, which is subject to reporting bias. In future research, this reporting bias could be addressed by designing a semi-structured questionnaire that captures other variables that influence social-emotional competence and performance in the English language.

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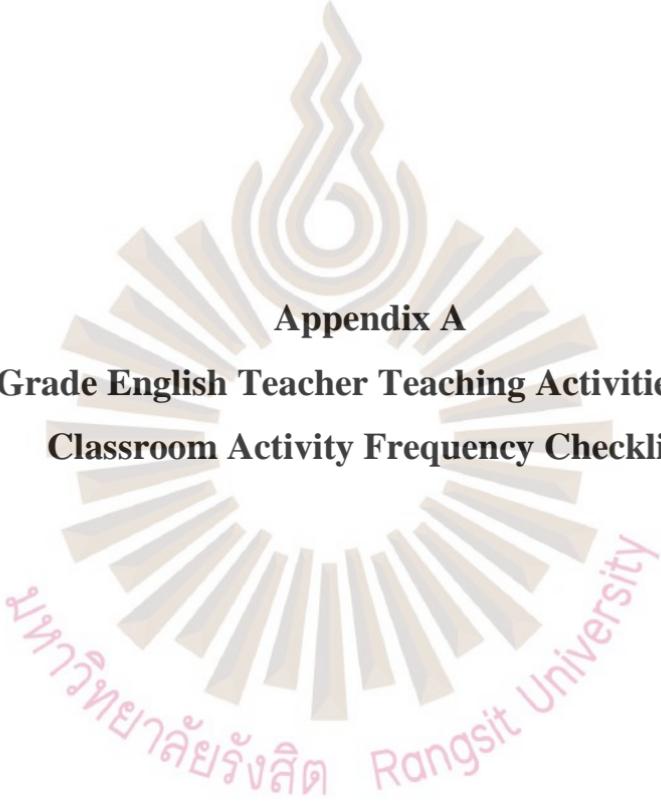
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## APPENDICES



The background of the page features a large, faint watermark of the Rangsit University logo. The logo is a circular emblem with a stylized flame or sunburst at the top, radiating lines in the middle, and a circular base. The text "มหาวิทยาลัยรังสิต" (Mahavithayalai Rangsit) is written in Thai script along the bottom arc, and "Rangsit University" is written in English along the right arc.

**Appendix A**  
**9th Grade English Teacher Teaching Activities Survey**  
**Classroom Activity Frequency Checklist**

## 9th Grade English Teacher Teaching Activities Survey Classroom Activity Frequency Checklist

### Survey Purpose:

- 1) To find out what activities utilized by 9th-grade English teachers in their classrooms.
- 2) To rank the activities based on the frequency of use.

### Instructions:

Please review the list of English activities below. For each activity, tick the box that best represents how frequently you use the activity in your teaching. Please base your response on your own teaching practices and circumstances.

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. Your feedback is invaluable in helping me understand teaching practices and preferences.

No.	Type of Activities	Brief Description	Frequency				
			Always	Often	Average	Rarely	Never
1	Listening Comprehension	Play a recording or a video clip for students, then have them answer questions about what they heard.	5	4	3	2	1
2	Charades	Have students act out words or phrases without speaking while others try to guess what they are.	5	4	3	2	1
3	English Karaoke	Play English songs, allowing students to sing along. This improves pronunciation, rhythm, and intonation.	5	4	3	2	1
4	Video Watching	Show students video clips or short videos, and then have them answer questions, share feelings, or discuss their understandings.	5	4	3	2	1
5	Role Play	Assign roles to students based on real-life situations or fictional stories, letting them practice language in context.	5	4	3	2	1

