

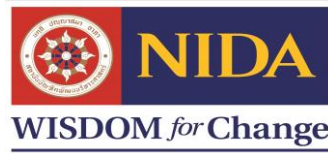
## The 6th International Conference on Language and Communication



“Language, Media, & Development  
in East and South-East Asia”

21 - 22 August, 2014

# *The 6<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Language and Communication*



## ICLC2014 Organizing Committee

### Preface

The proceedings of the International Conference on Language and Communication 2014 is an internationally peer-reviewed conference proceedings publication which aims to be the source promoting contributions of a variety of researchers' perspectives in interdisciplinary fields of inquiry, characterized as "Language, Media, and Development in East and South-East Asia."

On behalf of the organizing committee and the editorial board, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all ICLC2014 participants and GSLC staff for their hard work and effort in making the conference an inspiring event.

M.L. Jirapa Abhakorn  
Editor, *ICLC2014 Proceedings*  
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## **Western Travelogue Films Set in Siam during the Silent Film Era:**

### **A Case Study of *In Siamese Society* (USA 1919)**

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#### **Abstract**

Thailand's great variety of panoramas, its thriving domestic film industry and the country's well-developed infrastructure, have been attracting western filmmakers for over one hundred years. Hence, the number of western-produced films in Thailand in the 20<sup>th</sup> century is substantial. However, only little research about selected films made after the Second World War has been conducted. And studies of relevant films made prior, when Thailand was still named Siam, are virtually non-existent. This apparent lack of academic interest in these films may be attributed to the difficulty of actually finding them or because they were not preserved and are therefore lost forever. Incomplete and misleading information in particular about early films also poses a considerable problem. Nevertheless, a film-historical investigation into the corpus of western-produced films shot and set in Siam is called for because they were shaped by colonial and imperial worldviews of the West in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and by the modern interest in travelling. Therefore, they presented Siam, Siamese people and cultures to western viewers in very specific ways. These representations of Siam lasted well into the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The films that meet the necessary criteria – made by westerners, in Siam, to show Siam – are either travelogues, i.e. travel documentaries with a strong interest in the exploration of foreign cultures, or semi-documentaries/semi-narratives associated with the travelogue genre. The corpus of travelogues set in Siam can be divided into films of the silent



period, which officially ended in 1927, and films of the sound period. In order to limit the scope, this paper gives an overview of travelogues made during the silent film period only, and provides an in-depth analysis of *In Siamese Society* (USA 1919, Burton Holmes Travel Pictures) as a case study of Siam's depiction in western travelogues.

## **Introduction**

This paper seeks to make an original contribution to our understanding of western representations of Siam in a film, the underlying motivations of these representations, as well as their historical, cultural and ideological complexities. The second objective is to give an overview of the corpus of western films shot in Siam during the silent film period. One has to distinguish here between 1.) films made by European companies before the First World War, and 2.) U.S. American films made after the war until the late 1920s, when technological innovations brought about a fast transition to sound film.

Part 1 of the paper provides a definition and discussion of the travelogue film genre. The focus will be on viewer expectations after the turn of the century, the popular fascination with the cinematic travel experience, the genre's adherence to aesthetic traditions established by other media, the genre's cinematic style and dominant expressions, as well as broad influences of 19<sup>th</sup>- and 20<sup>th</sup>-century colonial and imperial attitudes on travelogue films.

Travelogue films formed the dominant genre of western films made and set in Siam during the silent film period and well into the sound period. Therefore, part 2 gives a brief overview of travelogue films made in Siam from 1909 to 1927 and discusses how colonial and imperial ideologies inherent in 19<sup>th</sup>-century travel literature about Siam shaped the content of underlying messages of these films.

Part 3 focuses on the renowned American travel lecturer and filmmaker Burton Holmes and provides an overview of the travelogue films he made in Siam in the years 1919 and 1920. The question of whether he coined the word “travelogue”, as is often believed, will also be addressed.

Part 4 is a comprehensive analysis of the Burton Holmes film *In Siamese Society* (USA 1919). This travelogue film consists of roughly six segments connected by intertitles and their common intention to offer western viewers insights into the life and culture in Siam. Finally, a discussion of the film’s intertitles reveals the colonial and imperial attitudes at that time as outlined in part 2.

### ***1. The Travelogue Film Genre***

A travelogue is a fusion of ‘travel’ and ‘monologue’, suggesting a form of (physical and/or mental) travel narrated by one voice, e.g. a speaker or writer. Dictionaries provide basic definitions: *Cambridge Dictionaries Online* defines travelogue as “a film or book about travelling to or in a particular place” (“travelogue,” 2014), *Oxford Dictionaries* defines it as a “film, book, or illustrated lecture about the places visited by or experiences of a traveller” (“travelogue,” 2014), and *Oxford English Dictionary* defines it as an “(illustrated) lecture about places and experiences encountered in the course of travel; hence a film, broadcast, book, etc., about travel; a travel documentary” (“travelogue,” 2014). Therefore, a travelogue can be a film, a book, broadcast, or a lecture supported by visual aids. It engages with a place visited by a traveler, and it is about the traveler’s experiences while traveling to, through and/or within that particular place. Essentially, it is a travel documentary.

According to Petersen (2013) from 1907, when the travelogue film genre began to emerge, until about 1915, when many film companies were struggling to stay relevant and competitive during the war, travelogue films played an important role in Europe and the US

(p. 3). Called ‘scenic films’ or ‘scenics’, travelogue films were popular during the whole silent film era, reaching a peak of popularity during the nickelodeon period (1905-1915). As non-narrative/non-fiction films they distinguished themselves clearly from action- and character-driven films. Usually they were not screened alone but as part of commercial film shows that would include a variety of films from different genres. Despite its widespread recognition, the travelogue genre film must be considered as marginal.

The phenomenon of voyaging lies at the heart of travelogue films. Presenting a series of disjunctive impressions of places, people and cultures, they offer a cinematic travel experience to other worlds that were perceived as existing in their own time and space. Being essentially imagined trips for their intended audiences, travelogues offer a gateway to escapism and, according to Petersen (2013) “construct travel as a kind of setting for desire” (p. xii), an embodiment of the spectator’s wish for knowledge and escape from daily routine.

Travelogues adhere to western aesthetic traditions. These preexisting visual traditions are based on the predecessors of photography, stereography, and magic lantern lectures. Spectators watched travelogues to experience something exotic, picturesque, and/or educational. Since the early film industry was largely considered an entertainment industry, it strived to gain respectability. Thus, it marketed the genre as valuable to one’s education about foreign places and cultures. Indeed, the films had didactic intentions, but the overall concern was to produce marketable travelogues that would provide aesthetically pleasing experiences. The word ‘picturesque’, then, is merely an advertising term for travelogues. Petersen (2013) writes: “By definition, the picturesque refers to a generalized sense of something aesthetically compelling, or “like a picture,” but as I point out, in travel films this dynamic has the effect of masking social and political realities with a veneer of clichéd beauty” (p. 21). (Interestingly, one travelogue film of the sound-film era is titled *Picturesque Siam* (USA 1934, dir. E. M. Newman, Warner Brothers.)

Travelogue films use a strategy that is rather different from narrative/fiction films. While the places depicted in travelogue films change, the ways in which they are shown changes only little because of the faithfulness to a rather narrow pattern, i.e. a formula. This formula concerns the travelogue's cinematic style and expression. Petersen (2013) gives a detailed explanation of the formula. Key features of it include: "a series of single, discrete exterior shots of landscapes and people," "explanatory intertitle[s]," a "stand-alone quality of the shots," editing that "preserves the integrity of each shot," shot arrangement "as a series of scenes that meander without a sense of progression," adherence to a "discontinuous editing principle," and "a sense that the shots form a collection rather than a unified whole." Travelogues also use "editing that shapes the film into a collection of views," usually "conclude with an emblematic shot [...] similar to a dramatic tableau," i.e. with an ending of "something picturesque [e.g. a sunset]," "something cute [e.g. a child]," or "something beautiful [e.g. a woman]." They also show "portraits (of people, costumes, things)" and use tracking shots (taken from a moving vehicle), which "are all about movement" (pp. 17-20).

Influenced by 19<sup>th</sup>-century western worldviews and values, travelogue films are awash with colonial and imperial subtexts. During the Progressive Era and Edwardian Period, imperialism was at a highpoint, which was reflected in western visual cultures not least in the travelogue film genre. Travelogues are in many ways expressions of the wide reach of Empire, therefore of western hegemony and territorial ambitions, as western filmmakers had the power to select their subjects, to film them, to comment on them, and to exhibit their films to mass audiences. Travelogue films were not propagandistic as they emerged before the rise of totalitarian states, but because they incorporated western-imperialist ideologies, they propagated these (unintentionally). Within travelogues' virtual contact zones of cultures, encounters between East and West could be staged, with western filmmakers in control of the staging processes and their passive subjects of interest. Thus, non-western cultures are placed

and viewed in a relation to western cultures, where this relation is one of differences, opposites, and hierarchies that regularly favors the western perspective.

## ***2. Travelogue Films Set in Siam***

Before the First World War four western films were likely shot in Siam (judging from titles and shooting locations cited on Internet Movie Database):

- *Livet i Nordsiam* (aka *Streetlife in the North of Siam*, Denmark 1909, Nordisk Film),
- *Transportation in Siam* (France 1911, Pathé Frères)
- *Siam, Its Rivers and Canals* (France 1912, Pathé Frères)
- *Siamese Customs* (France 1914, Pathé Frères, Distributor)

Whether *Livet i Nordsiam* is in fact the oldest western film shot and set in Siam, whether it still exists, and whether others exist besides these four is unclear. There was no US American film made in Siam before or during the First World War, and after the war the film industry in many European countries was struggling; therefore, no further European films were made in Siam during the rest of the silent film period. Instead, a few US American film production companies came to Siam (e.g. Burton Holmes Travel Pictures) and produced a number of travelogues there in 1919 and 1920 (see part 3).

During the 1920s there was still only little western film production in Siam. Two films that are historically significant are the feature-length films *Nangsao Suvanna* (USA, Thailand 1923) and *Chang: A Drama of the Wilderness* (USA 1927). Both were shot with Thai casts and US American directors, crew, and financial backing. While *Nangsao Suvanna* is lost, *Chang* has been preserved and is available on DVD. It is the oldest western-produced feature-length film set in Siam and was nominated for an Academy Award for “Unique and Artistic



Production” in 1929. Its directors were E. B. Schoedsack (1893 - 1979) and M. C. Cooper (1893 - 1973), famous for their semi-documentary *Grass: A Nation's Battle for Life* (USA 1925) and the groundbreaking *King Kong* (USA 1933).

As elaborated above, travelogue films were influenced by colonial and imperial ideologies. Moreover, travelogue films set in Siam were shaped by western 19<sup>th</sup>-century travel literature and the views perpetuated in it. These texts reveal an abundance of western colonial attitudes and stereotypes about Siam and the Asian continent in general, for example: 1.) The notion of quasi-colonization of Siam and the West's ownership of it. 2.) The desire for Siam to be a paradise for adventures and explorers and the nostalgia for a European rural idyll that could be found again in Siam. 3.) The ambivalence of the jungle, as it was seen as a frontier between the civilized and uncivilized world, the latter being in need for guidance by the West. 4.) The White Man's Burden, i.e. the idea that white Christians have to fulfill their mission of spreading Christianity and civilizing the heathens in order to secure their own and their subjects' salvation. 5.) The abundance of stereotypes about the Siamese people, including claims about the everlasting presence of oriental despotism and the allure of the harem. Siam and the entire Asian continent was propagated as being feminine, sensual, mystical, inferior and awaiting penetration, whereas the West was thought of as being masculine, intellectual, scientific, superior, and in the role of the penetrator. Furthermore, 19<sup>th</sup>-century travel literature often marked the Siamese as stubborn, lazy, resistant to conversion to Christianity, and likened them to children and animals.

### ***3. Burton Holmes' Travelogue Films Set in Siam***

The American traveler, photographer, and filmmaker Burton Holmes (1870-1958) was very active, particularly during the silent film era. He gained popularity through his documentary-style travel lectures, which he began in 1893 with public presentations about his journey

through Japan. The lectures became more successful when he began to incorporate the medium of film. Already before the turn of the century illustrated travel lectures by Holmes and other presenters captured people's imagination and were considered valuable sources of information about other countries, cultures and peoples. Owing to widespread appreciation, the travel lecture tradition lasted well into the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Holmes travelled excessively, documenting his trips around the world with the help of assistants. Later he made films for Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer and Paramount Pictures. To keep the films marketable he focused on the picturesque aspects of his subjects and avoided political commentaries, yet always maintaining a strong authorial presence in his live talks and travelogue films.

Holmes may be considered the father-figure of the travelogue. Whether he actually invented the word 'travelogue', as is stated on his Wikipedia entry ("Burton Holmes," 2014), is questionable. Petersen (2013) writes: "Burton Holmes did probably not coin the word travelogue as the word appeared as early as 1899. However, through his lectures Holmes popularized it (p. 23)." On this topic the official website of Burton Holmes (2006) states: "Burton Holmes did, or did not, invent the term "Travelogues" for his travel lectures with slides and movies. While Holmes is generally given credit for the term, he himself always said that the term was coined by his manager, Louis Francis Brown" (The Invention of the Term "Travelogues").

During its years of operation from 1916 to 1924, Holmes's company Burton Holmes Travel Pictures produced 248 travelogues shot around the world. At least eleven of these films were shot in Siam:

- *Bangkok* (USA 1919)
- *In Siamese Society* (USA 1919)
- *Ayudhya, Siam* (USA 1919)
- *Teak Logging with Elephants* (USA 1919)

- *The White Elephant Militant* (USA 1919)
- *King Rama at the Royal Wat* (USA 1919)
- *The Royal Ballet of Bangkok* (USA 1920)
- *Oriental College Boys and Co-Eds* (USA 1920)
- *The Kingdom of the Yellow Robe* (USA 1920)
- *Up-Country in Siam* (USA 1920)
- *An Oriental Sing Sing* (USA 1920)

Unfortunately, the Internet Movie Database does not provide any shooting locations for these films – nor does any other website. However, their titles and the chronology of their production suggest that they were indeed made in Siam. Moreover, *In Siamese Society* (USA 1919) and *Teak Logging with Elephants* (USA 1919) are widely available on the Internet, while the exact shooting locations and the actual survival of the other films listed above still need to be confirmed.

#### **4. *In Siamese Society* (USA 1919)**

*In Siamese Society* is 9 minutes and 40 seconds long, equaling the length of one 300-meter-reel. It was produced by Burton Homes Travel Pictures and distributed in the US by Paramount Pictures. As the title suggests, the goal is to observe the upper-class in Siam. It may be the oldest surviving western travelogue set in Siam. Thus far the researcher has been unable to find older such films. YouTube.com member Michael Rogge uploaded it as *Thailand, Siamese high society in 1919*, and Jeff Quitney uploaded it as *Thailand: "In Siamese Society" circa 1925 Filmo Bell & Howell Company*. Rogge's upload is accompanied by traditional, instrumental Thai music. Quitney's is silent and longer due to a Bell & Howell company logo at the beginning. This company produced of camera equipment and projectors.

The reasons for the existence of different versions are unclear. The musical accompaniment for *In Siamese Society* probably varied when it was first screened in US cities in the 1920s. Therefore the current paper does not treat musical components, and instead focuses on the images, the intertitles, and their apparent and implied messages.

The film consists of six segments: 1.) a scenery along a river bank, 2.) a hostess and child awaiting guests, 3.) a female servant applying cooling powder, 4.) a social gathering 5.) a woman putting on a Panung (traditional dress), and 6.) a panorama along a river bank. Segments two to five are choreographed and staged for the camera. The platform on which the social gathering takes place is like a stage. Nevertheless, all scenes are natural. Occasional lack of editing-continuity suggests that the central segment was filmed twice. The following is a detailed analysis of each segment.

### ***First Segment***

The film opens with the title caption “IN SIAMESE SOCIETY,” followed by intertitle [1]: “The smart set in Siam dwell in airy mansions amid the temples and pagodas of their Buddhist faith ---.” Impressions captured from a leisurely moving boat on the Chao Phraya River establish Siam as the setting. One sees wooden houses, piers and plants along the river bank, and the white spire of Wat Prayoon (a temple in Thonburi downstream of Wat Arun) in the background. (As is typical for travelogues, *In Siamese Society* presents Bangkok as representative of and synonymous with Siam.) Staging the camera on a boat is typical for travelogues as it reflects people’s turn-of-the-century fascination with movement on the cinema screen, which was a common metaphor for modern life itself.

The segment is interrupted: “We are privileged to attend a “social function” in a fashionable home ---.” [2] This prepares the viewer for the main event. But first more river bank scenery is shown before the second segment begins.

### ***Second Segment***

Intertitle [3] reads: “The hostess and her little daughter await the guests ---.” A mother and her young daughter are sitting on an elevated platform presumably in the garden of their house, and a servant is lying in the background. The hostess’s dress and mannerism suggest that she is a woman of high social standing and that she is about to host the aforementioned “social function.”

### ***Third Segment***

The story started in the previous segment is interrupted. Intertitle [4] reads: “The servant (they still have servants in Siam) is making up her mind and all the rest of her ---.” A young woman is applying cooling powder to her face, arms and shoulders, while another female servant is fanning her with a palm tree branch. A third female servant is observing both, and: “The powdery polka dots are supposed to keep her cool ---.” [5] The activity of powder application is shown with a medium shot, and intertitle [6] continues the thought: “--- so feeling cool, she can smile – which is more than we can do on a Siamese summer day ---.” In a medium close-up the woman, smiling coyly, looks just passed the camera, presumably at the filmmaker standing in the off. She does not appear in the film again. Therefore, this segment is independent in character. It introduces the viewer to a supposedly significant cultural activity.

### ***Fourth Segment***

Continuing the second segment, this central part of *In Siamese Society* gives selective insights into a social gathering of a group of upper-class women. Eastgate Dann (2008) notes: “The ‘harem’ has long been used in literature as the focal point of Eastern life, one of the essential differences in the minds of Westerners, between ‘us’ and ‘them’. As Grewal (1996:82) explains, the harem ‘became the racial sign for ‘Eastern’ culture’” (137). Western fascination



with the oriental harem in general and as it was imagined in novels has already been pointed out further above. This fascination extends to the film about the life of Siamese women. It must have been a very conscious decision by the filmmaker to make *In Siamese Society* into a film about women's individual and group activities and not to have any scenes showing Siamese men.

Intertitle [7] opens the segment: "The expected guests arrive – all ladies, though they don't wear skirts and do cut their hair ---." Six women enter a street through a garden gate and walk in a single file toward the right of the screen. Each woman wears her hair quite short. Each is dressed in a Panung (a traditional dress) and white blouse, one of them carrying a plate of food on her shoulder, another one holding a closed umbrella. Contrary to the intertitle's announcement, the group appears to be leaving their own home rather than arriving at that of the hostess.

At their destination, the group is welcomed by a servant: "The servants announce the guests – creeping in and out – It would be disrespectful to walk erect ---." [8] Prostrated in front of her mistress, the servant informs her about the guests' arrival, while another servant beckons them unto the platform. This is followed by intertitle [9]: "The guests are shown in ---." Having removed their shoes and ascended the steps, they proceed on the platform on their hands and knees. The camera pans to capture their bows of respect. Intertitle [10] comments: "Even they must creep, for courtesy demands this manner of approach – A polite salutation becomes a physical collapse ---." The group is sitting in a semi-circle so as to allow the camera an unobstructed view. Defying narrative continuity, intertitle [11] reads: "At every threshold there must be a jar of water – that all who enter may wash their feet –,” upon which the last woman rinses her feet and at the bottom of the steps.

Suddenly, attention shifts to the child: "The baby has been carefully brought up – Observe her pretty manners ---." [12] The "baby" is actually a girl aged three to four.

Encouraged by her mother, she greets every guest, bowing low in their direction. The mother then praises her obedient child.

A servant places a large bowl in front of the group, beside a tray with cups and condiments. Intertitle [13] intends to be humorous: “The favorite fashionable vice is the chewing of betel - Note: the betel is **not** a crawling bug but a biting-hot pepper leaf ---.” The hostess pulls the tray closer and examines the content of a teapot. Intertitle [14] states: “Making up the “quid” is an art – A slice of ARECA NUT is smeared with tinted lime and wrapped in the leaf of the peppery BETEL PLANT ---.” The viewer watches as the hostess instructs two guests in their handling of the leaves. “While the chewer chews, a reddish juice comes trickling from one corner of the mouth ---.” [15] The camera focuses on the two guests preparing the leaves and on one of them putting a folded leaf with content in her mouth. Intertitle [16] also attempts to be funny: “The juice also discolors the teeth – but it cheers and stimulates the chewer – The Siamese like it – Let ‘em – at least until the Anti-Betel-League gets after ‘em ---.” But no trickling juice or discolored teeth are shown. Could this be a case of (self-)censorship? A close-up of the two women’s hands and the small pots and condiments in front of them shows how the leaves are handled. The feast continues: “Tea is served –.” [17] The hostess pours the hot beverage while her daughter is looking on.

The scene digresses. Intertitle [18] reads: “Meantime we make a close-up look of the baby’s peculiar haircut ---.” The child is facing the camera so that the viewer may study its crouched position and “peculiar” hairstyle. When children of a Siamese aristocratic family reached a certain age, they shaved their hair in a circular way around the head and folded it at the top to symbolize nobility.

Intertitle [19] shifts the focus to Siamese clothing, but is awkwardly placed: “Dressmakers would starve in this land of the PANUNG – a three yard piece of silk or cotton which is merely *folded on* ---.” The camera focuses on the lower body of each guest as they

are departing. They hobble forward on their knees, exit the platform, and put on their shoes. This ends the central part of the film.

### ***Fifth Segment***

Following intertitle [20], “We bribe a servant to betray the secret of the simple, seamless, hookless, eyeless, pinless, buttonless PANUNG ---,” a young woman demonstrates how to put on a Panung dress, while a girl is looking on. This segment mirrors the second segment as both serve to showcase an important everyday activity rather than to contribute to the main event of segments two and four.

### ***Sixth Segment***

The film returns to its beginning, as intertitle [21] announces the end: “And what IS the Siamese word for ‘Goodbye’.” The camera is staged on a river boat, leisurely moving along the bank in the same direction as in the opening act. The shore passing by and a woman is departing a boat and stepping onto a pier.

The screen-filling trademark image of Burton Holmes Travel Pictures concludes the film. It is a collage of eight triangular images, depicting mountains, the sea, palm trees, and famous landmarks such as Egyptian pyramids and the Eiffel Tower. A silhouette of Burton Holmes’s head places him at the center, while the words *The End* are fading in.

Clearly, *In Siamese Society*’s intertitles are relevant when interpreting the film. They are written in white on a black surface. Many are embellished with hand-painted objects and people, usually placed below the text near the lower right corner. They depict the following: a wooden house by a river together with a pier and a long-tail boat [title], a pagoda [1], a vase with flowers [2], a child kneeling on the floor [3], an assortment of containers [4], a Buddha statue on a pedestal [5], a large umbrella [6], a makeup table and mirror [7], a khon statue

holding a fan [8], the silhouette of a worshipper [9], a child next to jack-in-the-box [12], a spilled wine glass, a leaf and a burning cigarette [13], and a smiling child [18]. Why several intertitles are not accompanied by paintings is unclear. It suggests that several people worked on the creation of the intertitles.

The purpose of the intertitles is to complement the texts and to prepare the viewer for the scenes. They also serve as a way for the filmmaker to comments on the images the way a voice-over commentary would in a sound-film documentary. Selected words and meanings are significant. The intertitles' references to temples, pagodas, style of dress, cooling powder, Buddhism, hospitality, demonstration of reverence and respect, social custom and etiquette, and betel nut chewing are intended to emphasize key elements of Siamese culture and everyday life. At the same time, they indicate the filmmaker's preferred topics in a film of very limited length; thus, only subjects considered truly representative of Siamese high society are included.

Emphasizing one piece of clothing, as in "in this land of the PANUNG" [19], points at the tendency to simplify the subject rather than grappling with its complexity. An exaggeration such as "A polite salutation becomes a physical collapse" [10] to describe the guests and servants' stooping in front of the lady is ill-chosen because it does not take fully into account each individual's awareness of their rank in the hierarchy and the necessity to keep one's head below that of the hostess at all times. An attempt at humor such as "the betel is **not** a crawling bug" [13] influences the viewers' reading of the travelogue, while "We bribe a servant to betray the secret" [20] implies a Siamese inclination to be corrupt and deceitful. The name "Anti-Betel-League" [16] is also meant to be witty and again requires a western-centric interpretation. It is a tongue-in-cheek reference to the temperance movements of the 1910s and 1920s in the U.S. and many other western countries. Finally, the pronoun "we" [2, 6, 18, 20] attempts to make viewers feel included. The prompts "Observe" [12], "Note" [13] and "Let"

[16] attempt to build an emphatic connection between the viewers and the Siamese “characters”. And the adjectives “smart” and “airy” [1], “fashionable” [2, 13], “little” [3], “pretty” [12], “favorite” [13], and “peculiar” [18] are manipulative authorial commentary as they also direct the spectators’ attention and heavily influence their reading of the events on the screen.

### Conclusion

The discussion of western travelogue films set in Siam during the silent film era and their representations of Siam has generated several insights:

Films of the travelogue genre sought to satisfy viewer expectations in the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century by their objectives to entertain, educate, and provide experiences of virtual traveling and “modern” movement. The genre adheres to aesthetic traditions of photography, and its dominant expressions reveal strong influences of 19<sup>th</sup>- and 20<sup>th</sup>-century colonial and imperial attitudes, such as the use of stereotypes and even racism in the descriptions of non-western cultures and people.

The overview of travelogue films made and set in Siam during the silent film period has included four films made by European companies before the First World War and eleven US American productions made in the post-war years. In the 1920s feature-length films were also produced, most notably the semi-documentary *Chang: A Drama of the Wilderness* (USA 1927) by Schoedsack and Cooper, who also wrote and directed *King Kong* (USA 1933). Moreover, the discussion has shown that travelogues set in Siam were influenced by colonial and imperial ideologies inherent in 19<sup>th</sup>-century travel literature about the country.

The introduction to the American filmmaker Burton Holmes and the overview of his films have shown that he was the major force behind silent travelogue films set in Siam. It has



also become clear that Holmes did not coin the word “travelogue,” however he was a central figure in popularizing travelogues through his filmmaking activity and travel lectures.

The analysis of Burton Holmes’s *In Siamese Society* has revealed a division of the film into several segments that are interrelated by their common interest in Siamese life and culture. The length of the film is limited to below ten minutes. Therefore, the filmmaker had to be selective in his choice of subjects and impressions that he deemed as culturally significant for western cinema audiences to see. The central segment, showing the social gathering of a group of upper-class women, is complemented by two main activities: the application of cooling powder to the skin and the process of putting on a Panung dress. As is typical for a travelogue, these activities are presented in stand-alone segments. Impressions of the river banks of the Chao Phraya, captured from a moving ship, open and close the film. The analysis of each segment and the accompanying intertitles has shown that the scenes are staged and that the intertitle texts are shaped by colonial and imperial attitudes that (unintentionally) belittle the Siamese.

The insights arrived at in this paper are inevitably limited because of the necessity to restrict its scope to films made during the silent film period and reliance on a case study approach. The inclusion of further in-depth analyses of separate films and the inclusion of travelogues with sounds made in the 1930s could lead to a reevaluation of the observations and conclusions presented here.

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## **Linguistic Landscape of Two Language Schools in Bangkok**

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### **Abstract**

Studies of the linguistic landscape (LL) are concerned with the language of signs in public spaces such as advertising signs, posters, official notices and other public signs. This qualitative and quantitative study investigated the linguistic landscape of two language schools in the Bangkok Metropolitan Area (American University Association [AUA] Language Center and the British Council). The aim of this study was to explore the characteristics and amount of ad signs, language(s) used, the number of words, and font sizes. The research involved collecting and analyzing 44 advertising signs displayed in the schools' spaces and their vicinity. This study revealed that the issue under study, when viewed from different perspectives, could allow observers to draw a few conclusions bearing on the social and urban dynamics of modern Thai life in the context of globalization. "Globalization" is here understood in a narrow sense as a social factor affecting the social life and aspirations of the population of a particular country and serving as an inspiration for development, and prospective business opportunity, from the perspective of the language schools. Though not involved directly with the English language teaching classroom, the research is relevant in the context of understanding the learners' expectations and developing language teaching strategies and policies as well as figuring out marketing policies. The schools' linguistic landscape offers evidence bearing on the ideologies and identities as subscribed and maintained by the institutions.

*Keywords:* Linguistic Landscape, Advertising Signs, Globalization, Ideology, Identity

## **Introduction**

Language is represented and displayed around contemporary society in different forms, both spoken and written. In any given public space, a myriad of written language is displayed for various purposes as it is on shop windows, commercial signs, posters, street signs, official notices, advertising billboards, area maps and in many other forms. The signs are meant for people to receive the messages that businesses and authorities intend to send, hopefully without causing information overload.