6	Debates	Organize the class into small groups and provide discussion topics. Encourage each group to share their opinions and work towards a consensus.	5	4	3	2	1
7	Group Work	Divide the class into small groups and assign discussion topics.	5	4	3	2	1
8	Pair Work	Have students work in pairs to practice conversations.	5	4	3	2	1
9	Storytelling	Ask students to tell stories or anecdotes related to a specific theme, personal experiences, or fictional scenarios.	5	4	3	2	1
10	Show and Tell	Show a picture, image, or item and ask students to describe it to the class.	5	4	3	2	1
11	Interviews	Conduct mock interviews where students take turns being the interviewer and interviewee.	5	4	3	2	1
12	Tongue Twisters	Students practice pronunciation and fluency with tongue twisters.	5	4	3	2	1
13	Events Discussions	Discuss current news or events in English to keep the topics relevant and engaging.	5	4	3	2	1
14	Charades	Have students act out words or phrases silently, with others guessing the terms. This activity enhances vocabulary and non-verbal communication.	5	4	3	2	1
15	Mystery Word	Give students clues about a word, and they have to guess the word based on the hints given.	5	4	3	2	1
16	Vocabulary Bingo	After reading, students write down their brief answers or responses, helping to reinforce comprehension and writing skills simultaneously.	5	4	3	2	1

17	Draw a Mind Map	Students read the articles and then draw mind maps based on their own understanding.	5	4	3	2	1
18	Choral Reading	Encourage students to read a text aloud in unison, which promotes fluency and boosts confidence.	5	4	3	2	1
19	Jigsaw Reading	Different students read different parts of a text and then share the information with their group or the whole class.	5	4	3	2	1
20	Cloze Reading	Detailed examination of a short text or section of text, focusing on students' deeper comprehension, vocabulary, and author's craft.	5	4	3	2	1
21	Individual Writing	Students work independently on a writing task.	5	4	3	2	1
22	Pair Writing	Students collaborate with a partner to co-write a piece.	5	4	3	2	1
23	Group Writing	Form small groups where students collaborate on a collective writing task.	5	4	3	2	1
24	Creative Writing Prompts	Provide a prompt or a picture and have students write a short story, poem, or text based on it.	5	4	3	2	1
25	Phonetics Practice	Use IPA symbols or other phonetic tools to help students understand and practice English sounds.	5	4	3	2	1
26	Hot Seat	Position a student with their back to the board. Display a word behind them, and with hints from the class, the student tries to guess the word.	5	4	3	2	1
27	Sentence Scramble	Provide a set of jumbled words and have students rearrange them to form grammatically correct sentences.	5	4	3	2	1



The image features a large, faint watermark of the Rangsit University logo in the background. The logo is a circular emblem with a central flame-like shape, surrounded by a ring of radiating lines. Below the emblem, the university's name is written in Thai and English: "มหาวิทยาลัยรังสิต Rangsit University".

**Appendix B**

**Certificate of Approval by Ethics Review Board of Rangsit University**



COA. No. RSUERB2023-188

**Certificate of Approval  
By  
Ethics Review Board of Rangsit University**

<b>COA. No.</b>	<b>COA. No. RSUERB2023-188</b>
<b>Protocol Title</b>	<b>Investigation into the Social-Emotional Competencies of Middle School Chinese Students</b>
<b>Principle Investigator</b>	<b>Janfei Lin</b>
<b>Affiliation</b>	<b>Suryadhep Teachers College, Rangsit University</b>
<b>How to review</b>	<b>Expedited Review</b>
<b>Approval includes</b>	<b>1. Project proposal</b> <b>2. Information sheet</b> <b>3. Informed consent form</b> <b>4. Data collection form/Program or Activity plan</b>
<b>Date of Approval:</b>	<b>5 December 2023</b>
<b>Date of Expiration:</b>	<b>5 December 2025</b>

The prior mentioned documents have been reviewed and approved by Ethics Review Board of Rangsit University based Declaration of Helsinki, The Belmont Report, CIOMS Guideline and International Conference on Harmonization in Good Clinical Practice or ICH-GCP



Signature.....

(Associate Professor Dr. Panan Kanchanaphum)

Chairman, Ethics Review Board for Human Research

Ethics Review Board of Rangsit University, 5th floor, Arthit Ourairat Building (Bldg.1) Rangsit University

Tel. 0-2791-5728 Email: rsuethics@rsu.ac.th

**Appendix C**  
**Questionnaire**



## Questionnaire

Dear Respondents,

I am Jianfei Lin, student ID: 6407645, a Master's degree student from the Graduate Program of Bilingual Education at Rangsit University of Thailand. This questionnaire is a part of my Master's Thesis. I am conducting a research study titled *"Investigation into the Relationship between Social-Emotional Competences and English Learning Activities of Middle School Chinese Students."* The purpose of this study is to understand the influence of social-emotional competences on your English language learning experiences.

Your responses to the following questionnaire will help us gain valuable insights into how your emotions and social awareness affect your English learning activities. Please answer the questions honestly based on your own experiences.

### Part I Demographic Information

- 1) Name: \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) Class: \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) Gender: \_\_\_\_\_
- 4) Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Please read each statement carefully and indicate your level of agreement. For each item, mark (✓) the option that best represents your opinion.

**Important:** Please select only one option for each item.

## Part II Social-emotional Competencies

Items	Scale				
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	5	4	3	2	1
<b>Self-awareness:</b>					
5. I know what I am thinking and doing while describing the picture or image to the class.	5	4	3	2	1
6. When I encounter unfamiliar words or phrases during listening comprehension, I can accurately recognize my feelings of confusion or curiosity.	5	4	3	2	1
7. I recognize my strengths in understanding specific types of content during listening comprehension activities.	5	4	3	2	1
8. In a dialogue in pair work, compared to my partner, I can identify what my strengths are.	5	4	3	2	1
9. In a discussion in group work, compared to my peers, I can identify what my strengths are.	5	4	3	2	1
10. I understand why I choose certain vocabulary or grammar structures in my English writing.	5	4	3	2	1
11. During English listening exercises, I'm aware when I'm feeling frustrated or confused.	5	4	3	2	1
12. I understand how I feel when I'm writing independently.	5	4	3	2	1
<b>Social Awareness:</b>					
13. While participating in choral reading, I respect the reading pace and tones of my peers, acknowledging that everyone has their unique style.	5	4	3	2	1
14. When doing pair work, I understand that some classmates may have difficulty speaking fluently due to nervousness or lack of confidence.	5	4	3	2	1
15. If a classmate is sad, angry, or happy while we are playing SEEWO group competition games, I know what they are thinking.	5	4	3	2	1

16. I understand that in role-play activities, different people have varying interpretations and reactions to the content of a dialogue.	5	4	3	2	1
17. If a friend is upset about their individual writing activities, I can understand why they have this kind of feeling.	5	4	3	2	1
18. When watching English videos, I can tell how the characters are feeling by the way they look.	5	4	3	2	1
19. If a classmate is frustrated with an individual writing task, I can tell the reason why.	5	4	3	2	1
20. If a classmate is upset during an English cloze reading practice, I have a pretty good idea why.	5	4	3	2	1
<b>Self-management:</b>					
21. When doing listening comprehension exercises, even if I don't understand, I can still try to control my feelings, such as frustration or sadness.	5	4	3	2	1
22. In pair work, even if my friend says something I think is wrong or I disagree with, I stay calm and talk nicely.	5	4	3	2	1
23. When competing with others in SEEW O games during English class, I can stay calm.	5	4	3	2	1
24. When I am reporting in front of the whole class after a group discussion, I try my best to stay calm and try to control my nervousness.	5	4	3	2	1
25. When I encounter challenges in individual writing, I can stay calm and overcome anxiety.	5	4	3	2	1
26. I can stay calm during challenging English-speaking exercises, such as describing a picture in front of the class.	5	4	3	2	1
27. I stay calm when I make mistakes in English presentations.	5	4	3	2	1
28. I can control my feelings when receiving unexpected feedback on my English group assignments.	5	4	3	2	1
<b>Relationship Management:</b>					
29. I will always apologize if I unintentionally hurt a classmate's feelings during an English group discussion.	5	4	3	2	1