Taking a closer look at the language on advertising billboards or advertising signs in Bangkok's public spaces, English is noticeable as one of the major languages. The spread of English into advertising signs is one of the most obvious markers of the modernization of Thai society. Study of language on advertising signs can reflect the power, status and importance of a particular language in a given society. A study by Huebner (2006) can be considered the first and foremost to examine the linguistic landscape (LL) of Bangkok. He demonstrated how the language on the signs in Bangkok reflected the growing influence of English upon the Thai language. Since the time of his study, the importance of English has been increasing even more rapidly in various fields such as business, tourism, and education.

English use in international communication is evidence of the globalization of urban Thai society. English is an important language and it is a symbol of modernity in Thailand (Smalley, 1994). It is taught as a foreign language, but it has played an important role in Thai education. The popularity of English can be seen from the mushrooming language schools, both large and small; the two oldest English teaching institutions are the American University Association Language Center, often simply referred to as AUA, established in 1952 (History

of AUA, 2013), and the British Council, or BC, also established in 1952 (About British Council Thailand, 2013).

The LL of the two schools' advertising billboards with different messages has become the focus of this study because these signs not only try to attract learners to sign up for lessons, they also reflect the ideology and the identity of the institutions.

This study attempted to uncover the LL of AUA and BC in aspects such as number of ad signs, languages(s) used, the number of words, and font sizes. Data came from ad signs collected from AUA and BC branches in the Bangkok metropolitan areas. There were 16 ad signs from six branches of AUA, located in Chamchuri Square, Hua Mark, Muang Thong Thani, Ratchayothin, Srinakarin, and Thonburi. There were 28 ad signs from five branches of BC, located in Chaengwattana, Ladprao, Pinklao, Siam Square, and Srinakarin.

### **Literature Review**

Coulmas (2009), basing his research on the historical perspective, argues that ancient inscriptions or, to be precise, texts left to be viewed in the public space, prove that the linguistic landscape is as old as writing and probably started simultaneously with urbanization. However, the definition of LL appears to have been first used by Landry and Bourhis (1997, cited in Backhaus, 2007, p. 9). According to their definition, LL refers to all language items on signs that are visible in a given public space:

“The language of public road signs, advertising billboards, street names, place names, commercial shop signs, and public signs on government buildings combines to form the linguistic landscape of a given territory, region, or urban agglomeration.”

The study of LL is concerned with the written form on display in the public space (Coulmas, 2009; Backhaus, 2007; Gorter, 2006). The written form in the public space includes any sign located outside or inside a given location (Ben-Rafael et al., 2006). These definitions therefore emphasize that the focal point of LL study is the language on signs in the public space.

Some pioneering studies had been conducted before Landry and Bourhis, in 1997, coined a proper name for the study of language on signs. Most of these studies typically focused on particular cities and their signs, yielding results that reflected on the languages present in the particular cities. For instance, Masai (1972, cited in Backhaus, 2007) investigated the language used on signs in a monolingual area: Shinjuku, Japan. The results showed the presence of foreign languages such as English, French, Spanish, Chinese, German, and Russian.

Spolsky (2009) summarized LL studies in bilingual cities, such as research on LL in Brussels, Belgium by Tulp (1978), which showed “the predominance of French”, and signs on a Jerusalem street (Rosenbaum et al., 1977) which found the presence of English and Romanized scripts on signs. Surprising findings in the commercial sectors of Montreal, Canada, revealed the presence of English instead of the expected monolingual French (Monnier, 1989, cited in Backhaus, 2007).

The effect of globalization is made visible through the presence of English language in ad signs. The studies of LL, therefore, have so far focused on multilingualism, especially the ad signs in shopping and commercial areas. There are a number of articles and journals on pure LL and multilingualism such as Backhaus (2007), Torkington (2008), Gorter (2006), and Shohamy & Gorter (2009). Gorter (2006) assembled a special issue of LL: *A New Approach to Multilingualism*. This special issue examines the LL in Jerusalem (Israel), Bangkok (Thailand), Tokyo (Japan), Friesland (the Netherlands), and the Basque Country (Spain). The

articles deal with the categorization of the signs (official versus non-official signs or top-down and bottom-up signs) and the characteristics of the signs such as what language was displayed on signs (monolingual, bilingual, multilingual), size of text used, amount of information, the presence of translation, and the order of language on signs.

Apart from the articles and journals written by seasoned scholars, there have also been a few theses written by MA students with an interest in LL research. While we do not intend to pass judgment on the scholarly value of the below-mentioned works, we feel that mentioning them is necessary as it demonstrates that the issue at hand is perceived as worthy of the international scholastic community's attention. There are at least three studies worth mentioning in this context. Karapalo (2011) described the social reality of English in Tampere, Finland, by applying LL. Botterman's LL study (2011) uncovered the degree of multilingualism in Ghent, Belgium. Edelman (2010) revealed to what extent LL in the Netherlands reflected the spoken languages of the community, and the factors influencing linguistic and semiotic properties of signs.

Today there are numerous scholars from a variety of fields such as education, sociology, and tourism who have shown interest in LL (Shohamy & Gorter, 2009). Sayer (2010) proposes an approach for using LL as a pedagogical resource in Mexico by analyzing the social meanings of the English language. In addition, Cenoz and Gorter (2008) study the potential use of LL as a source in language acquisition and stress that LL can be conducive to learning, contributing to improved second-language acquisition. From a more sociological perspective, Ben-Rafael's 2009 study analyzes how LL reveals people's participation, and shapes social actions, ranging from religious to commercial events, to mention just two. However, seeing the issue from a different perspective, Kallen (2009) examined how LL is used to play the role of ideological tool, together with the issue of authenticity in tourism signs in the Irish linguistic landscape.



## **Methodology**

The methodology adopted for this study should be defined as both qualitative and quantitative. Collecting data involved taking digital photographs of both schools' advertisement signs and storing them in a computer for later analysis. This method is typical for LL research as the use of digital cameras allows the researcher to take an unlimited number of photographs of linguistic objects (Gorter, 2006). The data was analyzed and sorted into four categories: the number of ad signs, language(s) used, the number of words, and font sizes of the bilingual ad signs. This way of sorting the data proved to be relatively simple and efficient with the help of Microsoft Excel. In one particular section (the number of words), the data was categorized qualitatively for "content words" for further quantitative analysis. The qualitative methodology was also used in doing discussion and drawing conclusions relevant to the scope of the research and bearing on the social, urban, and business matters.

The collection of data included taking photographs of AUA and BC advertisements as found in the schools' branches. There are altogether 17 branches of AUA located in different parts of Thailand. Out of them, only six branches located in the Bangkok Metropolitan Area were selected for this study. Out of six BC branches, five are located in Bangkok, and the sixth is located in the city of Chiangmai, in northern Thailand. Only the five Bangkok BC branches were selected for this study.

Studies of LL typically identify areas and locations of interest as points of discussion (William & Van der Merwe, 1996, cited in Muth, 2008). This idea justifies our giving descriptions of the locations of the two schools. All the schools are located in urban areas. The Chamchuri Square branch (AUA) and Siam Square branch (BC) are in the major commercial centers of Bangkok. The Ratchayothin branch (AUA) and Ladprao branch (BC) are also located in commercial areas, in the east side of Bangkok. The Hua Mark branch (AUA), Srinakarin branch (AUA and BC) and Chaengwattana branch (BC) are at large

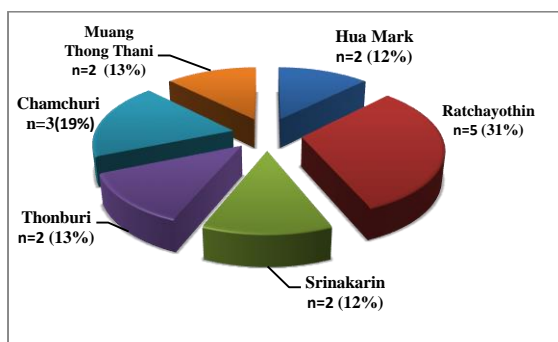
shopping malls. The Thonburi branch (AUA) and Pinklao branch (BC) are in the west side of Bangkok. The Muang Thong Thani branch (AUA) is in a venue complex for exhibitions and entertainment events, Impact Muang Thong Thani.

We visited 11 branches of AUA and five of BC on three occasions in order to collect data. The first time in July 2013 was purely for the purpose of surveying, or examining the accessibility of the branches and the surrounding environment. Then, visiting the branches again in August 2013 with a digital camera, we started to photograph all ad signs displayed inside the schools, and in their immediate vicinity.

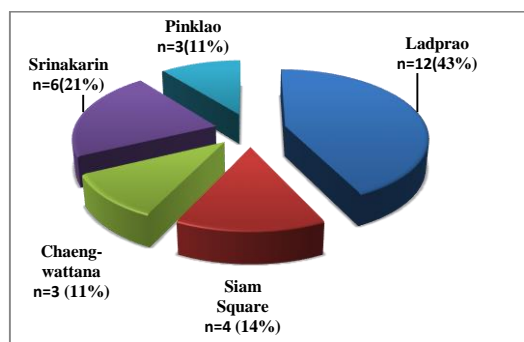
The linguistic landscape is represented by signs that may be removed or added regularly, or that have been present for many years (Gorter, 2006). This statement served as a valuable suggestion that encouraged us to embark on the second data collection mission in October 2013. We found that some previous ad signs had been removed and newly updated ones had been posted. Finally, we had collected 44 ad samples. Each one served as a unit of analysis. Out of the 44, 16 ad signs were collected from six branches of AUA, and the remaining 28 ad signs were collected from five branches of BC.

## Findings

### *Amount of Ad Signs*



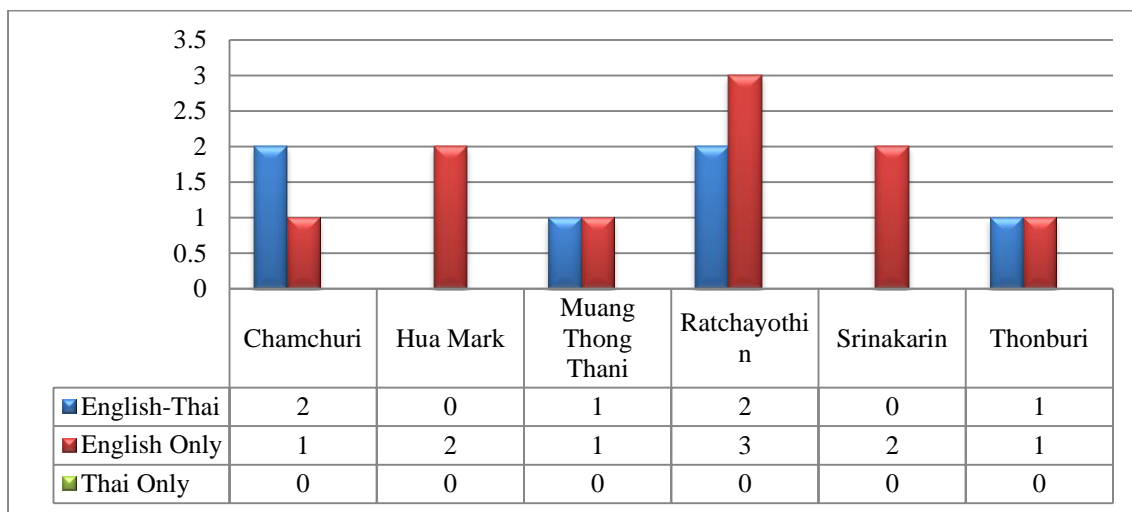
**Figure 1:** Proportion of AUA ad signs



**Figure 2:** Proportion of BC ad signs

The pie charts of ad signs of AUA and BC above show that, for AUA, the most ads found were at the Ratchayothin branch (n=5 or 31%). The remaining (number) branches displayed similar numbers of only two or three advertising signs. Looking at BC, the most signs were found at the Ladprao branch (n=12 or 43%); 21% were found at Srinakarin, and 14% at Siam Square, while only three were displayed at both Pinklao and Chaengwattana (n=3 or 11%).

### *Languages Used*

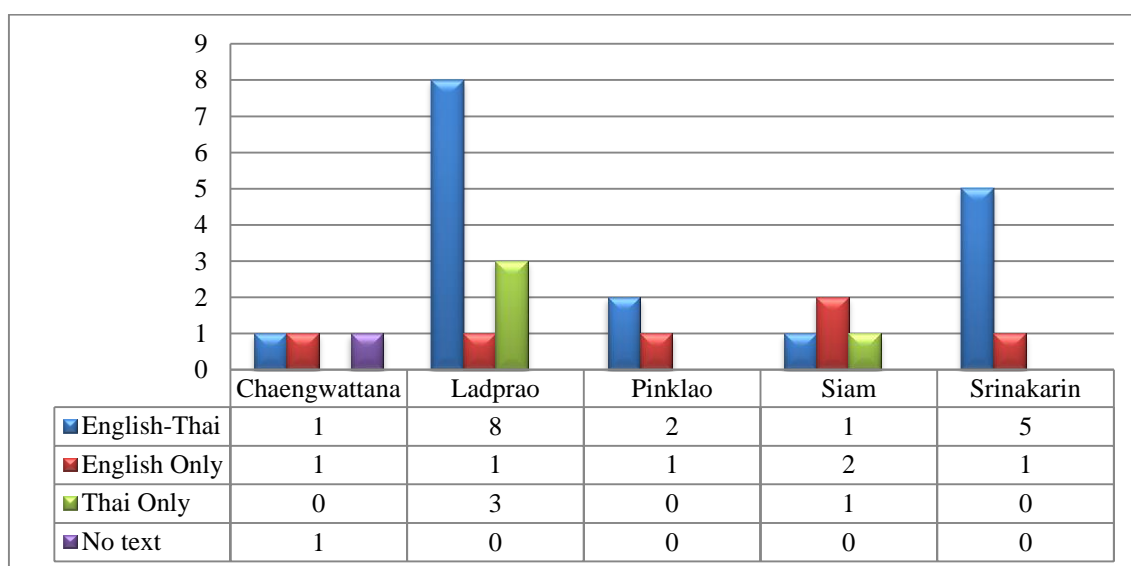


**Figure 3:** Proportion of languages used on ad signs on AUA's branches

Another characteristic of the ad signs analyzed was the proportions of English and Thai language used by both language schools. The overview of language use proportion of AUA is displayed in figure 3. The total 16 AUA signs appeared to be either English-only or bilingual (English-Thai). No monolingual Thai ad signs were found at any branch. However, the Hua Mark and Srinakarin branches were the two locations with no bilingual English-Thai on ad signs.



**Picture 1:** Monolingual English ad sign of AUA



**Figure 4:** Proportion of languages used on ad signs on BC's branches

Figure 4 demonstrates the proportion of languages used on ad signs of BC. Of the 28 ad signs examined, some were bilingual English-Thai ( $n=17$ ), some were monolingual English ( $n=6$ ), some were monolingual Thai ( $n=4$ ), and one had no text but only images of people ( $n=1$ ). The Chaengwattana, Ladprao, and Siam Square branches used bilingual English-Thai signs, monolingual English signs, and monolingual Thai signs to advertise the schools. The Chaengwattana branch also used the ad sign that had no texts but only images of

people. At the same time, the ad signs of Pinklao and Srinakarin branch were bilingual English-Thai and monolingual English. From the data, what all the signs save one had in common is that they were all either bilingual English-Thai, monolingual English or monolingual Thai.

Comparisons between the findings in figure 3 and figure 4 are needed. It is notable that many of both AUA's and BC's ad signs were monolingual English. There were no monolingual Thai AUA ad signs, while two branches of BC used monolingual Thai text. Regarding bilingual ad signs, every branch of BC had signs with both English and Thai. BC mostly uses bilingual English-Thai advertisements rather than monolingual ads. On the other hand, only four out of six branches of AUA used bilingual English-Thai in ad signs. In addition, only one of all BC's signs had no text, while no-text signs were not found in any of AUA's Bangkok branches.



Picture 2: Bilingual English-Thai ad sign of BC



Picture 3: Monolingual Thai ad sign  
of BC

### *Font Sizes*

Another characteristic to analyze was the size of the fonts of each language in bilingual English-Thai ad signs. The results are given in table 1. In all bilingual AUA ad signs, the English text was presented with a larger font size.

**Table 1:** Font sizes of texts on bilingual English-Thai signs of AUA

Language Size	Branches			
	Chamchuri	Muang Thong Thani	Thonburi	Ratchayothin
All the same	-	-	-	-
English larger	2	1	10	2
Thai larger	-	-	-	-

The results for BC follow the same direction. The English text was larger than the Thai text in all signs.

**Table 2:** Font sizes of texts on bilingual English-Thai signs of BC

Language Size	Branches				
	Chaengwattana	Ladprao	Pinklao	Siam Square	Srinakarin
All the same	-	-	-	-	-
English larger	1	7	2	1	5
Thai larger	-	-	-	-	-

From the data, English is the dominant language of all signs. It was presented in an obviously larger font size in all ad signs.



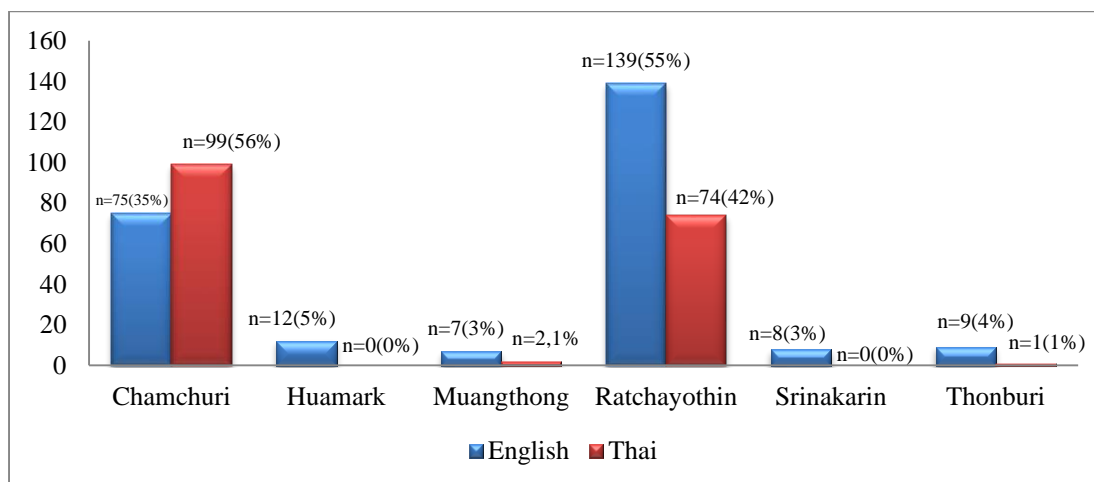
**Picture 4:** Bilingual English-Thai ad sign of AUA



**Picture 5:** Bilingual English-Thai ad sign of BC

### *The Number of Words*

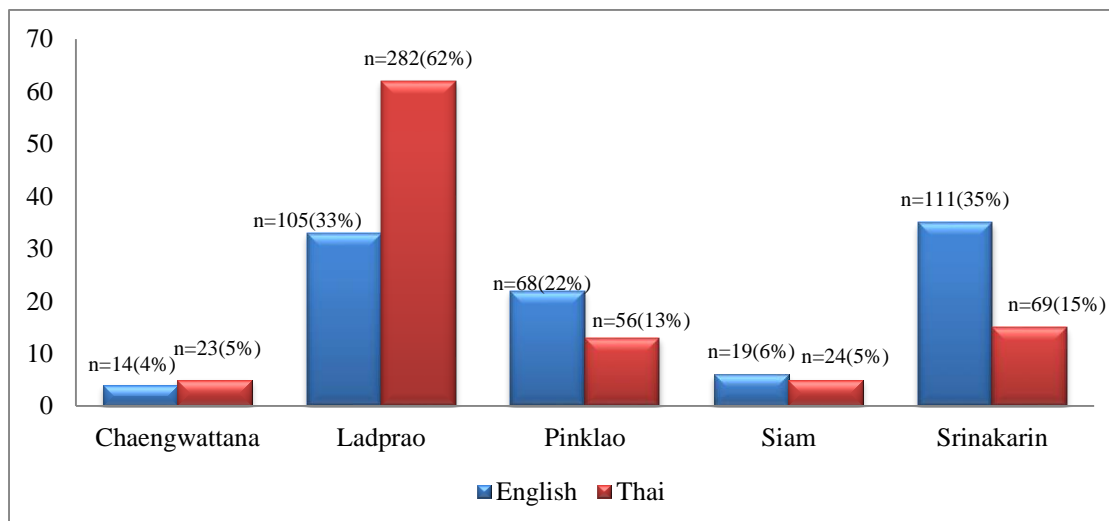
The next LL element to be reported is the number of words used in each advertising sign. For the six AUA branches and five BC branches, figures 5 and 6 show the number of words per ad for each branch.



**Figure 5:** The number of words used on AUA ad signs

Let us start with AUA. At the Chamchuri branch, more Thai text was found than at other branches (n=99 or 56%). To illustrate, 42% (n=74) of all the Thai text appeared at the Ratchayothin branch, and 1% each appeared at the Thonburi (n=1) and Muang Thong Thani branches (n=2). On the other hand, no Thai text was found at the Hua Mark and Srinakarin branches. However, greater use of English words was found at the Ratchayothin branch (n=139 or 55%) and Chamchuri branch (n=75 or 35%). The number of English words dropped to only 12, or 5%, at Hua Mark. At the Srinakarin (n=8 or 3%), Thonburi (n=9 or 4%), and Muang Thong Thani (n=7 or 3%) branches, the number of English words was found to be even lower.





**Figure 6:** The number of words used on BC ad signs

In the BC ads, according to figure 6, Thai text was used mostly at the Ladprao branch (n=282 or 62%), while at the Srinakarin and Pinklao branches, the amount of Thai text measured 15% (n=69) and 13% (n=56). In addition, Thai text accounted for only 5% (n=24) and (n=23) of language in signs at the Siam Square and Chaengwattana branches, respectively. About the same amount of English was used in the signs at the Srinakarin branch (n=111 or 35%) and Ladprao branch (n=105 or 33%). The least English text was found at the Pinklao branch (n=68 or 22%), Siam Square branch (n=19 or 6%) and Chaengwattana branch (n=14 or 4%).

## Discussion

It is obvious that over the past decade, Bangkok has joined the trend of globalization, which is defined as the flow of goods, money, images, finance and business, as well as the migration of people, mobility of tourists, interaction of media, and advancement of communication technologies (Fairclough, 2006). In economic terms, globalization is the integration of national economies into an international economy through trade, direct foreign investment,

short-term cash flow, migration of workers, and adoption of new technologies (Bhagwati, 2004, cited in Vaish, 2010; McCulloch, 2002).

The economic situation in Bangkok has seen a dramatic change recently, made visible by the increasing investment of foreign companies, the expansion of business areas, and the mass transit system such as the skytrain and subway. The skytrain, for instance, represents a symbol of modernity (Jenks, 2004).

When we take a closer look at the effect of globalization on language, we can see that more and more people are using English as a matter of course. Undoubtedly, this language has become vital for modern society. English usage is a consequence of globalization to serve intercultural communication (Seidlhofer, 2011; Pennycook, 2007). English is important enough to be learned as a second language on the international level (Amberg & Vause, 2009). Even though the Thai government made the English language a compulsory subject of study from primary school onwards, apparently it has proven insufficient to enable students to communicate with foreigners in some cases. (Though this is presented as an opinion, it should be perceived as an observable fact.) To serve the demands of English communication outside schools, there are an increasing number of international institutions and English programmes in Thai education (Darasawang, 2007). We, therefore, can assume that in order to survive in this era of globalization, Thai people must become proficient in English.

One of the major growth industries in the past decade is the English language teaching business (Crystal, 1997). Courses in English are becoming more popular for those who would like to improve their English skills. The most popular varieties of English being taught around the globe are British and American English (Ronowicz, 2011). Though there are many language schools in Thailand, this study focuses on two major schools: AUA and British Council. Both of these are well-known and well-established schools in the English language teaching field. AUA started its social organization in 1924 with cooperation between Thai

students returning from their studies in the United States, and their American friends in Thailand (History of AUA, 2013). AUA has aimed to promote understanding between Thais and Americans through their language, customs, and traditions since 1952 (History of AUA, 2013). There are a total of 17 branches in Thailand, with five of these branches operating in the Bangkok Metropolitan Area: Chamchuri Square, Hua Mark, Muang Thong Thani, Ratchayothin, and Srinakarin. The other famous English language school is the British Council, which is an international organization to promote international education and cultural opportunities. The institution has been one of the communication bridges between Thailand and the United Kingdom since 1938, and the BC English teaching institution established its first office in Bangkok in 1952 (About British Council Thailand, 2013). There are a total of five BC branches in the Bangkok Metropolitan Area: Chaengwattana, Ladprao, Pinklao, Siam Square, and Srinakarin.

The branches of AUA and BC in the Bangkok Metropolitan Area are similar in number; therefore, we can assume that the number of ad signs of both language schools should also be similar. Surprisingly, after analyzing the data, we found that the total number of ad signs of AUA was much lower than that of BC. As seen from the data, it was observed that the much greater number of BC promotion signs related to the activities offered to language learners throughout the academic year. It was found that BC offered many updated activities for those who wish to gain experience in and new knowledge about English through workshops, seminars, exhibitions, and competitions. That was most likely the reason why (confirmed by the data collected) BC employed a greater number of ad signs than AUA. Before taking a closer look of the amount of ad signs in each branch of AUA and BC, we think it vital to specify the areas where the schools are located. One such area is Siam Square, a shopping area in the commercial center of Bangkok (Huebner, 2006). At first, our assumption was that Siam Square branches, having been established some time ago and

enjoying substantial success, should have the greatest number of ad signs. However, our expectations were proved wrong, as it was found that the Ladprao and Ratchayothin branches displayed the higher numbers of signs. We argue that there are a few reasons that can be considered as contributing to this situation. First, the latter branches are in emerging business areas with convenient public transportation options that allow people to commute to these areas much faster than to Siam Square if they travel by road. The expansion of commercial buildings and huge shopping malls has made Ladprao and Ratchayothin attractive and popular business centers in Bangkok. The economic growth and development that the areas have seen, with the attendant rise in their reputation as new business areas, has attracted companies with higher standard requirements when it comes to hiring employees. The job market in Thailand values English, computer and interpersonal skills of new employees (Darasawang, 2007). It should be expected that employers will tend to prefer hiring people with greater language proficiency. For this reason, there is high demand for people to improve their English skills, which makes them the target group for both AUA and BC. Thus, AUA and BC's high numbers of ad signs in those areas to attract language learners and serve their needs are justified. We believe that the above explains why those two areas are flooded with commercial signs, including AUA and BC's advertisements.

Besides the number of ad signs, we will have a closer look at the language used in ad signs of AUA and BC collected from different places. The language displayed can provide information about the importance given to each language (Cenoz & Gorter, 2006). The data showed that English and Thai were the languages used in ad signs of AUA and BC. The language most commonly used in AUA ad signs was monolingual English. On the other hand, what was employed most in BC ad signs was bilingual English-Thai. AUA's preference for monolingual advertisements may be related to the school's identity and image. Sign creation is typically guided by the need of recognition, influence, power and motivation (Kramsch,

1998). The language expresses identity (Amberg & Vause, 2009; Cenoz & Gorter, 2008; Kramsch, 1998). The advertising conveys values and identities through its content and structure (Machin & Leeuwen, 2007). This might be explained by the fact that AUA has been established in Thailand since 1924. It should be considered an important reason to justify our assumption that it wants to capitalize on its prestige as the first language-teaching institution in Thailand. This should be viewed as AUA's rationale for using monolingual, English-only advertisements. BC uses bilingual English-Thai advertisements rather than monolingual English or Thai, because it holds many culture-related activities throughout the year as mentioned earlier, for example, a Halloween fashion contest, young adult courses, English summer camp and "B-connect" online activities. BC seems to make learning about other cultures part of language activities, and focuses more on intercultural communication. The ad signs can reflect and build up the cultural identities (Goldstein, 2008). Learning a language is about the integration of the target language and target language culture. The relationship between the target language and target language culture is like a marriage (Risager, 2007). BC shows that it does not want to separate these two issues in the language-learning context. The integration of the two languages may work in BC's favor, as language learners usually do not forget their existing cultural identity (Ronowicz, 2011).

Upon closer examination, the number of words is an important way to convey messages to language learners. From the comparison of the number of Thai and English words used in signs for AUA branches, we found that the density of English text was higher than Thai text. On the other hand, the density of Thai text for BC was higher than English text. This data can confirm our earlier hypotheses that AUA seems to maintain its identity and image as an international language teaching school, while BC seems to teach target language and target language culture in an integrated way. The reason supporting the AUA's maintenance of its identity can be uncovered through an analysis of slogans on ad signs. A

slogan is a short phrase, and it is a way to emphasize a brand's uniqueness to an audience (Drewniany & Jewler, 2008). Therefore, a slogan of AUA can be used to attract people's attention and suggest the school's main idea quickly. However, commercial identity is not a focus of this study, so this discussion shall not cover the scope of slogans. On the other hand, BC tends to include its logo in its ad signs rather than using a slogan like AUA. Companies normally use a logo as a symbol to identify the brand to consumers (Drewniany & Jewler, 2008). The logo can make language learners remember the name, and it also builds up the image of a well-established language school. This might be the issue of using different strategies to the advertiser's advantage.

The sizes of the fonts of English and Thai language in all bilingual ad signs were also of interest to the study. In any given ad signs, the English text of AUA and BC was presented in bigger font sizes than the Thai text. This data shows that English plays a role in international communication and is a dominant identity presented by both schools.

Apart from the number of ad signs, language(s) used, the number of words and font sizes, using images of people in the ad signs was one of the characteristics in the semiotics field that is worth mentioning, as we see that the readers read the text together with its accompanying images (Goddard, 2002). The images usually employed by the ads project the ideas of success, smartness, confidence and beauty, and belonging to an educated elite. The viewers could be expected to easily identify with the people portrayed in the ads or see themselves as becoming as such. In this way, the task of acquiring the knowledge and trying to reach their goal of mastering English will be backed by a subconscious motivation of being one of those "beautiful people".

As mentioned earlier, AUA occasionally used Thai in its signs. However, from a semiotic perspective, it is noteworthy that AUA chose to use Asian people for the images in its signs. This might be interpreted as its intention to project a sense of integrating its

American identity with the local identity through the use of images. It is also worth mentioning that when Thai is used alongside English in BC signs, the images of people presented in their signs always included Caucasians. This might represent BC's intention of complying with the language learners' expectations. It may be described as the "imagined community" (Norton, 2010) that the learners wish to actively belong to when they have accomplished the learning.

### **Conclusion**

Essentially, the linguistic landscape of AUA and BC sends a strong message regarding globalization and its impact on the social dynamics in Thailand. Evidence can be seen in the magnitude of signs, how they are presented and the communication they intend. We use the term "globalization" in the most general sense and also, particularly, as a factor making Thailand a part of the world's business community and facilitating the process of its becoming a full-fledged member thereof (which is definitely helped by the increasing number of people becoming versed in English).

The findings have bearings that could be of interest to researchers, managers and teachers of English language. This will present us not only with a picture of Thailand's social and urban dynamics at the beginning of the twenty-first century but the picture of social norms and ideologies in vogue at the time. Though probably not directly connected to the language as taught in the classroom, and if perhaps there is no pedagogical implication, the awareness of the social dynamics involved can help in developing teaching programs and policies to be followed by language schools.

BC, it seems, would address the audience that would look up to the Caucasians' images as stimulating and encouraging, as embodying the ideas of success, prosperity and smartness. It acts on (and also bears, or reflects on) the perceptions of the Caucasians by

certain elements of society. In this case, using these images is suggestive of BC's addressing and targeting the audience who may tend to idealize foreigners and what they represent in the global community. In contrast, it would seem that AUA would not address the audience trying to invoke the image of the successful Caucasian, but would try to promote the image of a confident and smart Asian who does not need an image of success, but is himself or herself a success story.

BC's programs are organized so as to effect deeper insights into and ultimately better understanding and even probably participation in the foreign English-speaking culture and into its language teaching. We might be justified at venturing *a guess* that there is a task of making students feel *comfortable* with the target culture. Some ads also show evidence that the programs of BC are gauged to meet the expectations of the Thais, who value the style of teaching more than the content (quite a few activities are game-based) definitely indulging the Thai penchant for enjoying whatever activity they are involved in, and making it fun.

Although many valuable studies have been conducted by exploring the presence of languages on signs, the studies have limitations in some aspects. Some studies have analyzed the language on signs in only a certain specific area; therefore, their findings may not represent the linguistic composition of the areas as a whole (Huebner, 2006; Wang, 2013). The second limitation may also apply to the current study. The linguistic landscape may be conducted as a longitudinal study because some signs may change from day-to-day, and some signs may be fixed for a longer period of time (Torkington, 2008). However, in the case of this study, this limitation is related to its specific focus. During the pilot study, we collected images of all the signs displayed in the areas. The majority of images of the signs collected were found to belong to the category of ad signs. Other signs included direction signs, timetable signs, logo signs, and notifications and prohibition signs which may have purposes of marketing of business or providing public information, rather than English language



teaching. We, then, decided to use only ad signs. We also hoped that the signs could reveal the ideology of the two language schools targeting the people in different areas in Bangkok. This ideology is believed to come from these schools' perceptions of the local people, and the marketing strategies based on the behavior of the people in the society.

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## **The Six English Writing Strategies of Undergraduate Students in Thailand: A Case of Thai-Nichi Institute of Technology**

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### **Abstract**

The purposes of this research were 1) to investigate the six English writing strategies used by Thai-Nichi Institute of Technology students under six aspects: Memory, Cognition, Compensation, Metacognition, Affectivity and Socialness; 2) to compare students' six different English writing strategies according to gender and academic major; and 3) to gather supplemental suggestions.

Research samples through a stratified random sampling technique were taken from 341 students who were enrolled in English courses of the College of General Education and Languages, Thai-Nichi Institute of Technology, in the second semester of the 2013 academic year. The instrument used for gathering the data was a rating-scale and an open-ended questionnaire. The statistics employed for analyzing the data were frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation, t-test, F-test, and content analysis.

The research findings were as follows: 1) Thai-Nichi Institute of Technology students displayed a moderate level of mastery of the six English writing strategies. The cognitive strategies and compensation strategies were used at a high level while the remaining strategies were used at a moderate level. 2) There were no statistically significant differences between

the male and female students. 3) Students with different academic majors showed statistically significant differences overall and in each aspect. Recommendations and suggestions for applications and future research are also discussed.

*Keywords:* English Writing Strategies, English Writing Learning

## **Introduction**

Students' use of language learning strategies is one window into the nature of language learning processes for individuals acquiring a new language. Oxford (1990) identified six categories of second language learning strategies as follows:

1. Memory strategies reflect very simple principles, such as arranging things in order, making associations, and reviewing. These principles all involve meaning. For the purpose of learning a new language, word arrangement and associations must be personally meaningful to the learner. Language learners generally have a serious problem remembering new vocabulary to achieve fluency. Memory strategies help language learners to cope with this difficulty. They enable learners to store verbal material and then retrieve it when needed for communication.

2. Cognitive strategies are essential in learning a new language. Such strategies vary considerably, ranging from repetition to expression analysis to summarization. Four sets of cognitive strategies consist of practicing, receiving and sending message, analyzing and reasoning, and creating structure for input and output. Learners need to structure this input into manageable chunks by using strategies such as note taking, summarizing, and highlighting.

3. Compensatory strategies guide language learners to guess the context in listening and reading; using synonyms and talking around a missing word to aid speaking and writing; and, strictly in speaking, using gestures or pause words. Good language learners, when confronted with unknown expressions, make educated guesses. Guessing can actually be a skilled way people typically process new information. That is, interpreting the data by using the immediate context and one's own life experience. Compensation occurs not just in understanding the new language but also in producing it. Compensation strategies allow learners to produce written expression in a new language even without complete knowledge (Oxford, 1990).

4. Metacognitive strategies are actions which go beyond purely cognitive devices, and which provide a way for learners to coordinate their own learning process. Metacognitive strategies include three strategy sets: centering your learning, arranging and planning your learning, and evaluating your learning. This strategy is essential for successful language learning. Language learners are often overwhelmed by much unfamiliar vocabulary, confusing rules, different writing systems, seemingly inexplicable social customs, and nontraditional instructional approaches. Other metacognitive strategies, such as organizing, setting goals and objectives, considering the purpose and planning for a language task, help learners to arrange and plan their language learning in an efficient, effective way.

5. Affective strategies are identified according to a learner's mood and anxiety level, talk about feelings, self-reward for good performance, and use of deep breathing or positive self-talk. The affective dimension of the learner is probably one of the most significant influences on language learning success or failure. Good language learners are often observed



controlling their emotions and attitudes towards learning. Negative feelings can stunt progress, even for a top rate learner who fully understands all the technical aspects of how to learn a new language. On the other hand, positive emotions and attitudes can make language learning far more effective and enjoyable.

6. Social strategies are identified as asking verification questions, clarification requests for a confusing point, soliciting assistance for a language task, conversing with a native-speaking partner, and exploring cultural and social norms. Social strategies assist the learner work with others to understand a foreign culture as well as its language.

For example, in order to be a successful English language learner, students need to be in control of the way they learn by considering the procedure and strategies that are the most effective. Students who emphasize the importance of using the English language might often consider which strategies are appropriate to use in different learning situations. Every particular strategy may not be appropriate to use with each of the language learning skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing. Indeed, a student might inquire and ponder why it does not seem to be difficult for some particular people to communicate in English? What learning strategies might they be using? If students intend to imitate those strategies, they may be able to set their goals, identify problems and find appropriate solutions. Finally, they may also improve their skill and achieve their English language learning goal.

Writing, in particular, is a difficult skill to master, even in one's own language. It has been found that if language learners are good writers in their language, they will probably be good writers in English. In any subject, if students' competence and intelligence are equal,

those who are able to convey their thoughts clearly in writing will score better marks. So it may be said that successful learners could be limited by inadequate writing skills.

Tribble (1996) described the acquisition of writing skills as a developmental process. EFL students acquire fluency, which involves developing the confidence to develop and express ideas. Once fluency is achieved, then clarity, the accuracy of their statements, is addressed. Clarity also involves grammar accuracy, spelling and mechanics. Furthermore, writing is not only a tool of communication but also records the importance of an event for an organization. For instance in many newspaper job advertisements, writing skill is included in the job requirements and those who have a good command of writing probably have a better chance to get the better jobs.

On the other hand, writing is a way of coming to know and interact with one's own thoughts and emotions; it is also a way of communication, a way of sharing one's thoughts and emotions with others; and it is a creative way of giving artistic shape to one's perceptions and understandings. Thus writing is one of the most challenging language skills.

Oxford (1990), in Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL), describes six categories of language learning, namely: memory strategies, cognitive strategies, compensation strategies, metacognitive strategies, affective strategies, and social strategies. Oxford's classification has been selected for this study because it is comprehensive, detailed, and systematic (Vidal, 2002).

In conclusion, the current researcher focused on the six English language writing strategies of undergraduate students at the Thai-Nichi Institute of Technology by creating research tools, such as a questionnaire, in order to study the six English writing strategies of TNI students. This research was purposely focused on the TNI students from faculties of

Business Administration, Engineering, and Information Technology in the second semester of the 2013 academic year. In this way, the results gained from the research will be used as a channel to solve any learning problems, as well as improve and develop the teaching-learning process, including the teaching materials, to develop a more effective and efficient pedagogical experience.

### ***Research Purposes***

- 1) to investigate the six English writing strategies used by Thai-Nichi Institute of Technology students from six aspects: Memory, Cognition, Compensation, Metacognition, Affectiveness and Socialness;
- 2) to compare six different English writing strategies used by the students according to gender and academic major; and
- 3) to gather supplemental suggestions.

## **Methodology**

### ***Population and Samples***

This research investigated the English writing strategies used by the Thai-Nichi Institute of Technology students from six aspects: Memory, Cognition, Compensation, Metacognition, Socialness and Affectiveness from the following sample population:

The population sample of this research was made up of 1,000 TNI students from 12 academic majors; Automotive Engineering, Production Engineering, Computer Engineering, Electrical Engineering, Industrial Engineering, Industrial Management, Japanese Business

Administration, International Business management, Accountancy, Information Technology, Multimedia Technology, and Business Information Systems, in the second semester of the 2013 academic year.

Samples of this research were taken from 341 TNI students derived through a Stratified Random Sampling technique.

### ***Instrumentation***

The instrument used in this study was a questionnaire. The questionnaire was constructed by the researcher, based on six English writing strategies used by the TNI students. This research questionnaire was used to identify the six English writing strategies of memory, cognition, compensation, metacognition, socialness and affectiveness. In addition, the questionnaire was employed as a research instrument for data collection based on an ordinal-scale measurement of six English writing strategies of the Thai-Nichi Institute of Technology students.

The first part (Part 1) of this questionnaire asked for demographic information, particularly the students' gender and academic major. Part 2 dealt with six English writing strategies used by the Thai-Nichi Institute of Technology students.

The third part (Part 3) asked for the TNI undergraduate students' suggestions and opinions about the six English writing strategies, through open-ended questions.

### ***Data Collection***

Using six English writing strategies used in the EFL classroom of the Thai-Nichi Institute of Technology, students' experiences were accessed through a questionnaire conducted in the second semester of the 2013 academic year.

The research questionnaire consisted of 3 sections. Part 1 concerned the students' demographic variables including their gender and academic majors. The 47 items of Part 2 covered six English writing strategies used in the EFL classrooms of the Thai-Nichi Institute of Technology. Therefore, the participants were requested to consider each item carefully and indicate how important each item was for their study. Part 3 sought the participants' suggestions and opinions. In summary, a total of 341 TNI students from three academic majors completed the questionnaire.

### ***Statistics Used for Analyzing the Data***

The collected data was analyzed using a standard computer program. The statistics used for analyzing the data were frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation, t-test, F-test and content analysis.

## **Results**

### **Phase 1: The results of demographic variables of the TNI undergraduate students.**

The analysis of the data from the questionnaires completed by the TNI undergraduate students in the 2013 academic year is presented in the first section and deals with the demographic variables from the students' responses, as outlined in the following table.

**Table 1:** Table of the results of respondents' demographic data

Demographic data of respondents	N	Percentage
1. Gender		
1.1 male	153	44.87
1.2 female	188	55.13
<b>Total</b>	<b>341</b>	<b>100</b>
3. Majors		
3.1 Automotive Engineering	48	14.08
3.2 Production Engineering	18	5.28
3.3 Computer Engineering	37	10.85
3.4 Electrical Engineering	22	6.46
3.5 Industrial Engineering	26	7.62
3.6 Industrial Management	20	5.86
3.7 Japanese Business Administration	42	12.31
3.8 International Business management	38	11.14
3.9 Accountancy	22	6.46
3.10 Information Technology	26	7.62
3.11 Multimedia Technology	23	6.75
3.12 Business Information System	19	5.57
<b>Total</b>	<b>341</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 1 shows that the gender percentage of the TNI undergraduate respondents ranged from 55.13 % for females and 44.87% for males. The percentage for academic majors

ranged from 14.08% for Automotive Engineering, 12.31% for Japanese Business Administration, 11.14% for International Business management, 10.85% for Computer Engineering, 7.62% for Industrial Engineering and Information Technology, 6.75% for Multimedia Technology, 6.46% for Electrical Engineering and Accountancy, 5.86% for Industrial Management, 5.57% for Business Information System, and 5.57% for Production Engineering.

**Phase 2: The results of using the six English writing strategies used by the Thai-Nichi Institute of Technology students**

**Table 2:** Table of mean and standard deviation concerning the use of the six English writing strategies of the Thai-Nichi Institute of Technology students in each aspect and in total.

Components	N	$\bar{X}$	S.D.	Level
1. Memory strategies	341	3.47	0.78	moderate
2. Cognitive strategies	341	3.59	0.85	high
3. Compensation strategies	341	3.58	0.78	high
4. Metacognitive strategies	341	3.47	0.83	moderate
5. Affective strategies	341	3.48	0.81	moderate
6. Social strategies	341	3.01	0.84	moderate
<b>Total</b>	<b>341</b>	<b>3.48</b>	<b>0.82</b>	<b>moderate</b>

Table 2 above indicates that the TNI students had used the six English writing strategies at moderate level ( $\bar{X}= 3.48$ ), when considered in each aspect. It was found that use of the cognitive strategies was at high level ( $\bar{X}= 3.59$ ), use of the compensation strategies was at high level ( $\bar{X}= 3.58$ ), use of the affective strategies at moderate level ( $\bar{X}= 3.48$ ), use of the memory strategies at moderate level ( $\bar{X}= 3.47$ ), use of the metacognitive strategies at moderate level ( $\bar{X}= 3.47$ ), and use of social strategies at moderate level ( $\bar{X}= 3.01$ ).

**Table 3:** Table of mean and standard deviation concerning the use of the six English writing strategies of the Thai-Nichi Institute of Technology students in the area of memory strategies.

Components	n	$\bar{X}$	S.D.	Level
<b>Memory strategies</b>				
1. I relate my composition topic to my background knowledge.	341	3.42	0.87	moderate
2. I use new words in a sentence so that I can remember them.	341	3.54	0.47	high
3. I memorize new English words by writing them down several times.	341	3.39	0.96	moderate
4. I revise my old compositions so as not to forget the mistakes I made and how to solve them.	341	3.56	0.84	high
<b>Total</b>	<b>341</b>	<b>3.47</b>	<b>0.78</b>	<b>moderate</b>

Table 3 shows that the use of the six English writing strategies of the Thai-Nichi Institute of Technology students in the area of memory strategies was at moderate level ( $\bar{X}$



=3.47) which indicates that the highest rank order of the six English writing strategies was item 4. *I revise my old compositions so as not to forget the mistakes I made and how to solve them.* ( $\bar{X} = 3.56$ ), item 2. Next, *I use new words in a sentence so that I can remember them.* ( $\bar{X} = 3.54$ ). The lowest rank English writing strategy in the area of memory strategies was item 3. *I memorize new English words by writing them down several times* ( $\bar{X} = 3.39$ ). Following this was item 1. *I relate my composition topic to my background knowledge.* ( $\bar{X} = 3.42$ ).

**Table 4:** Table of mean and standard deviation of the use of the six English writing strategies of the Thai-Nichi Institute of Technology students in the area of cognitive strategies.

Components	n	$\bar{X}$	S.D.	Level
<b>Cognitive strategies</b>				
1. I try out different ideas either orally or in writing to find out what I want to say.	341	3.47	0.84	moderate
2. I reread frequently in an attempt to find out what I want to say.	341	3.65	0.77	high
3. I review previous sections of the text when I find a mismatch between my written text and the ideas I want to express.	341	3.69	0.81	high
4. I reformulate the linguistic expression when I am not sure it is right.	341	3.52	0.77	high
5. I try to put my meaning on paper as quickly as possible so as not to forget my ideas even if I experience spelling or grammatical problems.	341	3.49	0.86	moderate

6. I write different drafts of my composition.	341	3.44	0.84	moderate
7. I read books or good writers' compositions to improve my writing.	341	3.73	0.96	high
8. I move paragraphs around in an attempt to organize my writing in a more coherent way.	341	3.74	0.83	high
9. I compare my composition with my plan or outline to see how well they match or to consider changes.	341	3.71	0.71	high
10. I put aside my writing for a few days to reconsider my thoughts with a fresh mind.	341	3.37	0.88	moderate
11. I read my composition aloud to "feel" its sound.	341	3.28	0.94	moderate
12. I use transition words ("thus", "however," "nevertheless" and so on) in my composition that would help my reader to understand my point.	341	3.89	0.97	high
13. I choose words and expressions that are formal when I write formally and informal forms when I write informally.	341	3.77	0.88	high
<b>Total</b>		<b>3.59</b>	<b>0.85</b>	<b>high</b>

Table 4 shows that the use of the six English writing strategies of the Thai-Nichi Institute of Technology students in the area of cognitive strategies was at high level ( $\bar{X}=3.59$ ). This indicates that the highest rank order of the use of the six English writing strategies was item 12. *I use transition words ("thus", "however", "nevertheless" and so on) in my*

*composition that would help my reader to understand my point.* ( $\bar{X} = 3.89$ ), item 13. Next, *I choose words and expressions that are formal when I write formally and informal forms when I write informally.* ( $\bar{X} = 3.77$ ). The lowest use of the six English writing strategies in area of cognitive strategies was item 11. *I read my composition aloud to “feel” its sound.* ( $\bar{X} = 3.28$ ) and item 10. *I put aside my writing for a few days to reconsider my thoughts with a fresh mind.* ( $\bar{X} = 3.37$ ).

**Table 5:** Table of mean and standard deviation of the use of the six English writing strategies of the Thai-Nichi Institute of Technology students in the area of compensation strategies.

Components	n	$\bar{X}$	S.D.	Level
<b>Compensation strategies</b>				
1. I use synonyms when I can't find the word I mean.	341	3.53	0.87	high
2. I use the dictionary to find out words that I don't know how to express in English.	341	3.51	0.75	high
3. I repeat in an attempt to keep my writing going.	341	3.77	0.74	high
4. I make guesses when I can't find the exact word that I need.	341	3.52	0.69	high
5. I use sources when I don't have enough ideas to complete my composition.	341	3.68	0.77	high
6. I make short pauses while writing my composition to consider what I have written so far.	341	3.51	0.89	high
<b>Total</b>	<b>341</b>	<b>3.58</b>	<b>0.78</b>	<b>high</b>

Table 5 shows that the use of the six English writing strategies of the Thai-Nichi Institute of Technology students in the area of compensation strategies was at high level ( $\bar{X}$  =3.58) with the highest rank order of the use of the six English writing strategies being item 3, *I repeat in an attempt to keep my writing going* ( $\bar{X}$  = 3.77). Next, item 5, *I use sources when I don't have enough ideas to complete my composition* ( $\bar{X}$  =3.68). The lowest ranking use of the six English writing strategies in area of compensation strategies was item 6, *I make short pauses while writing my composition to consider what I have written so far* ( $\bar{X}$  =3.51), and item 2, *I use the dictionary to find out words that I don't know how to express in English* ( $\bar{X}$  =3.51).

**Table 6:** Table of mean and standard deviation of the use of the six English writing strategies of the Thai-Nichi Institute of Technology students in the area of metacognitive strategies

Components	n	$\bar{X}$	S.D.	Level
<b>Metacognitive strategies</b>				
1. Before starting to write or while writing I make decisions about the content, organization of my composition and the linguistic expression and how I should do about them.	341	3.88	0.97	high
2. I plan my composition in advance or while writing either mentally or in writing.	341	3.48	0.87	moderate
3. I plan the content and organization of my	341	3.64	0.82	high

composition.				
4. I go back to my plan to consider the ideas I have written down and to reformulate them if I feel they are flawed.	341	3.33	0.75	moderate
5. I set myself long-term and short-term goals for improving my writing.	341	3.41	0.73	moderate
6. I think whether or not my ideas are clear as they are on paper.	341	3.43	0.96	moderate
7. I frequently think of my audience so as to adjust my text to their needs.	341	3.21	0.83	moderate
8. I pay attention to aspects such as thesis statements, topic and supporting sentences.	341	3.64	0.79	high
9. I write with a specific purpose in mind (i.e. to convince, inform, narrate an event and so on).	341	3.42	0.81	moderate
10. I am concerned with my lack of writing fluency and do something about it.	341	3.31	0.93	moderate
11. I follow a certain organization in my composition that would help my readers understand my point.	341	3.41	0.94	moderate
12. I have a set of priorities when revising my composition: first, ideas and organization and then grammar and spelling concerns.	341	3.79	0.78	high
13. I know the characteristics of good essays.	341	3.39	0.71	moderate

14. I am aware of the effectiveness of the strategies that I employ for my writing.	341	3.32	0.77	moderate
<b>Total</b>	<b>341</b>	<b>3.47</b>	<b>0.83</b>	<b>moderate</b>

Table 6 shows that the use of the six English writing strategies of the Thai-Nichi Institute of Technology students in the area of metacognitive strategies was at moderate level ( $\bar{X}=3.47$ ). The highest ranking order of the use of the six English writing strategies was item 1, *Before starting to write or while writing I make decisions about the content, organization of my composition and the linguistic expression and how I should do about them* ( $\bar{X}=3.88$ ). Next was item 12, *I have a set of priorities when revising my composition: first, ideas and organization and then grammar and spelling concerns* ( $\bar{X}=3.79$ ). The lowest rank of the six English writing strategies in area of metacognitive strategies was item 7, *I frequently think of my audience so as to adjust my text to their needs* ( $\bar{X}=3.21$ ) and item 10, *I am concerned with my lack of writing fluency and do something about it* ( $\bar{X}=3.31$ ).

**Table 7:** Table of mean and standard deviation of the use of the six English writing strategies of the Thai-Nichi Institute of Technology students in the area of affective strategies.

Components	n	$\bar{X}$	S.D.	Level
<b>Affective strategies</b>				
1. I encourage myself to find a better solution to a linguistic problem in my composition.	341	3.22	0.77	moderate

2. I reward myself when I'm given a good grade in a composition.	341	3.44	0.84	moderate
3. I motivate myself to keep writing by saying "come on," "go on," "you can do it."	341	4.19	0.92	high
4. I write a diary to express how I feel about my writing.	341	3.34	0.85	moderate
5. I try to overcome feelings of frustration, sadness, etc. when my writing is not as good as I would like .	341	3.33	0.76	moderate
6. I have confidence in my own capacity to write.	341	3.41	0.76	moderate
<b>Total</b>	<b>341</b>	<b>3.48</b>	<b>0.81</b>	<b>moderate</b>

Table 7 shows the use of the six English writing strategies of the Thai-Nichi Institute of Technology students in the area of affective strategies was at moderate level ( $\bar{X} = 3.48$ ). The highest ranking order of use of the six English writing strategies was item 3. *I motivate myself to keep writing by saying "come on", "go on", "you can do it"* ( $\bar{X} = 4.19$ ). Next was item 2. *I reward myself when I'm given a good grade in a composition* ( $\bar{X} = 3.44$ ); and the lowest ranking order in the use of affective strategies was item 1. *I encourage myself to find a better solution to a linguistic problem in my composition* ( $\bar{X} = 3.22$ ), close to which was item 5. *I try to overcome feelings of frustration, sadness, etc. when my writing is not as good as I would like to* ( $\bar{X} = 3.33$ ).

**Table 8:** Table of mean and standard deviation of the use of the six English writing strategies of the Thai-Nichi Institute of Technology students in the area of social strategies

Components	n	$\bar{X}$	S.D.	Level
<b>Social strategies</b>				
1. I seek assistance when I have linguistic problems that I cannot solve or I ask another person to revise my composition.	341	3.19	0.88	moderate
2. I seek opportunities to improve my writing, such as writing frequently for other people (emails, chat, letters, and others).	341	3.13	0.76	moderate
3. I give my writing to a friend or someone who is good at writing so that I have an opinion about my writing.	341	3.27	0.94	moderate
4. I compare my composition with my classmates' compositions.	341	2.46	0.79	low
<b>Total</b>	<b>341</b>	<b>3.01</b>	<b>0.84</b>	<b>moderate</b>

Table 8 shows the use of the six English writing strategies of the Thai-Nichi Institute of Technology students in the area of social strategies was at moderate level ( $\bar{X}$  =3.01). The highest ranking order of the use of the six English writing strategies was item 3. *I give my writing to a friend or someone who is good at writing so that I have an opinion about my writing* ( $\bar{X}$  = 3.27). Next was item 1. *I seek assistance when I have linguistic problems that I*



cannot solve or I ask another person to revise my composition ( $\bar{X} = 3.19$ ), and the lowest ranking use of the six English writing strategies in the area of social strategies was item 4. *I compare my composition with my classmates' compositions* ( $\bar{X} = 2.46$ ). Close to this was item 2. *I seek opportunities to improve my writing, such as writing frequently for other people (emails, chat, letters, and others)* ( $\bar{X} = 3.13$ ).

**Phase 3: The results of comparing the use of the six English writing strategies of the Thai-Nichi Institute of Technology students according to gender and academic major.**

**Table 9:** Table comparing the use of the six English writing strategies of the Thai-Nichi Institute of Technology students in total and of each aspect according to gender.

Components	Genders				t	p
	Male (N=153)		Female (N=188)			
	$\bar{X}$	S.D.	$\bar{X}$	S.D.		
1. Memory strategies	3.45	0.76	3.49	0.79	-2.374	0.269
2. Cognitive strategies	3.57	0.83	3.61	0.87	0.593	0.892
3. Compensation strategies	3.57	0.81	3.59	0.75		
4. Metacognitive strategies	3.44	0.81	3.51	0.86		
5. Affective strategies	3.51	0.79	3.46	0.83		
6. Social strategies	3.03	0.82	2.99	0.86		
<b>Total</b>	<b>3.42</b>	<b>0.80</b>	<b>3.44</b>	<b>0.82</b>	<b>-.607</b>	<b>0.519</b>

\*Statistical Significance at .05 level

The table shows that gender makes no differences in the students' use of the six English writing strategies in total and for each aspect.

**Table 10:** Table comparing the use of the six English writing strategies of Thai-Nichi Institute of Technology students in total and of each aspect according to academic major.

ANOVA

Components		SS	df	MS	F	p	
1. Memory strategies	Between Groups	2.256	6	.528	3.555	0.052	
	Within Groups	60.689	335	.213			
	Total	62.945	341				
2. Cognitive strategies	Between Groups	1.955	6	.377	7.055	0.021*	AE-BI, CE-BI, BJ-BI, IB-BI
	Within Groups	75.807	335	.292			
	Total	77.762	341				
3.Compensation strategies	Between Groups	2.439	6	1.930	6.227	0.029*	AE-IM, CE-IM,

							BJ-IM, IB-BJ
	Within Groups	111.834	335	.480			
	Total	114.273	341				
4Metacognitive strategies	Between Groups	.441	6	.321	4.571	0.053	
	Within Groups	78.365	335	.505			
	Total	78.807	341				
5. Affective strategies	Between Groups	6.422	6	2.711	3.824	0.051	
	Within Groups	115.937	335	.712			
	Total	122.358	341				
6. Social strategies	Between Groups	8.256	6	.728	2.687	0.055	
	Within Groups	138.689	335	.413			
	Total	150.945	341				
<b>Total</b>	Between Groups	2.026	6	.613	5.982	0.500*	AE-BI, CE-BI, BJ-BI, IB-BI,

							AE- IM, CE- IM, BJ-IM, IB-IM
	Within Groups	54.157	335	.389			
	Total	56.183	341				

*\*Statistical Significance at .05 level*

Table 10 shows that there **is significant statistical difference amongst** students from different academic majors overall at .05 level.