30. I always try to comfort my classmates when they struggle with English listening comprehension.	5	4	3	2	1
31. I try not to criticize my classmates when we have disagreements about assignments in English group work.	5	4	3	2	1
32. I am tolerant of my classmates' mistakes in English pair work discussions.	5	4	3	2	1
33. I stand up for myself in English class without putting others down while having discussions in English group work.	5	4	3	2	1
34. I can always calm down quickly when I am very angry.	5	4	3	2	1
35. I am able to control my temper and handle difficulties during English group discussions.	5	4	3	2	1
36. When I evaluate others' performances, I think before I talk.	5	4	3	2	1
<b>Responsible Decision-Making:</b>					
37. When my answers represent my group, I think carefully before responding to ensure I maximize points for the group.	5	4	3	2	1
38. I can vote for the representative who will best present our group's work for a higher score in the group activities.	5	4	3	2	1
39. When it's my turn to assign tasks for group activities, I will allocate tasks based on the strengths and weaknesses of different students.	5	4	3	2	1
40. In group discussions, I weigh different opinions and support what's best for the group.	5	4	3	2	1
41. In group work, I actively listen to all viewpoints and weigh the pros and cons of each before giving the opinion most beneficial for the group's score.	5	4	3	2	1
42. When picking a group for English class tasks, I choose one where we can learn and get along well.	5	4	3	2	1
43. When suggesting a story or topic for class discussion, I consider what most students might find interesting.	5	4	3	2	1
44. When doing an independent writing assignment, I will consider what would be better for me, such as what vocabulary or sentences to use that would allow me to complete the task more successfully.	5	4	3	2	1

### Part III English Learning Activities

**Instruction:** Tick the box that best represents how appealing each English learning activity is to you.

5 = Extremely Appealing

4 = Quite Appealing

3 = Neutral

2 = Slightly Unappealing

1 = Not at All Appealing

Items	Scale				
	Extrem ely Appeali ng	Quite Appeali ng	Neutral	Slightly Unappe aling	Not at All Appeali ng
45. Listening comprehension	5	4	3	2	1
46. Pair work	5	4	3	2	1
47. Choral reading	5	4	3	2	1
48. SEEWo games	5	4	3	2	1
49. Cloze reading	5	4	3	2	1
50. Individual writing	5	4	3	2	1
51. Group work	5	4	3	2	1
52. Show and tell	5	4	3	2	1
53. Video watching	5	4	3	2	1
54. Role play	5	4	3	2	1

## Chinese Version of the Questionnaire

### 社会情绪能力调查中文版

社会情绪能力 (Social-Emotional Competence) 指的是一个人在社交互动中，特别是在处理与情绪相关的社会情境时，表现出的一系列情绪智力和社交技能。本问卷旨在调查中国初中生的社会情感能力与英语学习活动之间的关系。本问卷中收集到的所有个人信息将会被保密，所有数据也将仅用于本人的论文研究。

请根据自身情况诚实作答。非常感谢您的配合！

#### 第一部分：个人信息

1. 姓名：\_\_\_\_\_ 2. 班级：\_\_\_\_\_
3. 性别：\_\_\_\_\_ 4. 年龄：\_\_\_\_\_

#### 第二部分：社会情绪能力自我测评表

请勾出 (✓) 最符合自己实际情况的数字选项

5:非常同意    4:同意    3:一般    2:不同意    1:非常不同意

项目	5: 非常 同意	4: 同 意	3: 一 般	2: 不 同 意	1: 非 常 不 同 意
5. 英语课上，在面向全班同学对图片等进行描述时，我能意识到自己在想什么和做什么。	5	4	3	2	1
6. 当我在听力理解过程中遇到不熟悉的单词或短语时，我能准确地意识到自己对听力内容的困惑或好奇。	5	4	3	2	1
7. 在听力理解活动时，我知道自己在理解哪些类型的听力内容方面有优势。	5	4	3	2	1
8. 在两人一组合作的对话中，与同伴相比，我能意识到自己的优势是什么。	5	4	3	2	1
9. 在小组活动讨论时，与同伴相比，我能意识到自己的优势是什么。	5	4	3	2	1
10. 我明白我在英语写作时为什么要选择某些词汇或语法结构。	5	4	3	2	1