**Phase 4: The results of the study of the Thai-Nichi Institute of Technology students' opinions and suggestions about using the six English writing strategies.**

**Table 11:** Table of frequency and percentage of number of opinions and suggestions of TNI undergraduate students in using the six English writing strategies.

Opinions and suggestions	n	Fre.	%
Using six English writing strategies	79		
Opinions	36		45.57
1. Writing for the main idea is useful in writing essay.		13	16.46

2. Writing strategies are essential for undergraduate students.		10	12.66
3. Transition words are difficult to use.		6	7.59
4. It is very hard to write more words in a short time.		4	5.06
5. Formal Writing is very difficult.		3	3.80
<b>Suggestions</b>	<b>43</b>		<b>54.43</b>
1. Teachers should give examples of writing in various styles.		15	18.99
2. Academic writing should be taught every semester to improve writing skill.		12	15.19
3. Writing strategies should be applied in every class of the English language.		8	10.13
4. The teachers should teach writing by using CALL.		5	6.32
5. Games about writing should be played in writing classes.		3	3.80

Table 11 details the opinions and suggestions of the TNI undergraduate students in the use of the six English writing strategies as follows:

1. The opinion and suggestion responses of the 52 students can be divided into 2 categories: Firstly, 36 students (45.57%) answered that *Writing for the main idea is useful in writing essay* was equal to 16.46% (13 students); *Writing strategies are essential for undergraduate students* 12.66% (10 students); *Transition words are difficult to use* 7.59% (6 students); *It is very hard to write more words in short time* 5.06% (4 students); *Formal Writing is very difficult* 3.80% (3 students).

Secondly, the remaining 43 students (54.43%) shared that *Teachers should give examples of writing in various styles* 18.99% (15 students); *Academic writing should be*

*taught in every semester to improve writing skill 15.19% (12 students); Writing strategies should be applied in every class of English language 10.13% (8 students); The teachers should teach writing by using CALL 6.32% (5 students); Games about writing should be taken in writing classes 3.80% (3 students).*

## Conclusion

The results of the research study and data analysis can be concluded as follows.

### ***Phase 1: The results of the demographic variables of the TNI undergraduate students.***

The percentages of the TNI undergraduate respondents according to gender ranged from 55.13 % for females and 44.87% for males; according to academic majors, the results ranged from 14.08% for Automotive Engineering, 12.31% for Japanese Business Administration, 11.14% for International Business management, 10.85% for Computer Engineering, 7.62% for Industrial Engineering and Information Technology, 6.75% for Multimedia Technology, 6.46% for Electrical Engineering and Accountancy, 5.86% for Industrial Management, 5.57% for Business Information System, and 5.57% for Production Engineering.

### ***Phase 2: The results of the study of the Thai-Nichi Institute of Technology students' use of the six English writing strategies.***

The TNI students use the six English writing strategies at moderate level ( $\bar{x} = 3.48$ ) when considered according to each individual aspect. It was found that use of the cognitive

strategies is at high level ( $\bar{X}$ = 3.59), use of the compensation strategies is also at high level ( $\bar{X}$  = 3.58), use of affective strategies is at moderate level ( $\bar{X}$ = 3.48), use of memory strategies is at moderate level ( $\bar{X}$ = 3.47), use of metacognitive strategies is at moderate level ( $\bar{X}$ = 3.47), and use of social strategies is at moderate level ( $\bar{X}$ = 3.01)

***Phase 3: The results of comparing the Thai-Nichi Institute of Technology students' use of the six English writing strategies according to gender and major.***

1. Students of different gender show no differences in the use of the six English writing strategies in total and in each aspect.

2. Students with different academic majors show statistically significant differences overall at .05 level. There were 8 pairs of different majors as follows.

1. Undergraduate students from AE major and BI major
2. Undergraduate students from CE major and BI major
3. Undergraduate students from BJ major and BI major
4. Undergraduate students from IB major and BI major
5. Undergraduate students from AE major and IM major
6. Undergraduate students from CE major and IM major
7. Undergraduate students from BJ major and IM major
8. Undergraduate students from IB major and IM major

When considered according to each individual aspect, it was found that there were statistically significant differences at .05 level in cognitive strategies for four pairs of different majors as follows:

1. Undergraduate students from AE major and BI major
2. Undergraduate students from CE major and BI major
3. Undergraduate students from BJ major and BI major
4. Undergraduate students from IB major and BI major

Moreover, there were statistically significant differences at .05 level in compensation strategies for four pairs of different majors as follows:

1. Undergraduate students from AE major and IM major
2. Undergraduate students from CE major and IM major
3. Undergraduate students from BJ major and IM major
4. Undergraduate students from IB major and IM major

***Phase 4: The results of the study of the Thai-Nichi Institute of Technology students' opinions and suggestions about the use of the six English writing strategies.***

TNI undergraduate students offered the following opinions and suggestions in the use of the six English writing strategies:

1. The 52 students' answers can be divided into 2 categories, opinions and suggestions. 36 students (45.57%) wrote: *Writing for the main idea is useful in writing essay* was equal to 16.46% (13 students); *Writing strategies are essential for undergraduate*



*students 12.66% (10 students); Transition words are difficult to use 7.59% (6 students); It is very hard to write more words in short time 5.06% (4 students); Formal Writing is very difficult 3.80% (3 students).*

Meanwhile, the remaining 43 students (54.43%) shared: *Teachers should give examples of writing in various styles 18.99% (15 students); Academic writing should be taught in every semester to improve writing skill 15.19% (12 students); Writing strategies should be applied in every class of English language 10.13% (8 students); The teachers should teach writing by using CALL 6.32% (5 students); Games about writing should be taken in writing classes 3.80% (3 students).*

## Discussion

The results and data analysis of this study can be discussed as follows:

The results of using the six English writing strategies by TNI students in six areas was at moderate level. Accordingly, this result can be explained, as follows:

Memory strategies were at moderate level which might be because TNI students are sometimes involved in writing for main ideas, guessing the meaning of vocabulary from context clues, writing for details, and taking notes. However, learning to write is difficult especially for those writing in a second or a foreign language within an academic context since they do not have the skill and knowledge to generate ideas for their writing. As effective writing is considered to be a problem for EFL learners, there is a need for ways of teaching that can help learners improve their writing performance (Harris & Graham, 1996).

Cognitive strategies were at high level which might be explained as the TNI students being familiar with the use of cognitive strategies related to cognitive activities; for instance, brainstorming, planning, outlining, organizing, drafting, and revising. Cognitive aspects of writing have received particular attention, as investigators have attempted to understand the thought processes underlying students' compositions (Flower & Hayes, 1981).

Compensation strategies were found to be at high level which might be explained as the TNI students using various techniques such as using previous background knowledge to guess the current content, using synonyms and making educated guesses. Guessing is actually a particular way people typically process new information. That is, interpreting the data by using the immediate context and their own life experience (Griffiths, 2003).

Metacognitive strategies were at moderate level which may explain the TNI undergraduate students' lack of awareness of using metacognitive strategies. Furthermore, metacognition is an expression to indicate an executive function, strategies which involve planning for learning, thinking about the learning process as it is taking place, observing one's production or comprehension, correcting one's own mistakes, and evaluating the learning after an activity is completed (O'Malley et al., 1985).

Affective strategies were at moderate level perhaps because TNI students did not apply various kinds of affective strategies. Learners might not have a positive perspective towards native speakers. On the other hand, good language learners are relatively aware of these emotions and they try to build positive feelings towards the foreign language. To a great deal, training can be of assistance to help students to face these controversial feelings and to

overcome them by drawing attention to the possible frustrations or, at least, mentioning them as they come up (Stern, 1992).

Social strategies were at moderate level possibly because TNI students do not understand how to use these strategies because social strategies are activities in which learners are exposed to opportunities that can help them to practice their knowledge. Even though these strategies offer exposure to the target language, they contribute to learning indirectly since they do not lead directly to the obtaining, storing, retrieving, and using of their second language (Rubin, 1987).

## ***Recommendations***

### ***1. Recommendation for this study***

1.1 The results of this study point out that TNI undergraduate students used all six English writing strategies at moderate level. Therefore, TNI administrators should support the use of modern writing materials in the library and in the classroom. On the other hand, teachers should teach higher level strategies to students and support TNI undergraduate students in their writing; for example, by providing supplementary materials both inside and outside the classroom.

1.2 A study of the results from the students' opinions and suggestions outline the desire for students to have an opportunity for special or extra and advanced class listening, speaking, and reading skills.

## ***2. Recommendations for further study***

2.1 A survey of the use of English listening and speaking strategies and English listening-speaking motivation is proposed as a focus for further study and research.

2.2 Comparisons of the effectiveness of English reading strategies and listening-speaking strategies of TNI undergraduate students should be tested in future research.

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**Hope or Despair?**  
**When *Small Happiness* Goes Viral**

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**Abstract**

This research looks into a Japanese-originated buzzword and focuses on its great popularity in Taiwan by putting it in the perspective of politics of desire introduced by sociologist Zygmunt Bauman and his postmodern sociological theory. Coined by Murakami Haruki, a world-renowned Japanese writer, the term Small Happiness first appeared on literary page and within years, it has been upheld by government officials addressing public policy as a manifestation, sweeping over Taiwan. This paper traces the way how this term has been introduced and applied, and argues that the state's emphasis on Small Happiness not only represents the promoted desire of the good life but also the intention to avoid the more problematic social inequality, political upheavals and economic crisis in contemporary Taiwan.

Through Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) of four major newspapers, the researcher argues that the popularity of this new word should be understood in the context of neoliberal society in which individual enjoyment, or tiny pleasure, has been constructed as desired consumer empowerment, while deliberation of public policies relatively marginalized. Small

Happiness is thus despair in disguise for it puts much more attention on material consumption that ‘adds little extra to ordinary life’ while neglecting uncertainty and dissatisfaction of society. Consequently and perhaps more importantly, this project attempts to examine the politics of language use and how it interacts with the development of society so as to shed light on social change and political maneuver through popular new terms.

*Keywords:* Small Happiness; Politics of Desire; Critical Discourse Analysis; Neoliberal Language

### **Introduction**

The global financial crisis of 2008 greatly impacted the world economic system in that the burst of housing bubble and credit crunch not only triggered a collapse in the value of many assets but also brought about a sharp decline in the new job market. As the Taiwanese economy is significantly dependent on the international trade of information technology devices and service industries, thus Taiwan has been vulnerable to the world economic circumstances. In order to lessen the negative effects of financial crisis, the Taiwanese government introduced a short-term employment program in 2008 to partially subsidize corporate companies if they hired new graduates, which to some extent was considered the immediate cause of the culture of *Small Happiness* this paper intends to investigate.

Under the College Graduate Corporate Workplace Internship Program, commonly dubbed the “22K Policy”, companies that employed college graduates with a monthly pay of no less than 22,000 NTD (approximately 700 US dollars) would receive a monthly subsidy of 10,000 NTD (approximately 330 USD) from the government. The 22K Policy was first



implemented to ease the increasing unemployment rate, however, corporate businesses took advantage of policy and did not raise the pay level of employees. As a result, the level of real wages in 2013 was lower than that of 1998 (Central New Agency, 2014), which is to say that the Taiwanese people were actually declining in terms of real income.

Paradoxically, it is within this context of economic deterioration that *Small Happiness* has emerged and become popular. For years, the craze for *Small Happiness* has prevailed throughout all classes and it has even been openly claimed by senior government officials to be the principle underpinning public policy. *Small Happiness* can arguably be regarded as the “zeitgeist” of contemporary Taiwan. This paper is an attempt to explore the trajectory of the term and argues that the state’s emphasis on *Small Happiness* not only represents the government’s intention to promote the desire to live the good life among the Taiwanese people but also reveals the intention to avoid dealing with the more problematic and systematic social political upheavals and economic crises in contemporary Taiwan.

This paper is divided into three main parts: introduction, literature and method, and analysis discussion. In the first section, the origins of the term will be briefly explored and the extent to which it has been used examined. In the second section, the researcher examines the work of sociologist Zygmunt Bauman and his discussion of postmodernity as well as the work of linguistic scholar Norman Fairclough and his concept of critical discourse analysis, especially concerning political discourse, to interpret the meaning of language use and its impact on society. In the last section, I examine the analysis from the perspective of Bauman’s postmodern discussion on the one hand, and Taiwan’s local social political context

on the other, aiming to shed light on social change and political maneuvering through the popular use of new vocabulary.

### ***Small Happiness: the Origin***

The term *Small Happiness* allegedly is adapted from the work of the world-renowned Japanese writer Haruki Murakami. In Murakami's 1986 essay collection *Afternoon in the Inlets of Langerhans* (ランゲルハンス島の午後) and again in his *How to find Whirling Cat* (うずまき猫のみつかけかた) of 1996, he mentioned the phrase "small yet definite happiness" (小さいけど確かな幸せ), such as "a sip of extra-cold beer on a hot summer day" or "coming across a long-sought album in a charity shop (even better for a reasonable price!)". It is commonplace for many Taiwanese to understand the Japanese language with the aid of Chinese characters (known as kanji) leading, oftentimes, to the misinterpretation of the original meaning due to the Mandarin medium. After the Chinese edition of the abovementioned two books were released in 2002 and 2008, a new term that combines three kanji characters, which was regarded as the shortened form for the phrase "small yet definite happiness", began to appear on blogs and gain popularity in Taiwan. For the sake of discussion, we will refer the shortened new term as *Small Happiness* and explore the trajectory of its invention and development.

### ***Research Questions***

*Small Happiness* was firstly introduced in newspaper in 2006 on a page of a literary supplement (Shi, 2006). Between years 2005 and 2009, use of this term was rather sparse, on

average under 10 times per year. In stark contrast, this term later became commonly used by government officials as a manifestation of administration and become ubiquitous around Taiwan. In order to better understand this change, this paper intends to answer three main questions:

Question 1: How has the term *Small Happiness* been applied?

Question 2: Under what social, economic and political contexts does this term “go viral”?

Question 3: What are the factors underpinning the term’s popularity?

Thus the current project not only traces the way this term has been introduced and applied, but also aims to explore its implications under the current social, economic and political contexts. It argues that the state’s emphasis on *Small Happiness* is not only representative of its goal to promote among the general population the desire for them to pursue living the good life but also its intention to avoid addressing the more problematic issues of social inequality, political upheavals and economic crises in contemporary Taiwan.

## Literature Review

### ***Zygmunt Bauman’s Sociological Theory of Postmodernity***

*Small Happiness* has become conspicuous in Taiwan since 2008, occurring concurrently with the global financial crisis. Taiwan has long been known for its dependence on global economic developments due to both the nature of Original Equipment Manufacturing (OEM)

and its investment in Mainland China. The fact that the economies of individual countries can no longer be separated from that of other countries around the world and that financial and economic crises remain unpredictable to many people is strongly reminiscent of Zygmunt Bauman's sociological theory of postmodernity (Bauman, 1992), to which we now turn.

Bauman writes extensively on the role of consumption and agents as consumers in postmodernity, or what he calls "liquid modernity" (Bauman, 2000). He (1992: 198 ) observes that "the most conspicuous social division under postmodern conditions is one between *seduction* and *repression*" (original emphasis), which is largely determined by the ability to consume. That for Bauman also constitutes one of the drives of today's consumer society, as people tend to demonstrate to others their capability of coping with life and having choices instead of denial of such agency.

Furthermore, Bauman points out several prominent forms of postmodern politics that help understand the formation of society, which I argue can well be applied to the subject of this article. These forms include tribal politics, politics of desire, politics of fear, and politics of certainty (Bauman, 1992). This paper argues that the popularity of *Small Happiness* may shed light on these forms as people nowadays communicate with members of community in a mediated way and likewise so are their desires conveyed. In such a mediated society, we desire what others may envy, or imagine about, the desire rather than the thing itself. The attractiveness of a certain thing arises when we expect it is going to be envied and the anticipated attention by others becomes the desire itself rather than something otherwise mundane. Therefore, *Small Happiness* is (re)assured usually when we post it on social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter, and more so when others respond to it.

*Small Happiness* also has something to do with the politics of fear, echoing what Bauman claims, that postmodern fear arises “from uncertainty” as a counterweight to the politics of desire. Put differently, it is right because not much is left to be desired, or because there is much to be feared, so that *Small Happiness* becomes such a craze that people seek to seize it while they can. The politics of fear also gives rise to the credibility of experts, which helps explain the rise of celebrity and ubiquitous celebritization of almost every aspect of life. What is most likely to be envied and thus the most luxurious *Small Happiness* is usually a thing publicized through mediated contents, such as being invited to a celebrity party or going to the same restaurant as celebrities.

Lastly, this sense of fear clearly leads to the politics of certainty that Bauman refers to as a quality of postmodernity, as people are eager to ensure that they have made the right choice, have the best taste, and have followed the latest trend. In order to make the correct judgment regarding such matters, people have first to decide whom to follow and trust, and on which criteria to base their decision.

## **Methodology**

### ***Critical Discourse Analysis***

When we attempt to apply the four aspects of postmodernity to the phenomenon of *Small Happiness*, we find CDA useful in bridging language use and social contexts. As a prominent linguistic scholar, Norman Fairclough has devoted much energy and compassion to demonstrating how CDA can help social science researchers better understand social contexts. Discourse is use of language “seen as a form of social practice”, and discourse analysis is

analysis of “how texts work within sociocultural practice” (Fairclough, 1995:7). For Fairclough, language acts much do more than reflect the world, it must actively construct it, thus the change of language use means not only the change of wording but a change in the discourse and more significantly the ideology underpinning the discourse (Fairclough, 2000). The study of discourse, according to Fairclough, involves the examination of the interaction between what he terms discourse practice, social practice and texts.

Fairclough has contributed enormously to the field of discourse analysis and demonstrated some fundamental analyses of how New Labour has constructed a new style and ideology of politics through introducing a new language set which was later infamously categorized as media “spin” (Fairclough, 2000). In addition, researchers have noted the advent of late modernity through the change of discourse, the dramatic change of economic system requires instrumentalization of discourse so that people can be mobilized, witnessing the extension of market language into not only the market economy, but also language in ordinary life and normalization of language (Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 1999:12). Fairclough (1995) deconstructed the discourse of a university prospectus, deciphering how neoliberal ideology has become rooted in people’s daily lives, including the aspects of social welfare, which was previously believed to be immune from economic invasion. The methodology of this present paper has significantly been influenced by the aforementioned works, and aims to shed light on how language change has implications on social change and political maneuvering.

### *Analysis: An Overview*

In tracing the trajectory of Small Happiness, four national newspapers (China Times, United Daily, Liberty Times and Apple Daily), the so-called “Big Four” of Taiwan’s newspaper industry (Wikipedia, 2014a), will be subjects of analysis because of the high readership and reach into the general public. Analysis spans several years, from 2006 when *Small Happiness* appeared in Taiwan’s print media for the first time, to the end of June 2014. The frequency usage of the term during the years is shown in the Table 1, in which a sharp rise is visible from 2011 onwards. According to the table, the term has appeared in the four selected titles 548 times during the first six months of 2014, approximately five times more than 2013, and 30 times more than that of 2011.

**Table 1\*:** Frequency usage of *Small Happiness* reference in four national papers in Taiwan, 2006-2014

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014**
China Times	0	1	2	7	2	6	14	42	161
United Daily	1	0	0	1	2	20	39	85	208
Liberty Times	0	0	0	1	4	11	21	51	116
Apple Daily	0	0	0	0	0	0	17	71	109
total	1	1	2	9	8	37	91	249	594

\* Table created by the author based on News Database of Legislative Yuan

\*\* The 2014 figure is as of June 30, 2014

Not only is *Small Happiness* becoming widespread, but its quality has also been transformed as the term moved from the literary and lifestyle pages into the “hard” news pages covering subjects such as politics and public policy. As at the end of 2010 most of articles mentioning *Small Happiness* still primarily appeared in the literary pages. The subjects of these articles tended to focus such contents as restful moments in ordinary life, often previously neglected or unnoticed, such as meeting an old friend for a cup of calming coffee in a afternoon, or even just enjoying being alone for a day off.

### ***Transformation of Meaning***

From 2011, *Small Happiness* seemed to become increasingly part of media spin, given its huge popularity and its appropriation by the private and public sectors alike. Taipei City Government flagged the term *Small Happiness* when introducing its Foreign Independent Travel packages to attract Japanese tourists in 2011, giving rise to the popular use of the term among more and more government departments. In the same year, the capital city released several more advertisements promoting tourism to the city, and gradually incorporated it into public policy. In a whole page advertisement commissioned by Taipei City Government in United Daily, the “Maternity Benefits” scheme was framed as a policy of *Small Happiness*, however, the one-off maternity allowance of 20,000 NTD (approximately 660 USD) did little to help parents to cope with the staggering cost of raising children in the capital city.

Taking a closer look at the relevant initiatives of *Small Happiness* promoted by various governments, *Small Happiness* is typically concerned with reinterpreting the current situation instead of addressing and resolving issues. On the one hand, local politicians claimed



that *Small Happiness* is a new way towards city regeneration (Cao, 2012), even for rural cities that had fallen behind in terms of infrastructure and development called for the discovery of new perspectives. Politicians also chanted artist Auguste Rodin's quote "Beauty is everywhere. It is not that she is lacking to our eye, but our eyes which fail to perceive her" (Chen, 2012).

Viewing ordinary life from a different perspective helps demonstrates facets that governments believe will boost the sense of satisfaction of the citizenry towards their life. In this vein, it is understandable that the public sector invests a significant amount of its resources and efforts into activities as karaoke contests, and creating tourist maps indicating popular restaurants, cafes and snack bars. On the other hand and perhaps more significantly, what goes with *Small Happiness* is ironically the shortage, undersupply of infrastructure or life necessities, yet citizens are encouraged to face the insufficient provision of some essential services with "a new perspective", to perceive the beauty of it instead of complaining and ranting, let alone fighting against the government who is supposed to be responsible for the situation. The advice seems reminiscent of the way the North Korean totalitarian government allegedly reiterates the importance of being grateful for and content with current life as demonstrated by the book *Nothing to Envy* (Barbara, 2009).

The pinnacle of the *Small Happiness* phenomenon arguably arrived in 2013 when several cities were bidding for the giant Rubber Duck installation created by Dutch artist Florentijn Hofman. Aimed at spreading love and happiness, the artist would probably never imagine that his artwork would cause bitter political battles between different municipal governments as politicians vowed to have the duck installed in their constituencies, resulting

in an immense craze for the giant yellow rubber duck. On the opening day of the installation alone, the rubber duck attracted more than 200,000 “duck worshipers” who flooded into Kaohsiung City. A total of 8.2 million people from a population of a little more than 23 million visited the floating sculpture for a taste of *Small Happiness*.

The idea of *Small Happiness* reached a climax when Premier Jiang Yi-huah demanded civil servants and officials draft or amend government policy to be based on “creating *Small Happiness* to the general public” (Lin, 2014). As a result of this *Small Happiness* policy, the number of national holidays has been increased, the winter vacation of 2015 has been extended by one week to 27 days as the lunar new year will fall a week after the vacation ends. With the approach of the mayoral election, mayors in different cities have been competing against one other in introducing either pay rises or more holidays, resulting in rising budgets while ignoring future debts.

## Discussion

In this section, three points of discussion will be proposed in order to better understand the implications underpinning this seemingly ordinary social and linguistic phenomenon. Firstly, *Small Happiness* has been largely related to material consumption and echoed Bauman’s politics of desire thanks to consumerist culture in media content fueled by social media. Happiness in a postmodern society has been represented and embodied by consumption that can be seen and envied through posts on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter or other social networking sites. Secondly, the trajectory of this buzzword largely corresponds to social and political upheavals. *Small Happiness* begun to gain popularity in 2008, which also marked the

beginning of several social movements addressing political, social, environmental and economic issues. Thirdly, this paper argues that *Small Happiness* has been appropriated by corporations, governments and the media to channel public attention toward the desire for the good life embodied through consumption, while at the same time downplaying the impact the aforementioned issues have on society, and sidelining the relevant information and significance of the social movements.

### ***Small Happiness as Politics of Desire***

The first observation is that *Small Happiness* has a neoliberal characteristic in which individual enjoyment has been constructed as desired consumer empowerment. *Small Happiness* has had a prominent material tendency largely thanks to a promotional culture that permeates the media, especially social media where people share moments of their daily life. According to different surveys, Facebook plays a large part in people's daily life in Taiwan if judged by the ratio of the overall population who regularly use it, with users spending an average of 6.5 hours browsing it every month. As of 2013, there are more than 13.23 million Facebook users, which is equal to more than 40 per cent of the total population (Apple Daily, 2013; Statista, 2013). Sharing "selfies", photos of gatherings, food and other leisure activities has also motivated users to seek *Small Happiness* in routine life. The analysis of this paper also corresponds to the aforementioned study which found that the majority of *Small Happiness* in newspapers is related to consumption such as shopping bargains, gourmet foods, holiday getaways, and so forth. The desire to show and to be envied has become "the agents' need" and forced consumers to perform more and more seemingly autonomous choices.

### *Small Happiness as Resistance*

Despite the dominant neoliberal ideology, resistance to capitalism and discontent over social injustice and environmental exploitation also prevails. For the following discussion I posit *Small Happiness* as a resistance to nihilism and cynicism in the current postmodern context in which a solid foundation of modern society and industrial development is replaced by the many ambiguous postmodern conditions. Categorized under third-wave democratization, Taiwan has embraced democracy, with the lifting of martial law and media liberalization away from state control for the past 25 years. However, the transition to full democracy is never easy, and it has stumbled with partisan wrangling and political powers' secret collusion with corporate business during the period of economic liberalization, tainting the credibility of political institutions, media and the dominant neoliberal ideology.

The emergence of *Small Happiness* in 2008 coincided with the Chen Yunlin Incident, in which police confiscated Taiwanese national flags carried by protesters during the visit of Mr. Chen, then Chairman of the Association for Relations Across the Taiwan Straits (ARATS), the body responsible for negotiation with the Mainland Chinese government. This incident stimulated a heated debate regarding state sovereignty and partly gave rise to the Wild Strawberries Student Movement, a student led sit-in movement requesting an overhaul of the Parade and Assembly Law.

More and more movements and protests ensued, including the anti-media monopoly protest (Loa, 2012), a protest for military judicial reform after the controversial death of army corporal *Hung Chung-chiu* (Chang, 2013), anti-nuclear power plant protests (Lee, Loa, & Hsiao, 2013), and most recently the Sunflower Movement, which was unprecedented in terms

of movement organization, communication, logistics, and fundraising and attracted global attention (Wikipedia, 2014b). The researcher posits these series of protests into the wider context of global resistance to dominant neoliberal narrative. This is to say that these protests are not contingent or one-off events but a set of related responses triggered by worsening social inequalities exacerbated by neoliberal concepts of market-driven free trade and deregulatory ideologies. The popularity of *Small Happiness* accompanies a mounting sense of dissatisfaction and frustration with social development, which can also be interpreted as a reaction against the politics of fear and certainty as proposed by Bauman.

### ***Small Happiness as Despair in Disguise***

In contradistinction to the much-celebrated consumption stands the marginalization of deliberation of public affairs and policy debates, which is the most worrying feature underpinning the prevalence of *Small Happiness*. It is from this point of view that the thesis of this paper can be illuminated: is it a society of hope or of despair if material consumption and trivial affairs is to be upheld and emphasized by the media, corporate business, and government alike?

Through the CDA applied earlier, we realize that *Small Happiness* in Taiwan has been appropriated by politicians and government officials and become synonymous with “no complaints”, and by doing so the government actually discourages dialogue by the people. People are asked “to look on the bright side” and be grateful for what they already have, while government institutions and officers of different levels continue to work on superficial policies with visible and prompt outcomes. The mentality of *Small Happiness* policy planning

over the past few years has resulted in a few more holidays, a few more benefits and a few more dollars in the pay packets of the Taiwanese peoples' part time jobs, most of which are concerned only with temporary projects that may well be abandoned once the budget has run out or the focus shifted.

This paper examines a new popular term which originated in Japan yet which established root deeps in Taiwan and aims to understand the popularity of the term by viewing it from the perspective of sociologist Zygmunt Bauman's postmodern theory. It suggests that language use has a close relationship with the development of society. Throughout this paper, the researcher presents how the term *Small Happiness* has emerged from popular discourse and how its virality makes sense when taking into account the changing domestic social, economic and political contexts. The researcher argues that although *Small Happiness* has been celebrated and appropriated by actors such as government and corporations for its consumerist tendency; therefore, its potential as a mode of resistance to this capitalist society cannot be ignored. The virality of *Small Happiness* may be a harbinger of a violent outbreak of what is now smoldering social discontent, a counter reaction that should not be underestimated.