11. 在做英语听力练习时，当我有挫折感或者困惑时，我自己能感受得到。	5	4	3	2	1
12. 我了解自己在进行个人写作练习时的感受是怎样的。	5	4	3	2	1
13. 在集体朗读时，我尊重同学们的朗读节奏和语调，我能理解每个人都有自己独特的风格。	5	4	3	2	1
14. 在两人一组合作时，我理解有些同学可能会因为紧张或缺乏自信而无法流利地说话。	5	4	3	2	1
15. 在用一体机希沃游戏程序进行小组游戏PK 时，如果有同学产生了悲伤、生气或高兴的情绪，我能理解同学的感受。	5	4	3	2	1
16. 我知道在角色扮演活动中，不同的人对对话的内容会有不同的理解和反应。	5	4	3	2	1
17. 如果朋友对英语个人作文练习任务感到不开心，我能理解他/她们为什么会有这种感觉。	5	4	3	2	1
18. 观看英语视频时，我能通过角色的表情判断他们的感受。	5	4	3	2	1
19. 如果同学对英语个人作文练习任务感到沮丧，我能说出原因。	5	4	3	2	1
20. 如果同学在做英语阅读理解练习时感到不高兴，我能知道为什么。	5	4	3	2	1
21. 在做听力理解练习时，即使我听不懂，我也能试着控制自己沮丧或者难过的情绪。	5	4	3	2	1
22. 在二人一组进行搭档时，即使我的朋友说了我认为错误的或我不同意的观点，我也能保持冷静，好好说话。	5	4	3	2	1
23. 在英语课上与他人进行一体机上的希沃游戏比赛时，我能保持冷静。	5	4	3	2	1
24. 小组讨论后，当我在全班面前发言时，我能尽力保持冷静并尝试控制紧张的情绪。	5	4	3	2	1
25. 当我在个人作文练习中遇到困难时，我能保持冷静，克服焦虑。	5	4	3	2	1
26. 在具有挑战性的英语口语练习中，例如用英语在全班面前描述一幅图片时，我能保持镇定。	5	4	3	2	1
27. 当我在英语演讲中出错时，我能保持冷静。	5	4	3	2	1

28. 当小组合作任务收到意料之外的评价结果时，我能控制自己的情绪。	5	4	3	2	1
29. 如果我在英语小组讨论中无意伤害了同学的感受，我会道歉。	5	4	3	2	1
30. 当同学在英语听力理解方面遇到困难时，我会尝试安慰他/她们。	5	4	3	2	1
31. 在英语小组任务中，当与同学对任务有不同意见时，我会尽量不用批评的语气对同学说话。	5	4	3	2	1
32. 在进行英语二人一组的讨论时，我对同学所犯的错误持宽容态度。	5	4	3	2	1
33. 在英语小组任务讨论过程中，我能在坚持自己的观点时做到不贬低他人的观点。	5	4	3	2	1
34. 当我非常生气时，我总是能很快冷静下来。	5	4	3	2	1
35. 在英语小组讨论时，我能够控制自己的脾气并解决困难。	5	4	3	2	1
36. 当我评价别人的表现时，我会先思考再说话。	5	4	3	2	1
37. 当我代表小组进行回答时，我会在回答前仔细思考，以确保为小组争取最多的分数。	5	4	3	2	1
38. 在小组活动中，我能公平地投票选出最能代表本组进行发言的代表，来让小组获得最好的分数。	5	4	3	2	1
39. 轮到我分配小组活动任务时，我会根据不同同学的优缺点来分配任务。	5	4	3	2	1
40. 在小组讨论中，我会权衡不同的意见，并支持对小组最有利的观点。	5	4	3	2	1
41. 在小组合作中，我会积极听取各种观点，权衡利弊，然后提出最有利于小组得分的意见。	5	4	3	2	1
42. 在为英语课的任务选择我想加入的小组时，我会选择一个大家都能互相学习并且相处融洽的小组。	5	4	3	2	1
43. 在让我建议英语课可以讨论的故事或主题时，我会考虑大多数学生可能会感兴趣的内容。	5	4	3	2	1
44. 在独立完成写作任务时，我会考虑怎样做对我更有利，比如使用什么词汇或句子能让我更顺利地完成任务。	5	4	3	2	1

### 第三部分：英语学习活动调查表

- 以下是 10 种常见的英语课堂活动，请圈“○”出表示每种英语课堂活动对你的吸引程度所对应的数字。
- 吸引程度从高到低：  
5=非常吸引我；4=相当吸引我；3=一般吸引我；2=有点不吸引我；1=完全不吸引我

	非常吸引我	相当吸引我	一般吸引我	有点不吸引我	完全不吸引我
45. 听力练习	5	4	3	2	1
46. 二人一组对话练习	5	4	3	2	1
47. 全班齐读	5	4	3	2	1
48. 希沃游戏	5	4	3	2	1
49. 阅读理解练习	5	4	3	2	1
	非常吸引我	相当吸引我	一般吸引我	有点不吸引我	完全不吸引我
50. 独立写作练习	5	4	3	2	1
51. 小组合作	5	4	3	2	1
52. 看图说话	5	4	3	2	1
53. 看视频	5	4	3	2	1
54. 分角色扮演	5	4	3	2	1

## **Appendix D**

### **Interview**



## **Interview**

### **Introduction:**

Welcome to the interview session. This research aims to better understand your English learning experiences. Your insights are invaluable, and your honest responses will contribute significantly to my study.

Each interview will last about 10 minutes.

Your responses will be kept confidential, and the information collected will be used for research purposes only.

### **Interview Questions:**

1. How do you generally feel about different English learning activities?
2. Can you tell me about a time when you felt happy in an English class?
3. Can you share with me an experience when you felt unhappy during an English class?
4. Can you recall a challenging experience you had during an English class?
5. Can you describe a time when you were particularly proud in English class?

### **Closing:**

Thank you for your participation. Your input is invaluable to our research.

## Interview Guidelines Chinese Version

### 采访指南

#### 简介：

欢迎来到访谈环节。本研究旨在探讨英语学习的各个方面，重点是自我意识、社会意识、自我管理、关系管理和负责任的决策。您的见解非常宝贵，您的诚实回答将对我的研究大有裨益。

#### 访谈程序：

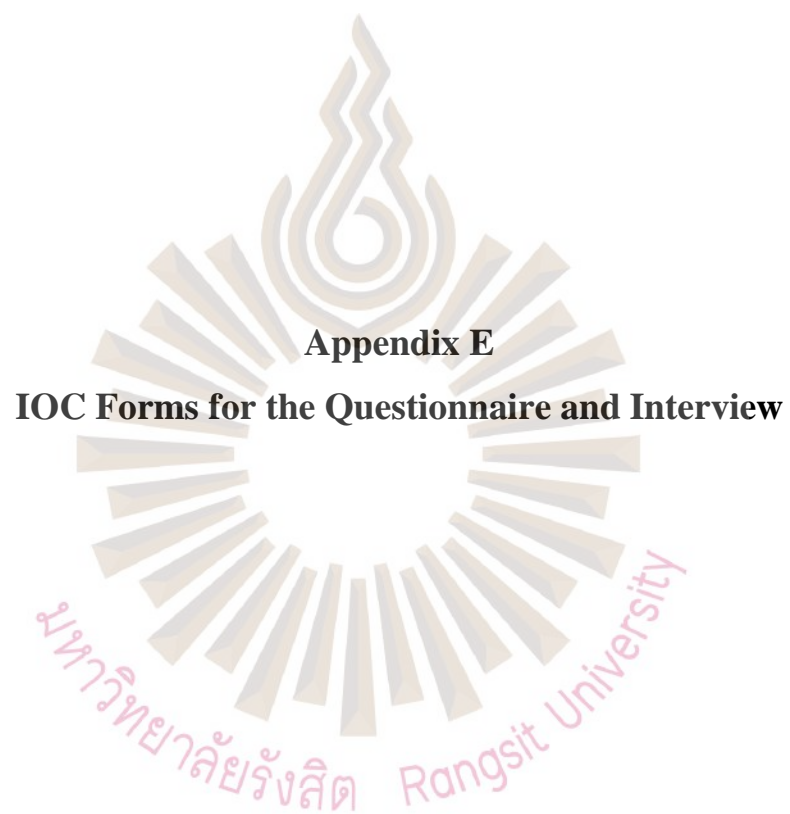
- 每次访谈大约持续 10 分钟。
- 首先，访谈员将简要介绍研究目的和访谈主题。
- 您的回答将被保密，收集到的信息仅用于研究目的。

#### 访谈问题：

1. 你一般对不同的英语学习活动有什么感觉？
2. 你能告诉我你在英语课上感到快乐的时候吗？
3. 你能和我分享一次你在英语课上感到不开心的经历吗？
4. 你能回忆起在英语课上的一次挑战经历吗？
5. 你能描述一次在英语课上特别自豪的经历吗？

感谢您的参与。您的意见对我们的研究非常宝贵。

(根据提案，定性数据将采用半结构式访谈的方式收集，访谈对象为九年级的九名中国学生。研究人员将使用手机对访谈进行录音。每位受访者的中文访谈时间约为 10 分钟。之后，将进行定性数据分析)。



## **Appendix E**

### **IOC Forms for the Questionnaire and Interview**

## IOC Form 1

### Item Objective Congruence (IOC) Index Form for the Questionnaire

**Research Objectives:**

1. To assess the social-emotional competencies among middle school students in China.
2. To understand students' opinions on English learning activities.