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## Research on the Training Mode of English for Postgraduate

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### Abstract

First of all this paper introduces the teaching status of graduate English in most Chinese mainland universities briefly, in which some disadvantages of the current graduate English teaching there have been pointed out. Then, it emphasizes that in order to develop graduates' ability of using English in a well-rounded way, the training objectives of English for graduates should not only be defined as being skill-oriented and major-concerned, but also focus on the promotion of graduates' abilities of critical thinking and international academic communication. Finally, this paper makes an attempt to propose strategies for building an effective training mode of graduate English, ranging from the teaching concept, the curriculum design and teaching materials development, the measures for improving the efficiency of graduate English class to the assessment methods.

*Keywords:* English for Postgraduate, Training Mode

## Introduction

The graduate enrollment has been expanding rapidly in China, rising from 120,000 in the year of 2000 to the 631,000 in the year of 2014. Such an expansion provided more and more people with access to higher education. Meanwhile, it inevitably created some kinds of problems and conflicts in the higher education, particularly in the teaching of graduate English. For instance, with the expanded enrollment some colleges are suffering from a severe shortage of graduate English teachers. What's worse, with the development of social economy and the globalization of higher education the English level of graduates from most colleges fails to keep up with the market demand.<sup>[1]</sup> As far as the author is concerned, the key reason why the English level of most graduates fail to meet the market demand lies in the improper training objectives of English for graduates. According to the teaching syllabus of graduate English issued by the Chinese Ministry of Education in 1992 (which is still in use), as a compulsory curriculum of higher education the teaching of graduate English aims at helping students to acquire and improve the ability of fluent reading, a certain command of writing and translating as well as basic skills in both listening and speaking. However, with the accelerated process of internationalization the social demands for the quality of graduates, especially for their English level have been on the rise. According to the surveys of graduates' expectations for their English study conducted by many researchers, it's safe to draw such conclusions that most of the graduates wish to cultivate a comprehensive ability of language use, especially in listening and speaking; they also desire to strengthen the learning of specialized English in the hope of enhancing their abilities in the scientific literature retrieval as well as academic paper writing and translating. In brief, the graduates should be qualified

professionals with a practical language competence. This will absolutely pose new challenges to the current training mode of graduate English.

### ***Training Objectives of English for Graduates***

Concerning the current training mode of graduate English, the length of schooling in most Chinese mainland universities is generally two years. The English course usually lasts for one or half a year. From the perspective of curriculum, skill-oriented courses such as the *Intensive Reading*, *Oral English*, *English Listening* and *English Writing*, etc. are generally offered. Speaking of the popularity, *English Listening* always comes first while *Oral English* scores the second. The others in turn are *Intensive Reading*, *English Translating*, *Writing* and so on. Unfortunately, the curriculum of most universities is still based on the *Intensive Reading* with the *Listening* as a supplement. Furthermore, there's nearly no difference between the graduate English teaching and the college English teaching in terms of not only the teaching approach but also the teaching materials. Therefore, it is no wonder that many graduates are disappointed with their English classes at present. During the recent years, scholars in China have become aware of this and done some studies from different perspectives, such as studies on the curriculum design and the English level-based teaching, etc. Some progress has actually been made. But due to many other factors, the overall quality of graduates English hasn't been obviously improved. For example, most of the teaching materials chosen for graduates are only an extension of those for college English. That's to say, although the texts included may be much longer and more difficult than those for college English, they still belong to the category of general English, ignoring the relationship between language learning

and professional improvement. Besides, the final exam compromises a significant proportion of the course assessment. All the above factors can lead to a negative learning concept and improper learning methods of graduates, which will finally impose adverse impacts on the learning effect.

To sum up, with the development of social economy and the internationalization of higher education, the training objectives of English for graduates should not only be defined as being skill-oriented and major-concerned, but also focus on the promotion of graduates' abilities of critical thinking and international academic communication. In the light of the status quo mentioned above, and in accordance with the training objectives of English for graduates, this paper makes an attempt to propose some strategies on building an effective training mode of English for graduates from a practical perspective.

### ***Building an Effective Training Mode of English for Graduates***

#### ***1 Teaching concept***

The teaching concept exists in the whole process of teaching activities. It embodies the nature of teaching, represents the ideal pursuit of teaching activities and helps the teacher to organize and implement his or her teaching. Therefore, all the teaching activities must be carried out under the guidance of appropriate teaching concepts, which emphasizes the interactivity of teaching, the subjectivity of students and the constructiveness of knowledge. In the contemporary scholarly discussion, the theoretical concept of "critical" has become a focus of many scholars. In terms of education, critical pedagogy is a relatively old concept, primarily uncovered by prominent Brazilian educator Paulo Freire in his book titled "The Pedagogy of

the Oppressed in the 1960s and 70s". The educational philosophy of Paulo proposes that education aims at developing critical thinking by presenting the people's situation to them as a problem so that they can discern, think about, and act on it. Critical pedagogy is just the teaching concept that criticizes the traditional education for assuming learners as empty agents who receive knowledge from teachers and attempts to help students question and challenge domination, and the beliefs and practices that dominate. In brief, graduates can discern, think about, and act on any (professional) information presented to them in the language learning materials instead of following what is said in the texts blindly. During this process, graduates' ability to use English in a well-rounded way can be developed. In particular their abilities of critical thinking and international academic communication can be greatly promoted.

## ***2 Curriculum Design and Teaching Materials Development***

As mentioned in the above, the curriculum of most universities is still based on the *Intensive Reading*. This kind of curriculum setting focuses on the acquisition of language points, but ignores both the academic features of graduate English and the development of critical thinking of graduates. Therefore, as far as the author is concerned, compared with the general English, the English for Specific Purposes (ESP), or rather English for Academic Purposes (EAP), which links language learning with professional improvement, better suits the graduates. To be specific, EAP bases its rationale on the premise that students can effectively obtain both language and subject matter knowledge by receiving content input in the target language. As regards the curriculum design and teaching materials development, the author is

of the opinion that being practical and professional should be the top concern of the above two. Since the English for graduates usually lasts for 2 terms in most Chinese mainland universities, some Chinese scholars have held that the English for general academic purposes (EGAP) could be adopted in the first term while the English for specific academic purposes (ESAP) could be carried out in the second term.<sup>[2]</sup> The teaching materials chosen for EGAP should not focus on some in-depth knowledge, but can allow students to get to know the things in common between different disciplines and the English expressions of their specialized knowledge.<sup>[3]</sup> Suggested courses can include *Academic English Communication*, *English for Academic Study: Reading or Writing & Research Skills* and so on. By completing these courses, graduates are supposed to improve their abilities to catch on academic lectures, to retrieve and write academic papers, to make academic reports and participate in academic discussions. Then, when it comes to the second term, the English for specific academic purposes is preferred, such as *Legal English*, *Medical English*, *Business English* and so on. The teaching materials chosen for ESAP can vary from discipline to discipline. For example, in the *Legal English* class students will be taught to write a legal case while in the *Business English* class they will learn how to draft a business contract. However, no matter what discipline it might be, ESAP emphasizes on the acquisition of technical terms and the genre of academic papers in specific domains as well as the enhancement of communication skills in workplaces.<sup>[4]</sup>

### *3 Measures for Improving the Efficiency of Graduate English Class*

Since 1960s, more and more Western education researchers, especially those who come from America, have been interested in the subject of effective teaching. Scholars abroad have made wide researches on the concept and practice of effective teaching. As is known to all, it is difficult to define “effective learning”—people with completely different styles can be equally effective. But most would agree that the basic purpose of teaching is to enable learning. In other words, the aims and desired learning outcomes of effective teaching may thus invoke positive changes in the following: knowledge, abilities and mindset.<sup>[5]</sup> Based on this, some measures for improving the efficiency of graduates English class will be dealt with the following four aspects:

Nowadays, with the expanded graduate enrollment, there are usually more than 50 students in an English class. Such a large-sized class will definitely increase the physical and psychological pressure of students, which will certainly impose negative effects on the teaching effect. Besides, the large-sized class does not only discourage various kinds of interactions between the teacher and students and students themselves, but also helps to popularize the stereotypical teaching approach which only focuses on the vocabulary, grammar, reading or translating skills. As far as the author is concerned, to control the class size is of first importance in order to improve the efficiency of the graduates English class. Students from one class should be no more than 30. In such a class, it is convenient for the teacher to carry out various interactions in class (such as group discussion, role-play, case study, etc.), instead of focusing on the acquisition of language points.

The second aspect is to deepen the reform of teaching approaches and optimize the design of class activities. The choice of teaching approaches and class activities to be used depends largely on the information or skill that is being taught, and it may also be influenced by the aptitude and enthusiasm of the students. The traditional teaching approach for ESP mainly refers to the grammar-translation method. It is a method of teaching foreign languages derived from the classical (sometimes called traditional) method of teaching Greek and Latin. In grammar-translation classes, students learn grammatical rules and then apply those rules by translating sentences between the target language and the native language. But this kind of ESP teaching turns out to be the teaching of English reading for special purposes by means of translation. Moreover, the teaching materials seem too complicated for students to master, let alone to develop their application skills in specialized English. By contrast, the effective teaching approaches for ESP should all be learner-centered. Each is predicated through student engagement and suggests involvement via such strategies including collaborative and cooperative learning and problem-based learning. In the problem-posing model of critical pedagogy the teacher participates in the critical dialogue along with the students, helping them to identify the subjects they see as problematic, and rather than solving problems, reflect on these problems as the incentive for collaboratively constructed knowledge. While producing and evaluating their learning materials, students are engaged in the decision-making process in class, which in turn results in their own decision-making outside the classroom.<sup>[6]</sup> So, the problem-posing mode just adds critical quality to the existing textbooks and everyday instruction. More importantly, this research insists that it is quite necessary to judge and evaluate those teaching approaches and class activities according to the feedback



from students in order to make the class more efficient. Through these efforts, it is possible to change the learning concepts of students, which will be turned from regarding learning as an accumulation of knowledge to considering it as an interpretive process with a purpose of perceiving the reality, and improve their learning methods (such as relating the learning materials to their existing knowledge rather than learning by rote).

The third aspect is to improve the classroom management. Classroom management is closely linked to issues of motivation, discipline and respect. Methodologies remain a matter of passionate debate among teachers; approaches vary depending on the beliefs a teacher holds regarding educational psychology. Systematic approaches advocated by researchers so far include Discipline with Dignity, Positive Classrooms, etc. In the *Handbook of Classroom Management: Research Practice and Contemporary Issues* (2006),<sup>[7]</sup> Evertson and Weinstein characterize classroom management as the actions taken to create an environment that supports and facilitates academic and social-emotional learning. Toward this goal, teachers must develop caring, supportive relationships with and among students; organize and implement instruction in ways that optimize students' access to learning; use group management methods that encourage students' engagement in academic tasks; promote the development of students' social skills and self-regulation; and use appropriate interventions to assist students with behavior problems. The effective classroom management for graduate English here mainly involves clear communication of behavioral and academic expectations as well as a cooperative learning environment. By creating this type of environment, students are much more likely to want to do well. In other words, they are willing to, or rather, eager to give their opinions towards relevant issues. During these interactions, not only language skills

of students, but also their ability of critical thinking will be greatly promoted. Ideally, this transforms a classroom into a community of well-behaved and self-directed learners.

The last aspect for improving the efficiency of graduates English class stresses the importance of autonomous learning via the internet. With the popularity of computer assisted instruction in the English teaching, students can get more knowledge from a variety of channels via the web. Autonomous learning sees learners as individuals who can and should be responsible for their own learning climate. And this kind of education can help students develop their self-consciousness, vision, practicality and freedom of discussion. On the one hand, some e-learning platforms have been researched and developed successfully. These e-learning platforms provide a lot of supplementary materials from different resources. On the other hand, there are plenty of massive open online courses (MOOCs) aimed at unlimited participation and open access via the web. In addition to traditional course materials such as videos, readings, and problem sets, MOOCs provide interactive user forums that help build a community for students, professors, and teaching assistants. By means of learning online graduates can accomplish lots of tasks before or after the class, the classroom then becomes a place for further discussions and intellectual enquiries between the teacher and graduates and graduates themselves. This will definitely contribute to the effectiveness of graduate English class.

#### ***4 Assessment Methods***

As is known to all, the assessment methods of any course definitely have a great effect on the learning concept and strategies adopted by students, and finally on the learning effect. Positive assessment methods can enliven both the teaching atmosphere and the learning style, thus activating graduates' thoughts and inspiring their sense of innovation. Therefore, based on a comprehensive survey of the assessment methods for graduate English in the Chinese mainland universities, the formative assessment and multi-valuator assessment are strongly suggested. The formative assessment is commonly contrasted with summative assessment, which seeks to monitor educational outcomes. It typically involves qualitative feedback (rather than scores) for both student and teacher that focuses on the details of content and performance.<sup>[8]</sup> The so-called multi-valuator assessment holds that the teacher cannot be the only source of assessment and self-/group-appraisal should also be taken into account. Compared with the traditional assessments, in which the final exam usually comprises a significant proportion, the formative assessment and multi-valuator assessment can not only improve the quality of assessment, but also provides more opportunities for students' performance.

#### **Conclusion**

With the development of social economy and the globalization of higher education, great changes have taken place in the training objectives of English for graduates. Accordingly, this paper puts forward some strategies for building an effective training mode of graduate English

in the hope of cultivating qualified professionals with a practical language competence. But as regards the specific measures for implementation, further discussions are still needed.

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## **Technology and New Media in the Language Classroom**

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### **Abstract**

This paper is primarily addressed to teachers who stand on the threshold of bringing technology and new media into their classrooms. Technology and new media, such as smart phones and tablets have changed the face of communication in general and of language teaching more specifically. New media has widespread appeal among young people in particular, so it is in the teacher's best interests to bring new media into their lessons. It is the author's firm belief that technology will never replace the teacher, but it is without question that the twenty-first century teacher must employ technology and new media in some form, or run the risk of failure. The level that one chooses to incorporate new media within their class is entirely in their hands.

*"Do not confine your children to your own learning, for they were born in another time" –*  
Chinese Proverb.

### **Introduction**

In the contemporary world, technology and New Media (NM) is everywhere and it is mobile. The chances are very good that the people around you have in their possession, and/or are currently using, a mobile device of some kind; be it an, 'old-fashioned' cellphone, a more up-

to-date smartphone, or ‘tablet’ (e.g. the Kindle or an iPad). Additionally, the chances are also high that the younger the owner of the device is, the more up-to-date it will be.

Depending upon how one views it, the fact that younger people are such enthusiastic users of NM poses a dilemma or an opportunity for language teachers today. While I am a firm believer that technology will never replace the teacher, technology is very prevalent in the world today. However, it has not yet been fully accepted into mainstream language education. Further, while it is true that a relatively small number of teachers have fully embraced the use of NM into their classrooms, many teachers are still uncertain about the benefits of introducing NM into their language-learning classroom. In addition, teachers who would like to implement the use of NM in their classrooms are sometimes unsure about how to proceed. Regardless of where one stands on the spectrum for or against NM in the classroom, technology is making an indelible mark upon learning, and teachers today need to be aware of why and how to use NM now more than ever in the history of language learning.

### ***Definitions***

NM is a form of communication, which is accessible to large numbers of people through the use of digital technology, such as the Internet. Hockley (2012) explains that NM is often in the form of portable, hand-held devices. This includes smartphones (i.e. iPhones), tablets (i.e. iPads, e-readers, mini-laptops and even game consoles). These devices are usually small enough to put in your pocket or handbag. Although small, these devices have already caused widespread and far-reaching changes on the people who use them. NM has had its largest impact on teenagers and young adults. According to a recent study by the Pew Internet & American Life Project, only four percent of eighteen to twenty-four year olds do not currently own a cellphone or smartphone. Furthermore, a study by Kaiser Family Foundation found

that most teenagers use their NM devices for an average of seven hours and thirty-five minutes every day.

Furthermore, NM is altering the way that people view their world and themselves. NM is changing the boundaries between the way that people communicate with each other privately and publically. NM allows people to communicate using overlapping mediums, which were previously separate (i.e. Skype allows people to simultaneously use aural, visual and written mediums). In addition, as communicative speed between individuals has increased, our perception of geographic distance has dramatically decreased (Nueman, 1991). Not only are people communicating with greater frequency, we are communicating in real time with larger groups than ever before, from a more diverse range of geographic locations and cultural backgrounds.

### ***NM and Language Teaching / Learning***

NM is becoming cheaper and connectivity is becoming more accessible, which leads to a sharp increase in their use on a global scale. As sales of handheld devices rises, the number of people who are using NM, with widely diverse backgrounds also increases. These users are no longer confined solely to developed countries, but a significant number of users are in developing countries, such as India, China, South-East Asia, South America and Africa.

Thus, the teaching and learning of English as the lingua franca vehicle of communication is more important now than ever before. So too is the need for language teachers to integrate NM into their classrooms. One force drives the other. Indisputably, the handheld devices, which more than ninety-five percent of our learners possess, are an excellent place to begin. Moreover, it is most likely that our learners are already using NM to learn English outside the classroom. One method is to download and utilize applications, such as electronic word cards for vocabulary study. Learner dictionaries are also available as



an application, often free of charge, which are both powerful and convenient. Additionally, learners can watch their favorite Western artists on music videos or interviews and connect with them via social media for updates, all in English. These are some methods that our learners are already utilizing NM outside of the classroom to improve their English study. Most importantly, not only is NM convenient for learners' intake of language (i.e. listening, watching, reading), but NM aids them in their output as well (i.e. recording conversations, videos, or taking photos for speaking and / or writing activities).

It is only a small step for learners to bring their NM experiences from outside to inside the classroom. There are, however, a series of questions that teachers need to ask before deciding to implement NM in the language classroom. If you are considering the implementation of NM in your classroom, you first need to ascertain the following (Hockly, 2010):

1. Why should you implement NM in the language classroom?
2. What are your goals for implementing NM in your classroom?
3. How will you implement NM in your classroom?

### ***Why Should You Implement NM in the Language Classroom?***

While there is no one correct answer with regard to any of the above questions, answering Question One: "Why" is relatively straightforward. The aforementioned points (i.e. the very widespread appeal and use of NM as a communicative and language learning tool and among high school and university / college-aged people in particular) leads to the conclusion that what is good for language learning outside the classroom will be good for it inside as well. Hence, the high level of intrinsic (self-derived) motivation that is attached to the utilization of NM within language classrooms is a significant factor.

In the first instance, students enjoy learning online, because it is a natural extension of an activity that they undertake of their own free will for between forty to fifty hours every week. A large proportion of the tools that are available (and all of the sites to be discussed within this paper) are free to use, fun and are often very simple to implement within the language classroom.

### ***What are Your Goals for Implementing NM in Your Classroom?***

With regard to “what” you as teacher would like to do in your language class, there are a few factors worth considering.

#### ***Ownership***

What devices will your students utilize (e.g. iPhones, iPads, laptop / desktop PCs)? Further, is the device the property of the school / institution, of each learner, or will you use both? One the one hand, the performance of school owned devices is generally uniform. On the other hand, students may own a variety of different devices, with varying levels of performance. What policies does your institution have regarding learners using their own devices in the classroom?

#### ***Linguistic Input vs. Linguistic Output***

Will your learners’ be exposed to linguistic input, output or to a combination of both? Input can be achieved through implementing the wide-ranging and various listening and reading (often simultaneous) activities, which are now widely available for language learning online. Output can be achieved by letting learners record themselves doing class tasks and activities, or by getting students to make slideshow presentations. For the most effective learning, a combination of input and output is recommended.

### ***Global Content vs. Local Content***

What content learners will utilize on their, or their institution's devices depends upon the kind of learning you are permitted to employ. Global content, in this context, refers to learning content, which has a universal social appeal, such as multi-media. This includes audio and video, TV shows and movies, the Internet or social networking sites. In contrast, local content in this context, refers to activities that have a lower social appeal. Local content activities include quizzes, grammar and / or vocabulary learning sites, touch-typing courses and / or simple games or applications.

### ***How Will You Implement NM in Your Classroom?***

The implementation of online learning classes will benefit when teachers consider the following:

#### ***Location***

Will the utilization of online learning take place in the classroom or outside the classroom? Clearly, their employment within the classroom gives learners access to online dictionaries, news and information for web-based research (e.g. Wikipedia). Alternatively, if learners employ their use outside the classroom, then they can complete online listening tasks, play vocabulary / grammar games, etc. The outside approach can transform both the type of homework that teachers can assign and their learners' attitudes towards doing homework.

#### ***Access to Content***

Teachers have a responsibility towards the kind of content that learners are exposed to, especially during in-class activities. On the one hand, the teacher can adopt a 'top-down' approach and send learner-appropriate NM content to learners. On the other hand, the

employment of a ‘bottom-up’ approach will result in learners being able to search for suitable NM material, which is in-line with their learning interests and research goals.

### ***Utilization***

Related to the above, teachers should decide whether learners might utilize NM activities in all classes, which will cover a wide-range of activities. This approach is a heavy commitment to online learning. Alternatively, teachers may employ online learning of NM resources sporadically and for very specific purposes. One possibility is to utilize in-class time to introduce learners to correct usage of appropriate and recommended resources, which can then be employed by learners on a more on-going basis outside of class as homework or as part of a project-based task.

In summary, it is preferable if the above elements are considered as complementary to one another, rather than as diachronically opposed. These elements offer the greatest benefits when they are blended, rather than when they are taken in isolation. According to Reber (cited in Rutherford, 1987: 25), collaboration between seemingly opposing elements is superior to simply an either / or approach. This is because the interaction and blending of different elements (e.g. a linguistic input task that is combined with a linguistic output task) mirrors ‘the way in which knowledge...is acquired’ (25). As such, incorporating a blended approach for learners exposure to online learning content makes online learning an invaluable tool for language teaching.

### ***Tools for Online Language Learning***

As mentioned above, the selection of institution-appropriate and learner-friendly NM content is an important consideration for teachers. This section introduces a number of online

resources, which the author has successfully employed within his classes (and as homework assignments) over the past two years.

***Teacher Training Videos*** ([www.teachertrainingvideos.com](http://www.teachertrainingvideos.com))

Teacher Training Videos is the brainchild of Russell Stannard, winner of numerous teaching awards. As the name suggests, Teacher Training Videos is a website that teaches teachers how to utilize and employ online learning resources in the language classroom. This site contains step-by-step aural and visual instructions on a wide-range of first-rate, enjoyable and straightforward online resources (including the resources below).

***English Listening Library Online (ELLLO)*** ([www.elllo.org](http://www.elllo.org))

Todd Beuckens, a Japan-based educator, created ELLLO. ELLLO is a huge website, which contains learner-created videos, language learning games, news, entertainment and current affairs. Without a doubt, a focus upon the learner-created videos section will produce the greatest benefit for teachers. The premise is simple and very effective. English language learners from all over the world create a question, (e.g. ‘What is the best city in your country?’), which the learner then answers with video not exceeding one minute in length. Additionally, learners are allowed to create and upload as many videos as they like. The efficacy of this section comes from a number of important factors: Authenticity, relevance, variety and reproduction.

***Authenticity***

All videos are screened to ensure that they follow the guidelines before being uploaded. All videos contain authentic samples of second language English from a wide-range of sources.

As such, the language on these videos contains non-standard varieties and thus naturally occurring learner-errors. Thus, the employment of these videos in the language classroom raises learners' awareness of not only of different varieties of English, but also of linguistic strategies that non-native speakers utilize to communicate their message.

### ***Relevance***

Relevance is closely related to authenticity and has three significant elements of efficacy. First of all, the age of most speakers on the videos is often closer to the age of our learners than the age of the teacher to his or her learners. More often than not, a person's message is more appealing not only when the message topics, but also the speaker's appearance, attitude, behavior and also his or her linguistic errors are similar to those of the listener.

### ***Variety and Reproduction***

Currently, there are more than one thousand videos of language learners from every continent available for viewing, study, reflection and critique and reproduction. When used in class, our learners are exposed to people from a wide range of nationalities, most of whom speak with differing varieties of English than that employed by our learners. Additionally, there are a large variety of questions that are discussed. This variety provides rich content for our learners. Furthermore, the topics discussed (e.g. 'What do you like most about your city?') can likewise become discussion points among our learners.

The size, authenticity and relevancy of the content, coupled with the huge variety and ease of reproduction makes ELLLO a highly effective and recommended learning platform for teachers to employ in their language classroom.

***Lyrics Training*** ([www.lyricstraining.com](http://www.lyricstraining.com))

Unquestionably, Lyrics Training is the most popular interactive website among my learners. Fundamentally, this interactive ‘game’ features contemporary music videos coupled with cloze (gap fill) texts. Learners ‘play’ by listening and typing in the cloze gaps. Failure to complete the cloze results in the song being paused. Lyrics Training is a surprisingly hi-tech learning platform. On numerous occasions, I have observed learners using this site outside of class and during break time. Clearly, the effectiveness of this site can be directly correlated to level of enjoyment that learners experience from using it.

***Listen a Minute*** ([www.listenaminute.com](http://www.listenaminute.com))

Listen a Minute is a four-skills (listening / speaking / reading / writing) language learning website, which was created by Sean Banville. It has a target audience of lower level learners. Each lesson contained within this site begins with a reading text, with an accompanying listening file. Additionally, a range of online interactive quizzes accompanies the reading and listening texts. These activities can be employed in pair or group work activities and provide a high-level language lesson for our learners. Finally, each lesson and accompanying listening file can be downloaded and printed as class work or as homework.

***Facebook*** ([www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com))

Our learners are enthusiastic participants of the social networks that abound within contemporary society. However, in this sub-section, only Facebook (FB) will be examined for its efficacy in classroom management and language learning. Mark Zuckerberg founded FB in 2004, while he a Harvard University student. In the last decade, FB has had a huge impact upon media, self and society. Most learners already have a FB account, which they often check more often than they check their email accounts. Hence, when used correctly, FB

can be a very effective inside and outside classroom management tool. The following are some of the potential methods that FB can be employed for online language learning:

### ***FB and Language Learning***

The ‘group’ function may be employed to create a closed group (‘closed’ means that all posts made to the group may only be viewed by group members). Learners can be asked to use their smartphones to take and upload photos of English signs in their neighborhood. These photos can then be discussed either in class, or in the comment box. Additionally, learners can create and upload their own ‘ELLLO-style’ video (see sub-section 4.2).

The popularity of social media makes them very effective language learning platforms. Not only FB, but also Twitter and Line (not discussed in this paper) are also able to be effectively adapted for the needs of the language classroom.

### ***Implications for Future Research***

Presenting on this topic and writing this paper have allowed the author to identify some important areas of research, both qualitative and quantitative in nature. Although the employment of technology and NM within the classroom is relatively new to language teaching and learning and even newer is research into this field, a relatively large number of scholarly articles and research has already been conducted. Nicky Hockly and Scott Thornbury, whose work has been cited throughout this paper, are two of the most prominent and respected advocates for NM.

This paper has addressed the following research questions:

1. Why should you implement NM in the language classroom?
2. What are your goals for implementing NM in your classroom?



3. How will you implement NM in your classroom?

With regard to answering these questions in light of their possibilities for research, a number of possibilities are available. First of all, the author is currently conducting qualitative ethnographic research into correlations between learner motivation and computer use in language learning. However, further possibilities include researching the employment of NM with one's learners' language test results. This quantitative research could be conducted in conjunction with the afore-mentioned qualitative project. The results could then be triangulated with teacher – student interviews on the efficacy of NM in language teaching-learning. Finally, it would also be very interesting to undertake a collaborative cross-cultural project, with teachers who teach in different countries and cultural environments.

### **Conclusion**

This paper described the place of online learning and NM in language learning today. Technology is an inescapable factor of contemporary life, both inside and outside the language classroom. Further, the most predominant users of NM are members of the generation that was born at the end of the Twentieth Century (i.e. Generation Y). The opportunity that NM provides for language teachers today rests in its widespread popularity, its accessibility, ease of use and relevance to the life's of our learners. NM is here to stay; it is the responsibility of language teachers to become learners ourselves so that we may effectively lead our learners towards linguistic and technological autonomy. Our learners were born in a different time; thus we must not confine their learning merely to the limitations of our own learning.

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## **Attitudes and Motivation in English Language Learning: A Case Study of Attarkiah Islamiah School**

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### **Abstract**

The research aims at studying the attitudes and motivation in English as a foreign language learning of Thai secondary school students. The study sits within the theoretical framework of constructivist theory taking into account Gardner's attitude and motivation in language learning. The study considers students' motivation in English language learning into 2 motives: instrumental and integrative motivation. Participants of this study are 239 Mathayomsuksa 5 students (Grade 11) and 10 English language teachers from Attarkiah Islamiah School. A questionnaire based on Gardner's Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB) was used to investigate the students' attitudes and motivation. A semi-structured interview was then developed to explore the teachers' views on students' attitudes and motivation in English language learning.

The results show that the students had positive attitudes towards English language learning. The instrumental reasons (educational achievement and job opportunities) of the students were slightly greater than the integrative reasons (people and cultural reason). Interestingly, students were less likely to hold integrative motivation in English language learning because they were lack of good learning opportunities. One of the factors influencing their motivation in language learning might be because of the insurgency taking place in the

southernmost provinces of Thailand. The study contributed some perspectives on teaching practices that may help in encouraging students' attitudes and motivation to better learning achievement.

*Keywords:* Attitudes and Motivation, English Language Learning

## **Introduction**

The ASEAN Economic Community 2015 (The Association of South East Asian Nations) exhibits important cooperation amongst the 10 ASEAN member countries: Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Brunei Darussalam, Vietnam, Myanmar, Laos, and Cambodia (Association of Southeast Asian Nations, 2012). There are three major areas of cooperation: Political-Security, Economic, and Socio-Cultural. In order to develop the countries together and to obtain mutual advantages, the ASEAN Charter Article 34 addresses that the language to be used among the member countries should be the English language (Association of Southeast Asian Nations, 2012). Accordingly, it emphasizes, "The working language of ASEAN shall be English" (Association of Southeast Asian Nations, 2012). As a result, English is acceptable as the official language of communication for the ASEAN member countries. Learning and understanding English, therefore, will be advantageous to Thai students since the ASEAN community will make it necessary for the students to use the English language to communicate and understand other ASEAN members.

This study, therefore, investigates students' attitudes and motivation in English language learning in the Islamic private school, Attarkiah Islamiah School, in Narathiwat province because the report of the Ordinary National Educational Test (O-NET) which contributed to university entrance of Thai students during the academic years 2007-2009 revealed that secondary school students were weak in the English language, especially in Narathiwat province where the average score of English was placed in the bottom level of the

country (National Institute of Educational Testing Service, 2012). This would be attributed to the lack of the students' interest in English language learning and to the insurgency that is currently taking place in Narathiwat province. The implications of this study are expected not only to help teachers to understand students' attitudes and motivation towards language learning, but also facilitate the teachers to develop their teaching styles and teaching materials accordingly to the students' perspectives.

### ***Objectives of the Study***

The objectives of this research are:

- To examine the students' attitudes towards English language learning at Attarkiah Islamiah School.
- To explore the students' motivations in relation to the students' English language learning.
- To investigate the teachers' perceptions towards the students' attitudes and motivations towards English language learning.

## **Literature Review**

A review of the literature which investigates the attitudes and motivations towards learning English as a foreign language is presented.

### ***Attitudes of Learning English as a Foreign Language***

To the extent of favorability in learning English as a foreign language, language researchers take the importance of individual's aspects about culture and people who speak a particular language into consideration (e.g., Ellis, 1997; Gardner, 1985; Karahan, 2007; Savignon,

1983). In relation to positive and negative attitudes; for example, Thai students might obtain different degrees of English learning because they hold different attitudes. For students who have a positive attitude towards the language and towards the people of the language, they will be pleasant to be associated with that particular language culture. On the other hand, students who carry a negative attitude might be reluctant to learn and participate in a particular language community. Therefore, there is a general agreement among second language researchers that an effective way to comprehend language achievement is to study learners' attitudes to see whether they are positive or negative towards foreign language learning (e.g., Ellis, 1997; Gardner & Lambert, 1972; Karahan, 2007).

Many researchers agree that holding attitudes towards language learning and attitudes towards the community of the target language are importantly related to successful language learning, especially attitude towards language learning itself (e.g., Buckledee, 2011; Gardner & Lambert, 1972; Savignon, 1983). Gardner (1985), additionally, explained that the learner's attitude towards the language group will significantly influence the success in language learning. If learners hold a positive attitude towards the target group, they will maintain the motives to learn the language; in contrast, if they hold a negative attitude towards the group, they will refuse to learn the new language.

### ***Motivation of Learning English as a Foreign Language***

Gardner and Lambert (1972) categorized motivation as one of the social variables that is an important factor in raising the success in language learning. They intentionally emphasized the intensity of motivation for learning the language, focusing on two motives, integrative motivation and instrumental motivation.

Instrumental motivation refers to learning a language for utilitarian purposes and for the advantages of being proficient in the particular language. Learners attentively learn the

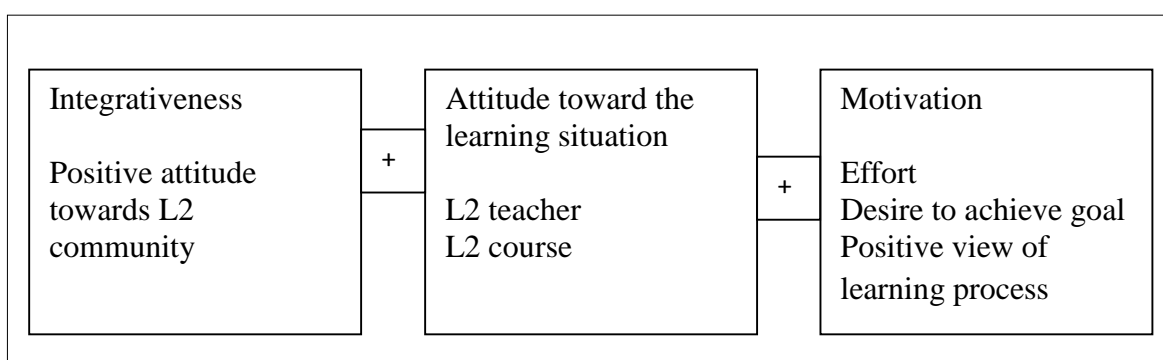
language to obtain social recognition and economic benefit, such as getting a well-paid job, reading technical materials, and obtaining a higher social status (Gardner, 1985; Norris-Holt, 2001). On the other hand, integrative motivation refers to the desire of language learners to be part of a particular language community, the personal interest in the people and cultures, and respect for the group's way of life (Gardner, 1985; Norris-Holt, 2001). Gardner (1985) defined integrative motivation as "learning a language because the learner wishes [wishes] to identify himself with or become integrated into the society of the target language" (p. 203). Sometimes learners indicating they have integrative motivation in language learning need to be accepted into the particular language group as a member and they may be rejected from their original group (Dörnyei, 2013).

Gardner's first socio-educational model (1985) underlines the importance of integrative motivation, which is derived from the particular language culture. He proposed that the degree of success in second language acquisition is obviously related to the feelings of the learners towards the particular language community. However, Dörnyei (2013) claims that the effective way to discern the extent of second language motivation is to investigate how the specific context, such as a classroom, influences the learners' perspectives and affects their interest in language learning.

Recently, the new version of Gardner's socio-educational model, in 2010, was developed on the basis of integrativeness and attitude towards learning situations which are the factors of teacher and classroom (Pineda, 2011). This is the latest version where Gardner expands all factors having an effect on motivation in learning a language. The three main elements are integrativeness, instrumentality, and attitudes towards the learning situation. The integrativeness consists of integrative orientation (IO), interest in foreign language (IFL), and attitudes towards French Canadians (AFC): French Canadian is a particular case study of Gardner. Attitudes towards the learning situation refer to teacher and classroom in general.

The acronym INS is used to refer to instrumentality. The latest model seems to put too much emphasis on the motivational factor that is composed of integrativeness and attitudes towards the learning situation.

Buckledee (2011), therefore, summarized Gardner's model in relation to the integrativeness attitude towards the learning context and motivation. Three main variables are formed to reflect the extent of language achievement (see Figure 1).



**Figure 1:** Gardner's integrativeness motivation

**Source:** Buckledee (2011, p. 30).

### ***Previous Studies on Attitudes and Motivation***

In the field of foreign language learning, a number of research studies, both in Thai and international contexts, have been conducted in the area of attitudes and motivation of students towards foreign language learning. The results of the previous studies in different contexts show slight differences.

Kitjaroonchai (2012) investigated the level of English language learning motivation of secondary students in Saraburi Province in central Thailand. The findings show students have high levels of motivation in learning the language for both integrative and instrumental reasons; however, the latter reason highly exceeds the former reason. Students learn the language in order to complete the school requirements and to engage in effective workplaces.



Kitjaroonchai noted that students perceived that one of the significant reasons of language learning is to communicate effectively with other people in the ASEAN community and to understand the culture and the way of life of other communities. Therefore, the results presented by Kitjaroonchai (2012) obviously indicate that the high level of motivation in learning the English language is because the students are actively regarding the launch of AEC 2015.

Sadighi and Zarafshan (2006) in the field of foreign language learning investigated the effects of attitudes and motivation on the use of language learning strategies of Iranian EFL University Students. The study found that attitudes is a significant factor influencing the use of Language Learning Strategies (LLSs); students with a positive attitude often use LLSs more than students with a negative attitude, and in relation to language motivation, the integratively motivated students use more strategies than instrumentally motivated students.

Additionally, to consider the Middle Eastern students' attitudes and motivation in English language learning, Al-Tamimi and Shuib (2009) investigated motivation and attitudes of petroleum engineering students at Hadhramout University of Sciences and Technology in Yemen. The results reveal that instrumental motivation is the main reason for the students to learn the English language, and they have positive attitudes towards the use of the language and its culture in a particular context. In other words, the instrumentally motivated learners in the Middle East, Southeast Asia (including Thailand), and East Asia (including China and Japan) indicate that they are motivated to learn English as a foreign language to reach the requirement of the schools and to get a better job.

Recently, Daana and Tahaineh (2013) stated that some learners are successful in learning the language if they are integratively motivated whereas others are better if they are instrumentally motivated and, again, some learners can achieve success with the language if they have both integrative and instrumental motivation. The researchers investigated the

social psychological variables, motivation and attitudes of Jordanian undergraduate students and their communities towards learning English where Arabic language is the official language. The findings present similar results as those of Al-Tamimi and Shuib (2009) that the students are more supported by instrumental motivation than integrative motivation. However, even though the latter motivation is, in fact, the weakest factor influencing their language learning, the students still have positive attitudes towards the target language and the culture of its people.

### **Methodology**

The theoretical framework of this study is taken from constructivist theory. This theory supports the notion that individuals normally construct new ideas and knowledge based upon their past and current knowledge as well as through experiencing things (Watzlawick, 1984). Accordingly, so as to understand the reality of a particular phenomenon, it is necessary for the researcher to find out how people construct their worlds and what meanings they give to their experiences. It is believed that those who have experienced the real situation are able to construct their own meanings of that particular thing or situation (VandenBoss, 2007). Therefore, the meanings could best be obtained from those who have lived in the area of study.

### ***Population and Sampling***

The context of this present study is the Attarkiah islamiah School. It is located at Treerat Road, Bangnak District, Muang, Narathiwat Province. The participants in this study are 239 secondary school students in Mathayomsuksa 5 (Grade 11). Moreover, 10 English language teachers of the school were taken part in the research interview.

## ***Research Tools and Procedure***

This research used two instruments with two data collection methods: a questionnaire survey including closed and open-ended questions, and a semi-structured interview.

### ***A Questionnaire Survey***

The questionnaire is adapted from the Attitude Motivation Test Battery (AMTB), originally presented by Gardner (1985). For the data investigation, the researcher administered the questionnaire which consisted of three main sections: demographic information, 33 attitudes and motivation items in form of five-point Likert Scale, and 3 open-ended questions. The questionnaire was first formulated in English and then translated into Thai to help the participants thoroughly understand all the items, followed by piloted the questionnaire from other school students. After piloting, the questionnaire had some item improvements. Then, the questionnaire was distributed to 239 students in order to conduct the students' attitudes and motivation in English language learning.

### ***A Semi-Structured Interview***

The questions of the interview were designed by the researcher with four items based on the research questions as the main theme to be explored. All the questions were piloted and then improved for the appropriateness of the interview. Then, the interview was undertaken with 10 English language teachers after the data received from the students was completely analyzed.

### ***Data Analysis***

The data obtained from a questionnaire survey and an interview were then analyzed through quantitative and qualitative methods respectively.

#### ***A Questionnaire Survey***

The data in response to question items in sections 1 and 2 of the questionnaire were derived from the student participants and were then analyzed through an SPSS program, version 16, in terms of frequency (%), mean (M), and standard deviation (SD). The interpretations of the students' attitudes and motivation were analyzed by classifying the obtained data into 3 levels which are low, moderate, and high. Besides, the responses of the student participants to the open-ended section on the questionnaire were analyzed through a grouping method.

#### ***A Semi-Structured Interview***

Once the interview questions had piloted and improved for appropriateness of the research interview, in the analysis process, the data from all 10 teachers was translated into English individually. After that, the teacher responses were analyzed through a grouping method.

## **Results**

Most of the attitude and motivation data obtained from sections 1 and 2 in the questionnaire survey and a semi-structured interview were then analyzed.

#### ***Students' Attitudes in English Language Learning***

According to the responses to attitudes about English language learning, almost all of the students were interested in learning English as a foreign language (see Table 1).

**Table 1:** Students' Attitudes towards English Language Learning

Items	M	SD
1. Learning English is really great.	<b>4.64</b>	0.63
2. I really enjoy learning English.	3.80	0.93
3. English is a very important part of the school program.	<b>4.48</b>	0.66
4. I plan to learn English as much as possible.	4.28	0.75
5. I love English.	3.84	1.04
6. When I hear someone speak English well, I wish I could speak like others.	<b>4.64</b>	0.63
7. The development of our country is possible mainly by educated people who know English well.	4.27	0.79
8. At least some other subjects should be taught in English at the secondary level in Thailand.	3.65	1.03
9. I do not like English.	2.16	1.16
10. I would rather spend my time on other subjects than English.	2.50	1.02
11. Learning English is a waste of time.	<b>1.70</b>	0.93
12. I think that learning English is boring.	2.03	1.04
13. When I finish Mathayomsuksa 6, I shall give up the study of English entirely because I am not interested in it.	<b>1.69</b>	0.96
14. English should not be the medium of instruction in secondary in Thailand	1.72	1.07
15. English should not be a compulsory subject in secondary school in Thailand	2.00	1.17

It is interesting to show that items 1 and 5 receive the highest mean score of 4.64 which refers to the students believing that learning English was really good and they expected to be fluent in English. When asked about the importance of English language teaching in Thailand, the responses were at a mean score of 4.48 with an interesting view that English was a very important subject of the school program. In contrast, when asked about the value of spending time learning English (items 11 and 13), most of the students did not think that learning English was a waste of time. They had quite low mean scores of 1.70 and 1.69 respectively. Most of the students revealed that they have a positive attitude towards English language learning. They believed that English was a very important language, and also believed that educated people who know English well are important for the development of our country. The students reported that in order to speak English well, they should be happy with and interested in learning English. Moreover, the students also indicated that if it is possible, they would continue learning English after finishing secondary school.

Moreover, in open-ended question 1, the majority of the students indicated that learning English was important for various purposes. The opinion provided by the students, therefore, can be grouped into five major areas:

- Importance of learning English for communication;
- Importance of learning English for the ASEAN community;
- Importance of learning English for further education;
- Importance of learning English for future careers; and
- Others.

### ***Students' Motivation in English Language Learning***

In this section, the research question 2 aiming to explore the students' motivation in relation to their English language learning is the main focus.

Regarding instrumental motivation (see Table 2), a number of the students showed that they were instrumentally motivated.

**Table 2:** Students' instrumental motivation towards English language learning

Items	M	SD
<b>Instrumental Motivation:</b> Studying English is important for me because		
16. I will need it for my future career.	<b>4.44</b>	0.79
17. English will make me a more knowledgeable person.	4.07	0.84
18. English will be useful for getting a good job.	<b>4.29</b>	0.81
19. Other people will respect me more when I know a foreign language.	<b>3.43</b>	1.03
20. I will be able to communicate with people who speak English and those in ASEAN member countries.	<b>4.58</b>	0.64
21. English will help me to further my studies	3.80	0.93

Items 20 relating to students' learning motivation to communicate with people speaking English and with those in ASEAN countries receive the highest mean score of 4.58. Items 16 and 18 got mean scores of 4.44 and 4.29 respectively; this indicates that there were highly motivated students of English.

They were also related to future careers and getting good jobs. Items 17 and 21 were in relation to learning English for facilitating students to be more educated continuing future study. These received mean scores of 4.07 and 3.80 respectively. When asked if they were praised and respected for knowing English, item 19 was the lowest item of the instrumental motivation in English language learning. It had a mean score of 3.43.

According to integrative motivation, the students indicated that they were also integratively motivated (see Table 3). A mean score of each item in this section was not too much varied from each other. Item 23 related to motivation in learning English for understanding cultures and traditions of the ASEAN member countries showed the highest mean score of 4.18.

**Table 3:** Students' integrative motivation towards English language learning

Items	M	SD
<b>Integrative Motivation:</b> Studying English is important for me because		
22. English helps me to easily make friends with foreigners.	<b>4.13</b>	0.85
23. I can understand the cultures and traditions of the ASEAN member countries.	<b>4.18</b>	0.77
24. I can understand English stories, novels, and literature.	<b>4.07</b>	0.90
25. English helps me to better understand the ways of life of the ASEAN member countries.	<b>3.94</b>	0.88



This is followed by item 22 related to the students' interest of learning English for making friends with foreigners and with native language speakers. It also had a quite high mean score of 4.13. Item 24 related to the students' motivation in learning English for appreciating English stories and novels also received somewhat the high mean score of 4.07. Moreover, items 25 related to the students' interest in learning English for understanding the way of life of the ASEAN member countries showed slightly low mean score of 3.94 compared to other items.

Moreover, the responses to the open-ended question 2 regarding the students' motivation in English language learning. The data obtained from the students can be categorized into two major types of learning motivation:

- Instrumental motivation
  - Learning English for educational attainment;
  - Learning English for communication; and
  - Learning English for future career.
- Integrative motivation.
  - Learning English for appreciating the way of life of others;
  - Learning English for knowing people and to be like others; and
  - Learning English because of self interest in the language itself.

In sum, the students of this study are both instrumentally and integratively motivated, but students are slightly inclined toward instrumental motivation rather than integrative motivation.

### ***Teachers' Perceptions on Students' Attitudes and Motivation***

The interview questions were designed for finding out perceptions of 10 English language teachers' perceptions on how they perceived their students' attitudes and motivation in English language learning in general. It would be useful to see if the responses of the teachers corresponded with the students because the responses of them might be helpful for language teachers and Thai educators to figure out the appropriate and effective ways to support students in enhancing their English language learning.

Most of the responses of the teachers corresponded to the students' results from the students' questionnaire. Most of the teachers believed that the main objective of students in English language learning was instrumental motivation which was to prepare themselves for getting higher scores in English examinations.

According to integrative motivation, only one teacher believed that students learnt the language because they were integratively motivated. The teacher mentioned that there might be a small group of the students that wanted to know people who speak English because some of them were good in English.

## **Discussion**

### ***Students' Attitudes and English Scores of Previous Ordinary National Educational Test***

When compared to students' in other parts of Thailand, the students in this area seem to be lacking of learning opportunities and have poor families' background knowledge (Malley, 2010). This in turn can lead to language learning attainment because the extent of success might come from the differences of students' language learning opportunities and practices.

These little differences in turn could lead to a bigger difference in learning success Gladwell (2008).

### ***The Students' Instrumental Motivation towards Educational Achievement***

One of the factors encouraging students' instrumental motivation in English language learning might be the social value. People in this context always admire and praise graduates who receive their degrees from famous universities. The students who do not get desired scores will be left behind. That is why they need to be more active in English language learning and improve their English score because many universities in Thailand, normally, require students who can obtain a high score on English exams. It can be shown that this social factor importantly influences the students' motivation in English language learning in order to gain high English scores, to study at a highly ranked university, and to succeed in graduation.

### ***The Students' Instrumental Motivation towards Future Job Opportunities***

As the world of globalization and business are dealing with the competence of English speakers, learning English can lead to students' new career opportunities and advancement. Competence in the English language can also increase students' competitiveness and ability to get good jobs and work in the right fields since most good job positions require applicants who are proficient in not only English but also others (e.g., aviation, business, language schools, medical center, etc.). Due to the fact that a large number of people in society are proficient in English, learning and having good knowledge of English, therefore, can increase the chance of getting a high salary job and perhaps being hired abroad particularly in English speaking countries such as United States, Australia, and in some countries of ASEAN community like Singapore, Vietnam, and Malaysia.

Apart from the instrumental motivation in English learning, most of the students still have strong integrative motivation in order to associate with English speaking people and to comprehend social cultures of those people, especially of ASEAN member countries.

### ***The Students' Integrative Motivation towards Understanding Others' Social Cultures and Being Knowledgeable People***

The students were more likely to be active in English language learning because they wanted to be part in the English speaking community in order to understand the words in a conversation correctly and to get along well with those people. Apparently, the insurgency in three southernmost provinces of Thailand may be one of the major factors influencing the students' integrative motivation in English language learning. This in turn is leading to the decline of the number of tourists and foreigners. Therefore, it is undeniable that the issue of the insurgency occurring in the three southernmost provinces is likely to affect students' English learning motivation; it additionally leads to reducing the development of the educational system.

### ***The Teachers' Views and Grammatical Teaching***

According to the students' responses, most of them revealed that the English language teaching has been focused too much on English grammar without integrating the use of the language in real situations. Accordingly, the students may not fully understand the actual use of the content of learning. Likewise, Krashen (1987) argued, "Language acquisition does not require extensive use of conscious grammatical rules, and does not require tedious drills" (p. 6-7). With regard to the teachers' views, the causes that may dominate their perceptions on the students' English learning are the Thai educational systems and the university admission's

system. This could be implied that the educational system and the assessment of language learning might shape the language teachers' perspectives on the students' actual learning motivation, and then would contribute to grammatical teaching phenomenon.

### ***Implications of the Study***

The finding of this study can facilitate language syllabus designers to consider the needs and the interests of language learners. The course activities should be interesting in order to encourage the students in English language learning because the students need to learn English for educational achievement, job opportunity, and especially communicative purposes. In the area of English teaching, the development of curriculum in this research context should also consider students' feelings and needs in order to fulfill their motivation in English learning and support them to meet their goals of learning.

### ***Recommendations***

It would be useful to study attitudes and motivation of students in different school contexts, such as other Islamic private schools and other Thai government schools in Pattani and Yala provinces. Moreover, study in different levels should also be regarded, such as primary levels and other secondary levels: Mathayomsuksa 4 (Grade 10) and Mathayomsuksa 6 (Grade 12) in order to compare and interpret the similarities and the differences of participants' responses. As a result, the findings would be more explicit. Besides, other research methodologies should be used such as experiments, control groups, and classroom observation in order to gain more precise information and to better understand students' perceptions and behaviors.

## **Conclusion**

This study investigated students' attitudes and motivation in English language learning of secondary students (Grade 11) at Attaikiah Islamiah School in Narathiwat province. The findings revealed that the students had positive attitudes towards English language learning. The students in this study stated that they were happy to learn English and positively agreed that knowing English was important for them to communicate with people from different countries, especially people in ASEAN countries, to continue in higher education, and to gain better job opportunities.

In reference to the students' motivation, the findings of this study showed that they had both instrumental and integrative motivation, but the instrumental motivation was somewhat more important than integrative motivation. The results of the study show that grammatical teaching was over-emphasized in language class without integrating enough real use scenarios. This might be a great factor influencing students' learning motivation because they felt frustrated using English. Another possible factor influencing students' learning motivation is the insurgency in three southern border provinces of Thailand. This would be the cause of a shortage of experienced and qualified teachers since the experienced teachers seem increasingly move to other parts of the country while newly qualified teachers often do not apply for jobs in this region (Malley, 2010).

This research finding, to some extent, could help teachers and syllabus planers to consider the appropriate way in increasing students' motivation, encouragement, and positive attitudes towards further English learning in order to enhance students' English proficiency.

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## **Iloko on Air: Youth Audience Reception of and Reactions to Mother Tongue Broadcasting**

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### **Abstract**

In 2012, the provincial government of La Union in the Philippines passed an ordinance that designated Iloko as their official language. The ordinance, titled the Iloko Code, aims to promote and preserve the language. To achieve these objectives, local broadcast stations were required to use Iloko adlibs and music in their daily content. Since a majority of the stations in La Union previously used Tagalog, another Philippine language, and English as their media of communication and since most of their musical content were Tagalog and foreign songs, the members of the audiences residing in La Union had mixed reception and reactions on the sudden use of Iloko on air. This research identified the reception and reactions of the La Union youth towards Iloko adlibs and songs on radio. Moreover, through the aid of Robert Phillipson's theory on linguistic imperialism, this research also determined the factors that affected the formulation of such reception and reactions. Through survey questionnaires and individual interviews, it was found that linguistic imperialism was present, though not massively, in the students' receptions of and reactions to Iloko media messages. The factors discovered in this study resonated the arguments presented by advocates of dominant and imperialistic languages.

**Keywords:** Media Linguistics; Linguistic Imperialism in the Media; Audience Studies;

Ilokano

## **Introduction**

### ***English and Filipino Linguistic Imperialism***

The marginalization, endangerment, and extinction of languages are persistent occurrences in today's world. In fact, out of all the 7,106 languages and dialects documented by the Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL) International, 1,519 are considered in trouble and 915 are dying (Lewis et al, 2014). These phenomena have been primarily attributed to the rapid expansion and dominance of only a small number of privileged languages such as English.

Such dominance is a product of linguistic imperialism. Phillipson (1992) defined linguistic imperialism as the assertion of dominance of a language over others. This assertion, according to him, is retained through “the establishment and continuous reconstitution of structural and cultural inequalities between English and other languages” (p.47). In his book, *Linguistic Imperialism*, he wrote that advocates and promoters of imperialistic languages often use three types of arguments – intrinsic, extrinsic, and functional. Intrinsic arguments assert the superiority of a certain language by enumerating what it is and what other languages are not. Extrinsic arguments suggest the importance of promoting a dominant language because it has more resources, such as teachers, teaching materials, and speakers. Finally, functional arguments depict a dominant language as a medium of “wider national and international communication” (Pupavac, 2012), thus making it an effective tool for economic prosperity and political security.

Mackey (2004) also wrote that linguistic domination and imperialism is caused by “military dominion” (p.69) and a language's economic power and “technical and scientific superiority” (p.69). The concept of military dominion implies that a language can expand and become dominant through a nation's victories in military conquests as the winning party can

impose their own culture over their conquered community. He also stated that languages and even cultures of those living in rural communities have the tendency to “exchange their modest self-sufficiency” (p.72) to conform to the demands of the global market, including the use of languages dominantly spoken in trade and business. The same is true in the realm of the scientific and academic communities. Linguistic preferences in trade, business, science, and the academe have raised the prestige of only a limited number of languages, leaving the others in the periphery.

At present, linguistic imperialism is no longer confined in the study of English as a dominant language. In the case of the Philippines, regional languages are also constantly marginalized in favor of the constitutionally-declared national language–Filipino, which is based on the grammatical structure, words, and concepts of another language in the Philippines, which is Tagalog.

### ***Iloko language: A Victim of Linguistic Imperialism***

Iloko, also known as Ilocano, is one of the major languages in the Philippines. It is mainly used in the Ilocos and Cagayan regions, parts of Region 3, parts of the Cordillera Administrative Region, and in some parts of Mindanao. Iloko is spoken by more than eight million people in the Philippines and in other countries and states where Iloko-speaking immigrants have a sizable population, such as Hawaii. However, due to the language’s limited usage in the sectors of education, media, business, and the government because of English and Filipino linguistic imperialism and through the increase in the number of non-Iloko-speaking immigrants in Iloko communities, the language has become under the threat of endangerment (McEachern & Calinawagan, 2011). Other linguistic groups in the Philippines, such as the Cebuanos, have even regarded the domination of Filipino as the “fourth colonization,” after



the domination of Spain, the United States of America, and Japan in the country (Gonzales, 1991, p.125).

The Iloko language has consistently been a victim of Filipino and English imperialism. Because of this, Iloko's prestige in education, science, and even in the mass media has declined over the years. This is evident in the prevailing mentality and belief that Iloko, as well other native languages apart from Tagalog, are mere dialects of Filipino.

Also, English and Filipino have been mandatorily used and taught in all public and private schools in the Philippines as their media of instruction. Filipino and English subjects have been included in the curricula of primary and secondary levels of the country's basic education. Prior to the implementation of Republic Act 10533 or the Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013 that supports mother tongue-based multilingual education (MTB-MLE), English and Filipino were declared as the official languages of instruction in Philippine schools. Such rules and regulations were stated and restated by education officials in 1957, former president Ferdinand Marcos in the 1970s, former president Corazon Aquino in 1990, and former president Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo in 2002 (Anderson & Anderson, 2007).

In the Philippine broadcast media, especially in the FM radio industry, English and Filipino are dominantly used. Filipino is also imposed on Iloko audiences because the most watched television stations and programs originate from Metro Manila, a predominantly Filipino-speaking region in the country. In businesses, Filipino and English are also used in a majority of their conversations, transactions, and materials for advertising.

### ***The Iloko Youth and Linguistic Imperialism***

The decline of Iloko's prestige because of English and Filipino linguistic imperialism has brought the decrease in the use of Iloko among the youth in urban areas such as the City of

San Fernando in La Union, the capital of the Ilocos Region.

In McEachern and Calinawagan's (2007) study, they projected that in 50 years, San Fernando will cease to be a dominantly Ilokano-speaking community because of the language's status in the city. This projection was due to two main reasons. First, Iloko is not used and taught in formal educational institutions in the city. Secondly, the language is also not being transmitted and taught within many households. In some families, the adults speak in Iloko between themselves but do not do so with their children.