**Research Questions:**

1. What are the social-emotional competencies among middle school students in China?
2. What are the opinions of middle school students in China regarding English learning activities?

**Students' Response Format:** 5-Likert Scale from 5 strongly agree to 1 strongly disagree.

<b>Satisfaction Form</b>				
<b>Directions:</b> Please tick ( ✓ ) only one in the appropriate column according to your consideration. Thank you for your cooperation. • ( +1: agree; 0: Not sure; -1: Disagree)				
		<b>Expert</b>		
<b>What to be Measured</b>	<b>Items</b>	<b>+1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>-1</b>
Self-awareness:  The ability to recognize one's own emotions, thoughts, and strengths	1. I know what I am thinking and doing while describing the picture or image to the class.			
	2. When I encounter unfamiliar words or phrases during listening comprehension, I can accurately recognize my feelings of confusion or curiosity.			
	3. I recognize my strengths in understanding specific types of content during listening comprehension activities.			
	4. In a dialogue in pair work, compared to my partner, I can identify what my strengths are.			
	5. In a discussion in group work, compared to my peers, I can identify what my strengths are.			

	6. I understand why I choose certain vocabulary or grammar structures in my English writing.			
	7. During English listening exercises, I'm aware when I'm feeling frustrated or confused.			
	8. I understand how I feel when I'm writing independently.			
Social Awareness:  The ability to take the perspective of and empathize with others appreciate diversity, and respect for others.	9. While participating in choral reading, I respect the reading pace and tones of my peers, acknowledging that everyone has their unique style.			
	10. When doing pair work, I understand that some classmates may have difficulty speaking fluently due to nervousness or lack of confidence.			
	11. If a classmate is sad, angry, or happy while we are playing SEEWO group competition games, I know what they are thinking.			
	12. I understand that in role-play activities, different people have varying interpretations and reactions to the content of a dialogue.			
	13. If a friend is upset about their individual writing activities, I can understand why they have this kind of feeling.			
	14. When watching English videos, I can tell how the characters are feeling by the way they look.			
	15. If a classmate is frustrated with an individual writing task, I can tell the reason why.			
	16. If a classmate is upset during an English cloze reading practice, I have a pretty good idea why.			
Self-management:  The ability to	17. When doing listening comprehension exercises, even if I don't understand, I can still try to control my feelings, such as frustration or sadness.			

successfully regulate one's own emotions, thoughts, and behaviors in different situations dash effectively managing stress, controlling impulses, and motivating oneself.	18. In pair work, even if my friend says something I think is wrong or I disagree with, I stay calm and talk nicely.			
	19. When competing with others in SEEWO games during English class, I can stay calm.			
	20. When I am reporting in front of the whole class after a group discussion, I try my best to stay calm and try to control my nervousness.			
	21. When I encounter challenges in individual writing, I can stay calm and overcome anxiety.			
	22. I can stay calm during challenging English-speaking exercises, such as describing a picture in front of the class.			
	23. I stay calm when I make mistakes in English presentations.			
	24. I can control my feelings when receiving unexpected feedback on my English group assignments.			
Relationship skills:	25. I will always apologize if I unintentionally hurt a classmate's feelings during an English group discussion.			
The ability to establish and maintain healthy and rewarding relationships with diverse individuals and groups.	26. I always try to comfort my classmates when they struggle with English listening comprehension.			
	27. I try not to criticize my classmates when we have disagreements about assignments in English group work.			
The ability to communicate clearly, listen well, cooperate with others, resist	28. I am tolerant of my classmates' mistakes in English pair work discussions.			
	29. I stand up for myself in English class without putting others down while having discussions in English group work.			
	30. I can always calm down quickly when I am very angry.			