As the future of the province and even the language, the members of the youth play a significant role in preserving the Iloko. This means that effective measures in the promotion and transmission of the Iloko language to the youth are necessary.

### ***The Iloko Code and the Local Radio Industry***

To mitigate the negative effects of linguistic imperialism to the linguistic choices of the youth and other audience groups in La Union, the local government passed a language policy. In 2012, the provincial board of La Union unanimously approved an ordinance, which is informally titled as the "Iloko Code," that designated Iloko as the province's official language. Included in the code are provisions governing the use of the language in various forms of mass media such as radio broadcasting.

The inclusion of provisions for the local broadcast media suggests that the proponents of the ordinance recognize the power of the mass media to battle linguistic imperialism and to promote and preserve the language. Under Sections 17 and 18 of the code's 9<sup>th</sup> chapter, disc jockeys and radio announcers are ordered to use Iloko adlibs and songs in their programs. Affected by the code are the province's existing AM and FM radio stations.

**Table 1:** List of AM and FM radio stations in La Union

<b>Bandwidth</b>	<b>Call Letters</b>	<b>Commercial Name</b>	<b>Ownership</b>
<b>657 AM</b>	DZLU	<b>657 DZLU</b>	Private
<b>720 AM</b>	DZSO	<b>Bombo Radyo</b>	Private
<b>783 AM</b>	DZNL	<b>Aksyon Radyo</b>	Private
<b>1170 AM</b>	DWVA	<b>Voice of America</b>	Private
<b>1224 AM</b>	DZAG	<b>Radyo ng Bayan</b>	Government
<b>88.7 FM</b>	DWLU	<b>Rock City FM</b>	Private
<b>101.7 FM</b>	DWST	<b>Love Radio</b>	Private
<b>104.3 FM</b>	DZUL	<b>My FM</b>	Private
<b>105.5 FM</b>	DWAA	<b>Big Sound FM</b>	Private
<b>106.7 FM</b>	DWMB	<b>Hot FM - Agoo</b>	Private

Before the implementation of the Iloko Code, a majority of radio program hosts from FM stations based in La Union used Filipino and English adlibs. Also, the songs aired on FM stations were mainly in Filipino, English, and even Korean. Big Sound Radio, My FM, and Rock City mainly aired English and Filipino pop songs. The AM stations, except Voice of America (VOA) because it only receives and relays programs from the United States, used Iloko in a majority of their contents, especially in their news, talk, and drama programs. They occasionally aired Iloko songs.

After the implementation of the ordinance, with the exception of VOA, all stations have gradually increased the use of Iloko adlibs and songs in their programs. One disc jockey, Boi Lollipop from My FM, even performs Iloko Rap on air.

However, the mere presence of a language on air is not enough. Cormack (2007) posited that though the broadcast media could be an effective tool in language maintenance, there could be a duality in the mass media's impact in language promotion and preservation. The mass media can also become a threat to a native or indigenous language due, firstly, to their economic nature. He pointed out that media companies have the tendency to overlook audience members from native or regional communities in pursuit of an audience group, which would prove to be the largest in number. Because of the limited population of what he calls as "minority language communities" (p.56), media organizations see them as unprofitable. Secondly, since a majority of broadcast program formats and contents are international in origin, the audience may have a propensity in being attracted to the international culture, "downgrading the value of the indigenous culture" (p.57). He also argued that the presence of a minority language in a certain medium does not automatically guarantee that people would speak the language.

In the case of the Iloko Code, the presence of Iloko in local broadcast stations does not automatically mean that the audiences would be encouraged to use the language. If radio listeners choose to reject an Iloko program or station due to several factors, then the aims, objectives, provisions, and the advocacy of the language policy will be in vain.

### ***Objectives of the Research***

Grounded on Phillipson's theory on linguistic imperialism, this research mainly aimed to discover the reception and reactions of the audiences towards broadcast stations that are using Iloko adlibs and songs. To satisfy the main objective, this research used the implementation of the Iloko Code as a case study. Specifically, this study aimed (1) to discover the reception and reactions of high school students towards La Union-based disc jockeys and radio announcers who use Iloko adlibs and songs on air; and (2) to determine the factors that caused the

formulation of the high school students' reception and reactions on disc jockeys and radio announcers who use Iloko adlibs and songs on air.

## **Methodology**

### ***Population and Sample***

Through purposive sampling, 52 students from the La Union National High School (LUNHS) in the City of San Fernando in La Union were chosen as respondents, with ages ranging from 11 to 17 years old. Out of the 52 respondents, 15 were from the 7<sup>th</sup> grade, 15 were from the 8<sup>th</sup> grade, 5 were from the 9<sup>th</sup> grade, and 17 were from the 10<sup>th</sup> grade. All students were attending the first shift classes of LUNHS, which was from 7:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

**Table 2:** Distribution of Respondents

Grade level	MALE		FEMALE		TOTAL	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
<b>7 (1st year)</b>	9	37.5	6	21.4	<b>15</b>	<b>28.85</b>
<b>8 (2nd year)</b>	6	25	9	32.1	<b>15</b>	<b>28.85</b>
<b>9 (3rd year)</b>	3	12.5	2	7.14	<b>5</b>	<b>9.615</b>
<b>10 (4th year)</b>	6	25	11	39.3	<b>17</b>	<b>32.69</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	24	100	28	100	<b>52</b>	<b>100</b>

### ***Research Instruments***

This study is both quantitative and qualitative in nature. Interviews, which took an average of 30 minutes each, were administered to determine the reception and reactions of the high

school student audiences towards disc jockeys and programs using Iloko as their medium of communication and content. The same method was also utilized to discover the factors that caused their reception and reactions. Questionnaires were also used to determine the radio stations and programs, from both the AM and FM band, to whom the respondents are listening to. The questionnaires had a 100% turnout since it was answered by the students just before the interview proper.

### ***Data Analysis***

After transcribing the interviews, a conventional content analysis was employed in determining the categories of the answers of the respondents. Hsieh & Shannon (2005) wrote that conventional content analysis is a type of data analysis wherein a researcher avoids the use of pre-conceived categories. Instead, it allows “the categories and names for categories to flow from the data” (p. 1279). This type of content analysis is mainly used in researches that aim to describe a phenomenon. This, therefore, means that the categories formulated in this research were not based on any related or past studies but solely on the trends that emerged during the interviews.

## **Results**

### ***Reception of Iloko Adlibs***

**Table 3:** The number of respondents who like or dislike Iloko adlibs.

	GRADE 7		GRADE 8		GRADE 9		GRADE 10		TOTAL	%
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	n= 52	n=100
<b>LIKE</b>	6	5	5	8	3	2	5	9	<b>43</b>	<b>82.7</b>
<b>DISLIKE</b>	3	1	1	1	0	0	1	2	<b>9</b>	<b>17.3</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>									<b>52</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 3 states that a total of 43 student-respondents declared that they approve the use of Iloko adlibs in radio stations based in La Union. They claimed that whenever a disc jockey or a radio announcer spoke in Iloko, they would listen continuously. They do not switch to other stations or turn the radio off. The number of those who expressed approval over the use of Iloko adlibs is significantly higher than the number of those who said otherwise. Only 17.31% of the 52 respondents claimed that they do not approve the use of Iloko adlibs in radio programs.

### ***Underlying Reasons for the Positive Responses to Iloko Adlibs***

Through conventional content analysis, which was defined earlier in this study, four major reasons were found to have influenced the positive responses of the student-respondents towards the use of Iloko adlibs on radio.

#### ***Sense of Pride***

The students claimed that they feel a sense of pride whenever they hear Iloko words, phrases, or sentences being spoken by disc jockeys (DJs) or radio announcers. This is evident in the respondents' consistent uttering of the phrase “*nakaka-proud po* [it makes me feel proud, sir].” Some even expressed their positive response over Boi Lollipop's attempt to perform Iloko Rap in his programs in MyFM. Most of the respondents stated that they felt proud because Iloko is their mother tongue.

#### ***Educational Tool***

A majority of the students also said that they like hearing Iloko words, phrases, or sentences on air because it gives them the chance to learn more about the language. The DJs or announcers who are using Iloko in their programs, according to the students, have actually

helped them know more Iloko words and expressions. After hearing a new phrase or term, they immediately asked their parents, grandparents, or guardians about their definitions. Even the respondents who are not native speakers found their exposure to the language through the radio an effective tool for them to learn Iloko.

### ***Understandability***

The third reason is that the respondents found Iloko adlibs easier to understand since it is in their native language. Respondents further expressed this thought through various phrases such as “*mas nagaganahan akong makinig* [I am more encouraged to listen]” and “*mas nakakatawa ang jokes* [the jokes are funnier].” Respondent 16 said that he felt more encouraged to listen to the radio because he understands Iloko-speaking DJs more than those who use Filipino and English. Respondent 3 also said that since the jokes are spoken in Iloko, they are easier to comprehend, therefore they are more humorous.

### ***Exposure to Iloko from Other Sources***

Finally, the core reason why most of the high school students are responding positively to Iloko adlibs on air was because they are already accustomed to speaking and hearing Iloko in their environment. The respondents claimed that the conversations they have in their homes are mostly in Iloko. This is because their parents, grandparents, or guardians were also native speakers. Their elders were also willing to help them understand Iloko terms or phrases. Moreover, the students said that they also use the language whenever they are with their peers or whenever they are in school.



### ***Underlying Reasons for the Negative Responses to Iloko Adlibs***

Through the aid of conventional content analysis, three categories of underlying reasons were formulated from the negative responses of some of the students on the use of Iloko adlibs on radio.

#### ***In-Migration***

While some respondents acknowledged the rationale of the production of Iloko messages on radio, they still voiced out their disapproval because, according to them, using Iloko adlibs is being “insensitive” to the needs of non-Iloko listeners who have immigrated to La Union. They said that radio messages should not be fully in Iloko. They recommended that DJs or announcers should speak more in Filipino or English.

#### ***High Exposure to Manila-based Programs and Hosts***

The students’ minimal exposure to La Union-based disc jockeys in the FM band has also contributed in their disapproval of Iloko media messages. In the questionnaire, the respondents were asked to enumerate all the radio stations and programs they are listening to. They were allowed to have **multiple answers**. The results are shown in Table 4.

**Table 4:** The respondents' choice of radio stations.

RADIO STATIONS	GRADE 7			GRADE 8			GRADE 9			GRADE 10			TOTAL
	M	F	Subtotal	M	F	Subtotal	M	F	Subtotal	M	F	Subtotal	
	n=9	n=6	n=15	n=6	n=9	n=15	n=3	n=2	n=5	n=6	n=11	n=17	
<b>Bigsound</b>	1	1	2	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	2	5
<b>Love Radio</b>	5	4	9	5	7	12	3	2	5	6	11	17	43
<b>Rock City</b>	2	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
<b>My FM</b>	5	2	7	0	3	3	1	0	1	3	5	8	19
<b>Hot FM</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>No La Union FM Exposure</b>	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
<b>DZLU</b>	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
<b>Bombo Radyo</b>	8	4	12	6	7	13	2	2	4	6	10	16	45
<b>DZNL</b>	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	2	0	2	4
<b>VOA</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>DZAG</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1
<b>No AM Exposure</b>	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	2

Love Radio is the most preferred radio station in the FM band, while Bombo Radyo is the most favored radio station in the AM band. Out of 52 students, 43 professed that they are listening to Love Radio. A majority of those students who are subscribed to the station claimed that they listened to Papa Jack and his program titled *True Love Confessions*. Papa Jack was a popular DJ hailing from the Love Radio network's Metro Manila station. Due to his immense popularity, his program was transmitted towards the network's regional stations. Some respondents also declared that they are subscribed to other Manila-based DJs such as Chris Tsuper, Nicole Hyala, and Chico Loco. The said DJs only speak English and Filipino adlibs.

In the AM band, 45 out of 52 respondents said that they have listened to Bombo Radyo in La Union, which uses Iloko almost all the time. However, the respondents claimed that they are only listening to the AM station whenever they need information about the suspension of classes during tropical depressions, storms, or typhoons. Most of them also shared that tuning in to Bombo Radyo was not their choice but their elders'.

A majority of the respondents had a higher exposure to Manila-based disc jockeys, which exposed them more to Filipino and English adlibs. Though they have listened to an Iloko-intensive AM station, they were only compelled to do so only if there were weather disturbances. In addition, some respondents claimed that they failed to appreciate Iloko adlibs because they felt that Tagalog-speaking DJs and announcers sounded better than those speaking in Iloko. For them, Iloko sounds rough on radio.

### ***Iloko as a 'Dialect'***

Calling Iloko as a mere dialect of Filipino was also a recurring answer among the respondents. A couple of students even corrected the interviewer saying that Iloko is not a language but a dialect of Filipino. They said that their teachers told them so. According to Anderson & Anderson (2007), the usage of the term dialect “often connotes that a speech variety is linguistically or expressively inferior, and such usage devalues small languages, even to their native speakers” (p.121).

### ***Reception of Iloko Songs on Air***

Though a majority of the respondents have expressed a positive feedback on the use of Iloko adlibs in La Union-based radio programs, their responses changed when asked about their reactions to Iloko songs played on air.

**Table 5:** The number of respondents who like, dislike, or are neutral towards Iloko songs on air

	GRADE 7		GRADE 8		GRADE 9		GRADE 10		TOTAL	%
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	n= 52	n=100
<b>LIKE</b>	3	2	3	7	2	1	3	6	<b>27</b>	<b>51.9</b>
<b>DISLIKE</b>	6	4	3	2	1	1	3	5	<b>25</b>	<b>48.1</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>									<b>52</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 5 states that 27 out of 52 students expressed a positive response towards the airing of Iloko songs in La Union-based radio stations. Some even claimed that they sang along whenever they heard some on radio. On the other hand, 25 students voiced their negative reception and reactions towards Iloko songs played on air. Some revealed that they would turn off their radio sets or change the radio station whenever they hear Iloko songs.

### ***Underlying Reasons for the Positive Responses on Iloko Songs On Air***

Two main underlying reasons for the respondents' positive responses towards Iloko songs on radio were found through the conventional content analysis.

#### ***Understandability***

A total of 27 students said Iloko songs were easier to understand and to relate to. They specifically expressed this by describing Iloko songs that they have heard before. Respondent 2 said that Iloko songs were “*mas tagos sa puso* [more striking],” while Respondent 21 said that such songs were “*masarap sa pakiramdam* [soothing]” because their lyrics were more emotionally accessible. Respondent 29 also claimed that Iloko songs were easier to comprehend because it featured her native tongue.

### ***Filial Influences***

Most of those who responded and reacted positively claimed that they were already accustomed to listening to Iloko songs because their siblings, parents, grandparents, or guardians were also regularly listening to such songs. As seen through the interviewees' responses, influence from family members was a vital part in the respondents' choice of music on radio. Respondents 10, 24, 25, and 37 have been encouraged to listen to and appreciate Iloko songs because both or at least one of their parents frequently listened to such songs. Grandparents have also influenced the students' positive reception and reactions towards Iloko music. Such is the case of respondents 8, 9, 24, 37, and 42. Respondents 14 and 26 were influenced by their siblings.

### ***Underlying Reasons for the Negative Reactions on Iloko Songs on Air***

For the respondents who reacted negatively towards the use of Iloko songs on air, four main reasons were found. Their responses were categorized through the aid of a conventional content analysis.

### ***Problems with Content***

There are those who said that they can actually accept the songs if the contents, theme, or lyrics were improved or were made more understandable. Respondents 3, 11, 13, 28, 33, 35, 39, 42, 48, and 50 specifically pointed out that they did not like Iloko songs on radio because they did not understand most of the lyrics. According to them, most words used in Iloko songs were deep and seemingly obsolete.

Also, some respondents said that they rejected Iloko songs not because of the language used but because of their theme or message. Some lyrics of Iloko songs were deemed offensive by some respondents because they have a sexual theme. They cited songs like

*Nagimas Kan Mayyang* [You are delicious, Mayyang]. Some, according to the students, were about infidelity such as *Basol Mo, Lalaki* [It's your fault, my man].

### ***Problems with Genre***

There were some who rejected Iloko songs because of the genre. Respondent 1 said that the youth in La Union were now rejecting Iloko songs because they believed that they are corny and out-of-date. He said, “*mas gusto nila yung mga rock, yung mga makabagong genre ngayon* [the youth today prefers rock or other contemporary genres].” Apparently, Iloko songs aired on radio were slow ballads and novelty songs. These genres, according to the interviewees, were among their least favored types. One of the respondents said that if the Iloko songs aired on radio were in a genre that he liked, he would probably have listened to it. As an example, he shared that he patronized the Iloko rap songs that Boi Lollipop performed in MyFM.

### ***‘Unpleasant’***

Phillipson (1992) wrote that desirable characteristics are attributed to dominant languages. Also, Anderson and Anderson (2007) stated that there is a lingering belief that “non-dominant languages are deficient as compared with dominant ones” (p.120). This supposed deficiency of non-dominant languages pertains to their accent, diction, pronunciation, intonation, and the like. These beliefs were evident in the responses of those who have expressed their disapproval over the airing of Iloko songs in radio stations. A majority of the 25 students who disliked Iloko songs on radio said they preferred Filipino over Iloko because they are more pleasant to the ears. Respondent 15 even described Iloko songs as “*matigas pakinggan* [it sounds rough],” while respondents 33 and 47 described Iloko songs as “*pangit pakinggan*

[unpleasant to listen to].” These reactions were brought by the perceived superiority of the Filipino or English language when it comes to pronunciation and diction.

### ***‘For Adults Only’***

Iloko songs have consistently been considered by the respondents as suitable and favorable only for adults, which includes their parents and elders. According to the respondents, the genres and lyrics used in the Iloko songs aired on radio stations in La Union were out-of-date and can only be fully understood by those who know much about the language, which are their elders.

## **Discussion and Conclusion**

Linguistic imperialism of English and Filipino still prevails, though not massively, in the linguistic choices of the youth when it comes to media consumption. It is most evident in the negative reactions and feedback expressed by some of the respondents regarding the use of Iloko adlibs and songs on air. These reactions and feedback reinforce prevailing arguments that have been used to impose the dominance of Filipino and English in the Philippines.

The reactions that are under the intrinsic arguments present what Filipino and English are and what Iloko is not. Some students said that Filipino and English are legitimate languages while the Iloko is only a dialect. This presupposes the dominance and superiority of Filipino and English over Iloko. The respondents also regarded English and Filipino as better languages when it comes to diction and pronunciation. Extrinsic arguments tell about the accessibility to a language’s human, literary, and mediated resources. Some of the youth’s linguistic resources were Manila-based FM radio disc jockeys who primarily speak Filipino and English. Finally, the functional arguments expressed by the respondents were about the usability of English and Filipino in the province. When it comes to Iloko adlibs, some

students received Iloko messages negatively because of the presence of immigrants who are not native Iloko speakers in the province. Also, some respondents said that they have no use of Iloko songs on air as they can only be understood and appreciated by adult or elderly audiences.

Arguments apart from those asserted by linguistic imperialism also emerged. Some students admitted that they only disapproved Iloko songs on air due to their content and not because of the language used. They said that they would listen to Iloko songs if their themes are wholesome. Furthermore, they said that they will approve the airing of Iloko songs on air as long as the words, lyrics, content, and genre are changed, revised, or updated.

Despite the presence of Filipino and English linguistic imperialism, there is still hope for the promotion and preservation of the Iloko as those who expressed approval on the use of Iloko on air constituted the majority of the respondents. Native speakers of Iloko defied the boundaries set by linguistic imperialism as they presented their own arguments in favor of the use of their mother tongue on air. Borrowing from Phillipson's categorization of the arguments in favor of linguistic imperialism, the positive responses of the students on Iloko adlibs and songs could also be classified as such.

The main intrinsic argument presented by a majority of the students is the identity of the Iloko language. They have considered Iloko as their own. According to them, they felt proud whenever they hear their language on radio. As an extrinsic argument, the respondents indirectly conveyed the richness of Iloko's human and mediated resources. They claimed that they were consistently exposed to the language in their homes and at their school. Moreover, they have been encouraged and influenced by members of their families to listen to and appreciate Iloko songs. They also regarded the radio as one of the resources of the language because they learned more Iloko words and expressions through it. According to the



respondents, Iloko adlibs and songs also have a high functionality because they are easier to understand and to relate to.

### ***Recommendations***

Though a majority of the respondents approved the use of Iloko adlibs and songs on radio, it is still imperative to address the negative reactions and concerns raised by the minority. Based on the results of the study, the following recommendations are hereby presented.

Parents and guardians should take responsibility in the transmission of the Iloko as they are still highly influential in the linguistic choices of the youth in the media and in their daily conversations. To increase the acceptance and appreciation towards Iloko adlibs and songs on radio, adults should provide the youth with more exposure to Iloko songs and conversations.

Broadcast stations should also produce programs that would cater to the preferences of the younger audiences. An example of this could be the production of an Iloko or a more multilingual version of Papa Jack's *True Love Confessions*. Equal airtime allotted to Iloko adlibs and songs alongside Filipino and English is also highly encouraged. Music producers should also compose Iloko songs that are more accessible to the youth.

As suggested by McEachern and Calinawagan (2011), to mitigate the negative effects of in-migration to the Iloko or any other language, the local government should establish a system that would require or encourage immigrants to study and learn the local language.

A more effective and extensive promotion of Iloko through basic education could also boost the interest and positive reception of audiences towards Iloko content in various forms of mass media.

The research community is also encouraged to address the limitations of this study. The respondents of this research are students from a public school, who are mostly from

families under the lower social classes in the country. To gain wider insight regarding the perception of the members of the youth, it is also beneficial to study the reception and reactions of students from private institutions. The study on the linguistic choices of other sectors and age groups are also highly recommended for the collection of more insights that would aid legislators and law enforcers to better implement or amend language policies.

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**Environmental Influences on Competence in English as a Foreign  
Language: A Study of Thai Undergraduates  
at an International University in Thailand**

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**Abstract**

This study is designed in an attempt to examine the ideal and the actual university learning environment in relation to English language learning and to investigate the actual environmental influence on the students' English language competence. This is to understand why a number of Thai university students of English-medium instruction programs are still unable to attain high levels of English proficiency despite engaging in an English-medium education system. An interpretive approach was used to conduct interviews with 10 teachers and 15 students of an international university, along with questionnaires which were administered to 175 students. The results disclose some major differences between the ideal and the actual university learning environment, perceived by the teachers and experienced by the students respectively. The major differences are related to the nature and amount of English exposure as well as the responsibilities of the English-medium instruction program's teachers. Precisely, having limited exposure to English outside the classroom, being exposed to little social English, getting little English-related feedback, and having few native English-speaking teachers were reported to be the major causes of these students' inability to use English effectively. Overall, with the improvement in all the four language skills, the students

reported having difficulty in using English in some aspects, English writing and grammar in particular. Based on this study's findings, major valuable implications which could be used as the strategies for improvement in the quality of the teaching and learning environments are finally suggested.

*Keywords:* Foreign Language Learning, Learning Environment, International Program

## **Introduction**

It is undeniable that English competence is essentially important in the era of globalization as it has become a prerequisite for today's professional accomplishment (Education First, 2012; C. Hengsadeekul, T. Hengsadeekul, Koul, & Kaewkuekool, 2010; Pawapatcharaudom, 2007). This implies that in order to successfully work in such a competitive market, graduates need to be equipped with a high level of English proficiency. This fact leads to the reformation of academic curricula provided by the Thai higher education institutions. A number of universities in Thailand, both public and private, have been attempting to imitate an English language environment by offering English-medium instruction in the hope of consolidating Thai students' English skills as well as training students for maximum language proficiency (Degang, 2010; Hengsadeekul et al, 2010).

However, there is some surprise to discover that there appears to be the great contradiction between the demands for English proficiency in today's globalized world and the actual level of Thai people's English competence. While today's globalized world requires individuals with high English proficiency, the English skills of Thai students and graduates, on the other hand, are critically poor, especially when compared with those of other countries in the region (Khaopa, 2012; Puengpipattrakul, 2007; Wiriyaichitra, 2002).

In fact, by focusing on a more specific context, it is surprising that Thai students and graduates of international programs where English is used as a medium of instruction are also

unable to perform well in the English language in spite of the fact that all subjects and coursework are conducted in English (Adamson, 2004; Barnes, 2008; The Economist Intelligence Unit, 2012; Pawapatcharandom, 2007; Wiriyachitra, 2002). Accordingly, serious consideration needs to be given to understand why a majority of Thai students and graduates are still unable to have proficiency in English, despite engaging in an English-medium education system.

From a wider perspective, the rationale of this study is guided by the premise that learning environment is crucial to students' foreign language learning and competence as it represents one of the key factors that promotes language learning success (Collentine & Freed, 2004; Firth & Wagner, 1997; Housen et al., 2011). Since Thai students and graduates of international programs are still unable to perform well in English, it could be said that there might be a discrepancy between ideal and actual educational environments. For this reason, it would be both favorable and necessary that this current study investigates the ideal and the actual Thai university-learning environment of English-medium instruction programs. In addition, it will be implemented in such a way as to examine the degree to which the current context of learning helps to promote students' English language competence. In this study, the research site is the private international university in Thailand, where English is the officially approved medium of instruction.

### ***Research Aims and Questions***

The chief objectives designed for the current study are (1) to examine the teachers' perceptions of the ideal learning environment for the context of an international university in relation to foreign language learning, (2) to examine the students' perceptions of the actual university learning environment in relation to foreign language learning, (3) to discover whether there is any discrepancy between the ideal learning environment perceived by the

teachers and the actual learning environment experienced by the students, and (4) to investigate the extent to which the actual university learning environment affects students' foreign language competence.

In relation to the four main research objectives mentioned above, three specific research questions are identified as follows:

1. What are the teachers' perceptions of the ideal learning environment for the context of an international university in relation to foreign language learning?
2. What are the students' perceptions of the actual university learning environment in relation to foreign language learning?
3. What are the students' perceptions of the extent to which the actual university learning environment affects their foreign language competence?

### ***The Key Aspects of Learning Environment for Foreign Language Learning***

According to Housen et al. (2011), "curricular context" and "extra-curricular context" are the two main contextual factors affecting students' foreign language learning and competence. The former refers to the classroom context shaped by the school's ethos, language/educational policy, curriculum design, and pedagogical approaches which in turn determine classroom practices, whereas the latter refers to the context beyond the direct control of curricular intervention. With these definitions, some compelling issues that fall under these two major contexts and are chosen to be objects of this study's inquiry can be discussed as follows:

### ***The Role of Language Prominence***

Language prominence is related to the number and nature of linguistic input and output opportunities provided for L2 learners in the curricular and extra-curricular learning contexts (Housen et al., 2011). It is generally believed that "the more prominent the L2 is in the

learning context, and the less prominent the L1, the more L2 acquisition will be promoted” (Housen et al, 2011, p. 88). In a word, the learning context is seen as the primary source providing the linguistic input and output opportunities for foreign language learning.

It is thus necessary to investigate whether and to what extent the L1 or the foreign language plays a role in the learning settings; that is, whether the L1 or the foreign language is widely used by most of the school population (e.g. students, staff, and teachers) and to what extent the foreign language functions as media of classroom communication, instruction, and so on. Concisely, the degree of English language prominence at both classroom and university level at the chosen university context still remains unknown and therefore needs to be examined.

### ***Teaching Practices and Learning Activities***

According to Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning (2011), an intellectual environment is considered one of the aspects of classroom climate where teachers provide content in an organized and engaging manner which usually includes classroom practices and activities.

As for classroom practice, Wong (2010) asserted that discouraging and minimizing the use of students’ mother tongue in the classroom should be the primary concern since allowing native language to be used in a classroom certainly results in depriving the students of excellent opportunities to learn and use English. In his study, the English proficiency of the students who were strictly required to use only English in class grew faster and better than those in the class where the use of Cantonese (the students’ mother tongue) was permitted since the latter group of students generally chose to speak Cantonese. This in turn limited their English exposure and practice and thus eventually resulted in a low confidence in their English usage.



Besides, Ibrahim (2001) and Wang (2009) maintained that giving students opportunities to participate in the classroom and get involved in various authentic and communicative-related learning activities should also be a high priority because it allows students to develop their strategic competence as well as practise communicative strategies.

### ***Motivating and Supportive Classroom Environment***

It has long been believed that a positive and motivating classroom climate can be considered a factor contributing to the attainment of a successful learning outcome (Bahous, Bacha, & Nabhani, 2011; Dörnyei, 2007). According to Michigan Department of Education (2011), “In a supportive and responsive environment, students feel more confident and capable of accessing the language and content” (p. 1). Principally, this issue is related to “Affective Filter Hypothesis” which demonstrates that a comfortable, motivating, and tension-free classroom environment can help in leading to a low affective filter, allowing students to learn the language faster and better (Krashen, 1982, as cited in VanPatten & Willaims, 2007). A tense classroom climate, on the other hand, can undermine learning and demotivate learners (Thanasoulas, 2002).