appropriate school pressure, and seek and offer help when needed.	31. I am able to control my temper and handle difficulties during English group discussions.			
	32. When I evaluate others' performances, I think before I talk.			
<p>Responsible Decision-Making:</p> <p>The ability to make constructive choices about personal behavior and social interactions.</p> <p>The realistic evaluation of the consequences of various actions, and consideration of the well-being of oneself and others.</p>	33. When my answers represent my group, I think carefully before responding to ensure I maximize points for the group.			
	34. I can vote for the representative who will best present our group's work for a higher score in the group activities.			
	35. When it's my turn to assign tasks for group activities, I will allocate tasks based on the strengths and weaknesses of different students.			
	36. In group discussions, I weigh different opinions and support what's best for the group.			
	37. In group work, I actively listen to all viewpoints and weigh the pros and cons of each before giving the opinion most beneficial for the group's score.			

	38. When picking a group for English class tasks, I choose one where we can learn and get along well.																																																																										
	39. When suggesting a story or topic for class discussion, I consider what most students might find interesting.																																																																										
	40. When doing an independent writing assignment, I will consider what would be better for me, such as what vocabulary or sentences to use that would allow me to complete the task more successfully.																																																																										
To understand the appeal to students of different English language activities.	41. <table><tr><th rowspan="2">Items</th><th colspan="5">Scale</th></tr><tr><th>Extremely Appealing</th><th>Quite Appealing</th><th>Neutral</th><th>Slightly Unappealing</th><th>Not at All Appealing</th></tr><tr><td>1. Listening comprehension</td><td>5</td><td>4</td><td>3</td><td>2</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>2. Pair work</td><td>5</td><td>4</td><td>3</td><td>2</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>3. Choral reading</td><td>5</td><td>4</td><td>3</td><td>2</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>4. Seewo games</td><td>5</td><td>4</td><td>3</td><td>2</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>5. Cloze reading</td><td>5</td><td>4</td><td>3</td><td>2</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>6. Individual writing</td><td>5</td><td>4</td><td>3</td><td>2</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>7. Group work</td><td>5</td><td>4</td><td>3</td><td>2</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>8. Show and tell</td><td>5</td><td>4</td><td>3</td><td>2</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>9. Video watching</td><td>5</td><td>4</td><td>3</td><td>2</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>10. Role play</td><td>5</td><td>4</td><td>3</td><td>2</td><td>1</td></tr></table>	Items	Scale					Extremely Appealing	Quite Appealing	Neutral	Slightly Unappealing	Not at All Appealing	1. Listening comprehension	5	4	3	2	1	2. Pair work	5	4	3	2	1	3. Choral reading	5	4	3	2	1	4. Seewo games	5	4	3	2	1	5. Cloze reading	5	4	3	2	1	6. Individual writing	5	4	3	2	1	7. Group work	5	4	3	2	1	8. Show and tell	5	4	3	2	1	9. Video watching	5	4	3	2	1	10. Role play	5	4	3	2	1			
Items	Scale																																																																										
	Extremely Appealing	Quite Appealing	Neutral	Slightly Unappealing	Not at All Appealing																																																																						
1. Listening comprehension	5	4	3	2	1																																																																						
2. Pair work	5	4	3	2	1																																																																						
3. Choral reading	5	4	3	2	1																																																																						
4. Seewo games	5	4	3	2	1																																																																						
5. Cloze reading	5	4	3	2	1																																																																						
6. Individual writing	5	4	3	2	1																																																																						
7. Group work	5	4	3	2	1																																																																						
8. Show and tell	5	4	3	2	1																																																																						
9. Video watching	5	4	3	2	1																																																																						
10. Role play	5	4	3	2	1																																																																						

## IOC Form 2

### Item Objective Congruence (IOC) Index Form for the Interview

**Objective:** This form is used to gain a deeper understanding of the participants' English language learning experiences.

<b>Satisfaction Form</b>			
<b>Directions:</b> Please tick ( ✓ ) only one in the appropriate column according to your consideration. Thank you for your cooperation. ( +1: Agree 0: Not sure -1: Disagree)			
Items	Expert		
	+1	0	-1
1. How do you generally feel about different English learning activities?			
2. Can you tell me about a time when you felt happy in an English class?			
3. Can you share with me an experience when you felt unhappy during an English class?			
4. Can you recall a challenging experience you had during an English class?			
5. Can you describe a time when you were particularly proud in English class?			

## Biography

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