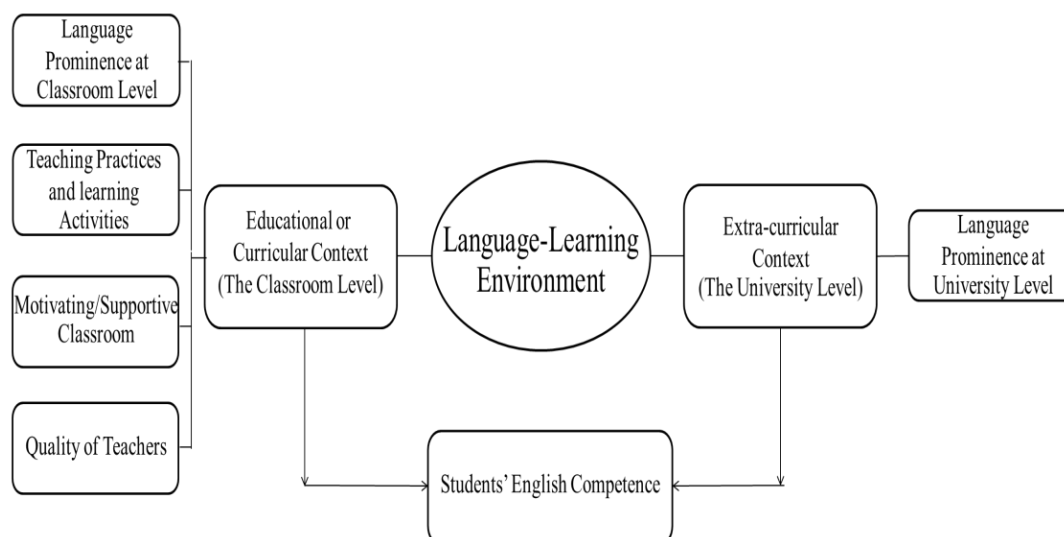
Moreover, the teacher is also said to be the key to motivating the language learner. As Dörnyei (2007) and Wong (2010) asserted, the teacher can play a significant role in creating the student’s necessary motivating character within the educational context through conscious intervention since an individual teacher plays a deciding role in creating and fostering the teaching and learning atmosphere. Accordingly, it is worth examining this emotional aspect of classroom climate by investigating whether the actual classroom atmosphere facilitates or hinders students’ language learning process and development.

### ***Quality of Teachers***

Clearly, the teacher plays a leading role in developing the quality of education which in turn affects the students' learning outcomes. According to Punthumasen (2007), quality of teacher is regarded as the most important school/university-related factor influencing students' learning outcomes. However, a review of relevant literature uncovers that not all teachers, in reality, are highly qualified. As Aguilar and Rodri'guez (2012) and Wongsothorn, Hiranburana, and Chinnawongs (2002) claimed, a teacher's insufficient level of English is considered one of the major concerns in today's language teaching. Another compelling point of view was supported by Li (2009) and Shoebottom (2011) who insisted that language learners who learn English as a foreign language will make faster progress if their teachers do not only use English in teaching academic subjects but also are responsible for students' overall English language development. As teacher quality is a key determinant of student learning outcomes, it is therefore necessary to explore the matter from this particular perspective in the current study.

### **Conceptual Framework**

Based on a review of the relevant literature, the five key aspects of learning environment for foreign language learning that are of concern include (1) the role of language prominence at classroom level, (2) the role of language prominence at university level, (3) teaching practices and learning activities, (4) motivating and supportive classroom environment, and (5) quality of teachers. These five issues were chosen to be the objects of this research inquiry. The construction of the below proposed model of analysis was based on a review of the existing research literature discussed earlier.



**Figure 1:** Conceptual Framework

## Methodology

This study is based on the constructivist theory proposed by Bruner (1996) supporting the belief that humans construct new ideas, knowledge and their own understanding based upon existing knowledge and through experiencing things. Based on the concept of constructivism, this study was therefore conducted within an interpretive framework that aims to understand phenomena through accessing the meanings participants assign to the areas under investigation.

### *Data Collection Methods and Procedures*

A semi-structured interview and a 45-item Likert scale questionnaire were employed as the two main research instruments. A mixed-method approach was employed as it allows the researcher to gain more valid and reliable data as well as to obtain more insights into the issue under inquiry.

The interview was used to elicit teachers' responses about the ideal language learning environment (RQ1) as well as students' responses about the influences of the actual university learning environment on their English learning and competence (RQ3).

A five-point Likert scale questionnaire, ranging from strongly disagree (#1) to strongly agree (#5), was used to examine students' perceptions of the actual university learning environment in relation to English language learning (RQ2). The questionnaire items were deliberately constructed and designed by the researcher and thus based on the interview results with teachers obtained from the research question 1. This is to discover whether there is any significant discrepancy between the ideal university learning environment perceived by the teachers and the actual university learning environment experienced by the students.

### ***The Construction and Development of the Research Instruments***

The Index of Item Objective Congruence (IOC) was applied to assess the content validity of the interview questions as well as the questionnaire survey. The interview questions and the questionnaire items were then revised and adjusted in accordance with the suggestions of three experts in the field.

Also, the questionnaire was first piloted with 20 Business English graduates of the university under investigation prior to the actual administration of the questionnaire survey and thus the design of the final questionnaire was based on their comments. Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient was then employed to assess the reliability of a questionnaire survey. In this study, the coefficient alpha was 0.923.

### ***Participants***

The participants for this study can be divided into two groups: (1) teachers and (2) students. In this study, Thai teachers of the Business English Department with more than 10 years of

teaching experience and fourth year undergraduate Thai students majoring in Business English of an international university in Thailand were selected by a non-probability purposive sampling technique.

In detail, 10 teachers were purposively selected as interview respondents. Besides, based on the Taro Yamane formula (1967), 175 students were asked to complete the survey questionnaire

( $e = 0.05$ , meaning a 95% of confidence level). Of these 175 students, 15 were then chosen for a subsequent interview.

### ***Data Analysis***

1. In analyzing the interview data, the researcher took advantage of interpretive capabilities of an insider's experience as she was a former undergraduate student of the university under investigation. As for research question 1, the interview data were analyzed based on five predetermined categories: language prominence at classroom level, language prominence at university level, teaching practices and learning activities, motivating and supportive classroom environment, and quality of teachers. The interview data derived from student participants' responses to research question 3 were analyzed conscientiously so that the impact of the actual university learning environment on students' English competence could be precisely discerned.
2. The data gathering via a five-point Likert scale questionnaire (RQ2) were computed and analyzed with the help of SPSS in terms of mean score (M) and standard deviation (SD). The interpretation of the mean score is shown as follow:

**Table 1:** Interpretation of Score Results

Scale	Score Range	Data Interpretation
5	4.21 - 5.00	Strongly Agree
4	3.41 – 4. 20	Agree
3	2.61 – 3.40	Moderately Agree
2	1.81 – 2.60	Disagree
1	1.00 – 1.80	Strongly Disagree

## Results

**Research Question 1:** What are the teachers’ perceptions of the ideal learning environment for the context of an international university in relation to foreign language learning?

### *Language Prominence at Classroom Level*

All the teacher respondents reported that in order for the students to acquire a high level of English proficiency, English must be used not only as a medium of instruction but also as a medium of social communication. All the activities in the classroom, including informal face-to-face conversations, must be carried out in English. The use of students’ mother tongue in the classroom should also be discouraged and minimized because excessive use of students’ Thai L1 certainly deprives them of the chance of using English in real conversations.

### ***Language Prominence at University Level***

All the teacher participants agreed that students' English exposure must not be limited only to the classroom setting; it is for the environment outside the classroom to be conducted in a way conducive to English learning as well. The effective university's learning environment should consist of a large number of teachers and students from different nationalities. This is to indirectly force students to use English in social conversations outside the classroom with their teachers and also with their classmates through working together on academic assignments. Besides, all reading materials, such as notices, billboards and posters, attached all around the campus must be written in English as well.

### ***Teaching Practices and Learning Activities***

Using interactive teaching technique with various types of authentic and communicative learning activities, teaching students English-related knowledge while teaching subject contents, and showing concerns over students' English competence by giving them English-related feedback were largely reported to be the ideal teaching practices that help to promote students' English learning and development in the classroom, thereby allowing them to be able to apply the skills they gain in the classroom in real-life contexts.

### ***Motivating and Supportive Classroom Environment***

It was reported that teachers play a key role in establishing a motivating and supportive classroom atmosphere. Encouraging students to think individually or as a group, motivating students to actively participate in class-activities, and providing students with only positive feedback were viewed as effective ways to create a comfortable, motivating, and tension-free

classroom environment. This in turn leads to students having a positive attitude towards learning English and thus learning the language faster and better.

### ***Quality of Teachers***

Having a very good command of English, mastering the subject contents, and placing an emphasis on both students' academic outcomes and language performance were said to be the major qualifications of English-medium instruction program's teachers. Furthermore, in order to help students become better foreign language learners, it was reported that good teachers need to be warm, caring, and accessible.

**Research Question 2:** What are the students' perceptions of the actual university learning environment in relation to foreign language learning?

### ***Language Prominence at Classroom Level***

In this study, it was found that the students rarely use English with their classmates as this statement obtained the lowest mean score ( $M = 2.49$ ,  $SD = 0.63$ ) and they are therefore not often engaged in real English conversations when they are in the classroom ( $M = 3.01$ ,  $SD = 0.86$ ). On the other hand, it was revealed that teachers try to minimize the use of Thai L1 in the classroom ( $M = 3.62$ ,  $SD = 3.69$ ) as this statement obtained the highest mean score.

### ***Language Prominence at University Level***

A majority of student participants agreed that the university consists of a large number of teachers and students from different nationalities as this statement obtained the highest mean score of 4.13 ( $SD = 0.67$ ). However, the students reported having few foreign friends



( $M = 2.57$ ,  $SD = 0.83$ ) despite the fact that the university consists of a number of people from different nationalities. Further, the researcher also found that English was not generally perceived by most of the students as a major medium of communication outside the classroom ( $M = 2.59$ ,  $SD = 0.62$ ). That is why the students reported having few opportunities to use English for meaningful purposes outside the classroom ( $2.59$ ,  $SD = 0.75$ )

### ***Teaching Practices and Learning Activities***

Most students agreed that an instruction is always conducted in English ( $M = 4.21$ ,  $SD = 0.80$ ). It was also seen that the actual teaching practices were conducted in an interactive approach ( $M = 3.78$ ,  $SD = 0.76$ ). Besides, with the mean score of 3.72, it was found that a number of students reported having a wide variety of learning activities ( $SD = 0.85$ ). However, receiving feedback on students' English performance gained the lowest mean score ( $M = 3.21$ ,  $SD = 0.83$ ), followed by the frequency of the teachers' teaching English-related knowledge during class time ( $M = 3.49$ ,  $SD = 0.84$ ).

### ***Motivating and Supportive Classroom Environment***

The mean scores of all the items are in the same range of 3 ranging from 3.46-3.88. This implies that the student participants agree on the point that the actual classroom environment in relation to English language learning is generally perceived to be motivating and supportive.

### ***Quality of Teachers***

Teachers were largely reported to be proficient in English and also knowledgeable about the language as these two items gained the highest mean scores of 4.29 ( $SD = 0.73$ ) and 4.27 ( $SD$

= 0.69) respectively. Yet, the item with the lowest mean score was for the statement related to the frequency of teachers' advising students language learning strategies or how to successfully learn English outside the classroom ( $M = 3.27$ ,  $SD = 0.75$ ), followed by that related to attention teachers pay to students' English performance ( $M = 3.28$ ,  $SD = 0.80$ ).

### ***Students' Overall Perception and Satisfaction of the University Learning***

#### ***Environment in Relation to English Language Learning***

The overall actual university learning environment of both inside and outside the classroom, as reported by 175 student participants, helps to foster their English language learning and development ( $M = 3.76$ ,  $SD = 0.65$ ). Besides, with the mean score of 3.83, it can be interpreted that the students are somewhat satisfied with the overall university environment in relation to English language learning ( $SD = 0.71$ ).

**Research Question 3:** What are the students' perceptions of the extent to which the actual university learning environment affects their foreign language competence?

### ***Students' Major Concerns over the Actual Learning Problems in the***

#### ***Environment***

The report on the unsupportive learning environment that affects students' English language learning and competence can be deliberately summarized into four major issues: (1) a lack of English exposure outside the classroom, (2) little opportunity for social English, (3) little English-related feedback from teachers, and (4) having few native English-speaking teachers.

In detail, students have limited exposure to English outside the classroom and also have little direct contact with natural English spoken in real conversations. Although English is the major language students are exposed to in the classroom, English communication in the classroom is reported to be mainly informative and purely related to academic topics. As revealed, a mere exposure to the language related to academic content is not sufficient for students to develop their social English, the skill necessary to operate effectively in the real world contexts. This kind of situation, together with the fact that Thai L1 is used as a major medium of communication outside the classroom, is said by almost all the respondents to impede the development of their practical English. Besides, teachers in reality are likely to place more emphasis on teaching academic content than on students' English language performance.

### ***The Influences of the Actual University Learning Environment on the Development of Students' Four Skills of English***

All the students reported getting much better at all the four language skills, but they at times still have difficulty in using English in some aspects. Grammatical and writing problems were reported to be their most difficult English language problems, whereas English listening was reported to be the most improved skill. As revealed, their strong progress in listening demonstrated their rich experience in listening to lectures given by teachers of different nationalities. However, as students have less direct contact with native English teachers, they at times have trouble fully understanding natural English spoken particularly by native speakers in the real contexts. Real English is normally spoken in fast speed with lots of phrasal verbs, idioms, slang, natural pronunciations with contractions, which is somewhat different from the language used in the classroom – slow speed with complete sentences, formal words, and long pauses between utterances.

## Discussion

The results of this study disclosed some discrepancies between the ideal learning environment perceived by the teachers and the actual learning environment experienced by the students. In contrast to the teachers' perceptions, the students reported that having limited English exposure outside the classroom, being exposed to little social English, getting little English-related feedback, and having few native English teachers were the major learning problems in the actual environment. These issues are said by the students to be the major causes of their inability to use English effectively.

Such findings are in accordance with those previously described by several researchers (Khamkhien, 2010; Oxford University Press ELT, 2011; Punthumasen, 2007; Wiriyachitra, 2002) saying that the English learning taking place in a foreign language context was mostly limited only to classroom settings. Although all education institutions in Thailand are aware of the importance of English as a world language, the school or university learning environment, in fact, does not facilitate foreign language learning in daily lives. In this regard, it is reasonable to argue that having insufficient opportunities to use English outside the classroom has been so far counted as one of the major causes of Thai students' low performance in English. Besides, as stated by Ibrahim (2001), typical classroom environment of an English-medium instruction program typically provides students only with a formal register of language since the purpose of communication is mainly informative and the topics to be discussed are mainly related to academic matters. This circumstance certainly impedes the development of students' practical English.

With regard to the issues of the quality and responsibility of teachers, the findings of Costa and Coleman's (2012) and Uys, Walt, Berg, and Botha's (2007) studies revealed that teachers of an English program tend to pay more attention to teaching academic content than to students' English performance. That is, little English-related feedback is given to students

as feedback is normally given on the point related to academic content. Clearly, all these findings stress the need for improving the quality of an English-medium education system. So as to help students attain high level of English proficiency, more attention should be paid to the issue of the quality and responsibility of teachers since the teacher is considered the key determinant of students' language learning outcomes (Punthumasen, 2007). Besides, the study of Pawapatcharandom (2007) also supports the findings of this study by indicating that having less direct contact with native English speakers could be considered another cause of Thai students' English problems.

Remarkably, the findings regarding the students' English major problems coincide with those found in the studies of Degang (2010), Pawapatcharandom (2007), Prapphal (2003), and Wongsothorn (1996). Very interestingly, despite being conducted over different years, the results pertaining to Thai students' poor performance in English writing and grammar remain unchanged. It can be deduced that English accuracy or linguistic competence has so far been the major English problem faced by Thai students.

The results obtained from this study regarding the students' overall English language competence are virtually similar to those from Chang's (2010) and Degang's (2010) studies. Most of the students agreed that they are making much progress with their listening skill after attending English-medium instruction programs. These might be because listening is the skill most frequently used in the class through listening to the English lectures and instructions.

### ***Implications***

Based on the analyses of the major findings, the first implication is that an abundance of exposure to English in its natural use must be a top priority as it allows students to practice authentic, practical, and functional use of language for meaningful purposes. It is suggested that teachers help EFL students to have extensive input by maximizing the use of natural

English inside the classroom as well as creating opportunities for students to engage in real English situations outside the classroom. Furthermore, apart from mainly concentrating on students' academic outcomes, very close and full attention should be paid to their actual English performance; teachers should not merely act as instructors or lecturers but also facilitators who always help and support students' English language learning and development. Regarding this, giving students more feedback on their English usage is suggested. Besides, more English writing and grammar trainings are needed. This is believed to help Thai students communicate in English more intelligibly, professionally, and accurately. Finally, exposing Thai students to real English listening situations is needed; an alternative to this could be incorporating real English listening tasks in the teaching and learning process or hiring more native English-speaking teachers. Doing so could help Thai students become familiar with natural English spoken in real situations, thereby overcoming their English listening problems.

### **Conclusion**

This study was undertaken to examine the ideal and the actual university learning environment and to investigate the actual environmental influence on the students' English language competence. This is to understand why a number of Thai university students of English-medium instruction programs are still unable to attain high levels of English proficiency despite learning in an educational system, where the medium of instruction is English. Overall, though getting better at all the four language skills after enrolling in an English-medium education system, a number of students are still unable to attain high levels of English proficiency. This implies that there is an urgent need for the improvement in the actual university learning environment in order to help Thai students, particularly those of English-medium instruction programs, become better language users. Improving the learning

environment indeed helps to consolidate Thai students' English skills as well as train them for maximum language proficiency. This, in turn, would have an obvious and positive impact in the highly competitive era of globalization where English plays a significant role in achieving both academic and professional success.

### ***Recommendations for Further Research***

As this study was conducted with only one specific study context, the exploration of the same theme in other institutional settings is recommended. Moreover, future studies could be conducted with other groups of research participants in order to gain various perspectives and obtain more accurate results, than what has been found in this research.

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## **Answer Designs in Thai Political Interviews**

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### **Abstract**

News interview is considered a powerful journalistic tool as well as a significant social interaction because it presents live and spontaneous interaction between interviewer (IR) and interviewee (IE) under particular norms and conventions for each party to follow. Among most frequent broadcast, political news interview is likely to develop high tension between the IR and the IE because of their different professional goals (i.e. seeking information and informing and convincing audiences). This study thus examines various designs of answer to different types of questions in broadcast political interview during an electoral campaign in Thailand during 2013. Based on the application of Conversation Analysis (CA), the preliminary analysis of question – answer pair reveals that the IE responds to the interview questions both in direct and indirect manner. That is the direct response occurs most when the interview questions concerns general issues unconnected to the IE. On the other hand, the indirect response exists in various forms to signify either agreement or disagreement to the question that includes personal characteristics, state of mind and the IE's proposals. Also the analysis shows various discursive devices in which Thai politicians employ in order to reduce damage possibly created by the interview questions while striving to take control of the interview for their political gains.

*Keywords:* Political Interview, Language, Conversation Analysis, Question and Answer, Answer Designs

## Introduction

Broadcast interview has been pervasive and common practice particularly for political communication due to its *eventfulness*, *spontaneity* and *liveliness* (Clayman, 2004, p.30). Regarding to these characteristics, the interview practice is a social phenomenon in which the unscripted and dynamic sequence of question and answer is conducted through human interaction (Clayman & Heritage, 2002a). With predetermined roles of participants (i.e. interviewer and interviewee) and the professional norms (i.e. objective and adversarialness), this interview practice becomes a social institution which constrains the participants to pursue the norms of questioning and answering. Regarding to the normative practices, a number of studies show how the interviewer (IR) orients to various forms of questioning in order to produce the questions that seem unbiased and neutral, but assume adversarial stance so as to initiate an argument (Clayman, 1992; Clayman & Heritage 2002b). On the contrary, the interviewee (IE) who is obliged to provide sought-after information despite hostile atmosphere empirically employs different discursive strategies in answering (Rasiah, 2010; Clayman, 2001; Clayman, 1993). While abundant studies on news interview are conducted in international context, little has been done to examine how the sequence of question and answer is managed in Thai political interview. This article aims to analyze various forms of the IE's answers during broadcast political interview as well as the extent to which the interaction between the IR and the IE mutually cooperates to achieve the goal of political interview.

The micro-analysis of the interviews with the Bangkok governor election candidates would be interesting in the sense that, first it yields insight into the mechanisms in which the IE employs in responding to the journalistic inquiries. Based on the IR's different grammatical structures of the interview questions, it might be interesting to uncover how the IEs' discursively design their answers in response to the questions and the degree to which

both the IR and the IEs work together to obtain goal of political interview. In addition, the study might reveal other implicit issues such as relationship and roles of the IR and the IEs.

### ***Conversation Analysis (CA) Framework***

Conversation Analysis (CA) is a theoretical method that is developed in 1974 by Harvey Sacks, Emanuel Shergloff and Gail Jefferson to examine organization of everyday interaction through recurrent patterns that are positioned within a turn or a sequence of talk, and are locally oriented by the participants to achieve mutual understanding (Heritage & Clayman, 2010). Therefore, the approach basically focuses on both linguistic features and non-verbal cues that are recognizable by the participants as units of analysis. These natural occurring data are then recorded and transcribed into detailed transcription. With this regard, the aim of CA is to (1) identify dynamic structures of ongoing talk emerging within the interaction and interpret the meaning from an emic perspective and; (2) to examine how mutual understanding is sequentially developed during the course of interaction (Seedhouse, 2004).

These notions of ordinary talk also apply to institutional conversations where the talk activities are distinctively constructed to achieve particular goals. As a prime area where action is performed, the turn of talk thus possibly becomes more complex than ordinary conversation, comprising multiple units so as to manage interactional goal while distributing to co-construction of the social activity (Seedhouse, *ibid.*). Accordingly, this extensive and complex concept of institutions talk outlines the import of various discursive strategies that the participants orient to when engaging in institutional talk as well as the methodic practices that constitutes to achieve the objective of political news interview.

### *Studies on CA and Answering in News Interview*

CA approach has been used to analyze questioning and answering instances of talk from news interview by a number of researchers. Heritage (2002) suggests that unlike questioning which relies largely on grammatical element, a responsive action would be recognized as an answer only when it relevantly responds to the question. In other words, answering occurs when IEs connectedly respond to the topics and/or tasks required by the preceding question. Though the act of answering seems indefinitely indicated, Clayman (2001) states that the IEs could perform the act of answering through different discursive strategies such as *roundabout trajectory* – the answer could be built up via fragment of talk that seems irrelevant to the topic discussed, *minimal answer plus elaboration* – the answer equipped with a word or phrase concerning information sought by the question (e.g. yes/no or the adoption of certain word or phrase from the question) and is followed by elaboration, endorsement or explanation, *indexical expressions* – the answer with anaphoric reference (e.g. pronoun) showing close connection between the answer and its preceding question and *discourse marker* – the answer that is initiated with discourse marker (e.g. because) connectedly referring back to the prior question.

In addition to this, he further claims that the IEs occasionally supply evasion in their responsive turn so that they could reverse the IR's control and discursively alter the course of talk both in overt and covert manner. For overt manner, the IEs practically carry out evasive answers through (1) *deference to the IR* – signaling the change of agendas through remarks that addressed certain degree of deference to the IRs, (2) *minimizing the divergence* – using particular remarks of permission that contained minimizing characterization (e.g. “briefly”) to trivialize the change of agenda and (3) *justify the shift* – providing explanation and justification for the change of topic agendas.

Besides responding in overt manner, Clayman also suggest that the IEs provide their answers to the interview questions in covert manner. The covert practice which often serves to manage undesirable questions discretely seems more advantageous during tense interview because the IEs could sidestep the adversarial questions while possibly shifting and controlling the direction of talk. Two strategies for covert evasion are: (1) *subversive word repeats and anaphoric pronounce* – using adopted words or phrases from the prior question to frame the answer while subtly shift the topic of talk; and (2) *operate on the question* – modifying certain aspects of the question (i.e. an entire question, a phrase or one part of a multi-part question) so as to facilitate or conceal the topical shift. The use of these covert practices function to strategically connect an issue the IE was going to discuss with the one required by the preceding question.

Within Thai context, Theamsomboon (1998) examined Thai politicians' responsive turns in both prepared – the components of the interview (i.e. the topic and time of interview as well as a person who interviewed) were known to the IE, and impromptu interview– the components of the interview were unknown to the IE. The findings show that the questions which were constructed in both interrogative form and statements invoked the IEs' responses in three types namely 1) *answer-response* providing relevant information to topic and task required by the preceding questions, 2) *non-answer response* providing partial evasive answer or the information that was relevant to either topic or task of the prior question and 3) *non response* providing irrelevant and full-evasive answer. In addition, these three types of responses were found employing different hedging devices for various communicative purposes including *quality hedges* – use of words or phrases to decrease degree of commitment; *quantity hedges* – use of words or phrases to signal uncertainty of the amount of information given; *relevance hedges* – use of words or phrases to introduce topic change; and *manner hedges* – use of techniques such as joke, exclamation or deference to avoid explicit



non-answer responses. Though this study have shown how the IEs discursively responded to the interview questions, the significance on responses-in-interaction by means of examining the way in which the interlocutors manage the sequence of talk is sparse.

### ***The Context of the Study***

The Bangkok gubernatorial election in March 2013 was considered tense between two major political parties – Democrat party and Pheu Thai party. While several members of the Democrat party have consecutively held the city’ governor office for overeight years, the Pheu Thai party led the then national government at that point. Following these two teams of administration, there are widespread rumors about conflict between the city and national government on corruptions, flooding problem and thereby affected the people to perceive the then governor’s performance as poor. Amidst the political mayhem, the current governor resigned and the tense on gubernatorial electoral campaign escalated. The victory of a candidate from one of these political parties would reflect their political bastion in Bangkok metropolitan; the area that Democrat party attempted to preserve while Pheu Thai party tried to overturn. Moreover, the addition of the independent candidates might have heated up the situation not only because they were fresh alternatives but also their popularity and the votes earned might have affected those expected by the two party-affiliated candidates thus reducing their chance to win.

### ***Data***

The data were collected from an interview session in an evening news program called *Jao khao den* (“เจาะข่าวเด่น”) with audio clips available on the program website. Each interview which concerned election campaigns, career achievements and personal experiences, was

conducted during January – February 2013 by one anchor. The total data lasted about 102 minutes and 33 seconds and comprised 24 instances based on different grammatical structure of interview questions. These 24 instances of talk were then transcribed and analyzed under conversation analysis framework.

## Methodology

Following CA approach, the live interviews were transcribed based on the Jeffersonian transcription (Heritage & Clayman, 2010) yet with addition of modified transcription (Du Bois, 2006, 1991) on borrowing words from foreign languages (i.e. English and Chinese) and non-verbal cue (e.g. laughter). The focus was on the IEs' responsive turn, and the process through which the IR and IEs co-constructed. The IEs' responsive turns were grouped based on different types of the IR's questions. They were then structurally observed and analyzed in accordance with their relevancy to both topic and agenda of the IR's questions. In addition to discursive strategies demonstrated by the IEs to handle possible hostile questions, the analysis would include the exploration of interactional goals and how they are co-constructed through the sequence organization by the IR and the IEs along with other possibly emerging issue such as relationship and social roles.

## Results

### Use of shift in footing

**Extract** (24 Jan. 2013, IE<sub>4</sub>)

- 1      IR:      มันจะทะเลาะกันเต็มไปหมดเลยมัยคุณเสวีพิสุทธิ
- 2      IE<sub>4</sub>: → คุณอย่าอ่อนแออ่อนแอไม่ได้ผมก็ให้คุณมีอาชีพเหมือนกันถูกปะ[นะมีรายได้=
- 3      IR:      [อือ

4 IE4: =เหมือนเดิม[นะเพียงแต่จัดระเบียบเข้าจะครับ=

5 IR: [ฮะ

**Extract** (24 Jan. 2013, IE4)

1 IR: Would it create furiously chaotic event Khun Sereepisutht.

2 IE4: → **Don't you be weak.** Can't be weak. I still provide you a career, right?[[You]=

3 IR: [ue

4 IE4: = can earn a living just like before.[just lay down new regulations=

5 IR: [yah

After the IE revealed his plan to relocate the street vendors from a famous street to other areas of the city, the IR produced a presupposition suggesting possibility that the IE's plan could cause chaotic incident among the vendors. Because the IR's presupposition was grammatically designed to seek the IE's confirmation, the IE then was placed in dilemma. This was because if the IE accepted such presupposition, his plan might be seen as ineffective. On the other hands, if he denied the presupposition, the IE might be perceived as a hypocrite since such the future action of chaos is unpredictable.

In line 2, the IE responded with a reference to the third party using pronoun "you" ("คุณ") as if he were talking to the street vendors directly "*don't you be weak...*" ("คุณอย่าอ่อนแอ..."). Accordingly, the topic of talk was also changed because in the following TCU, the IE gave an account of why the imagined vendors should remain relaxed and calm despite the change. The account also showed that the IE was in control of the situation. It was obvious that the IE did not deny or confirm the IR's the presupposition though his action might imply the possibility of such chaos.

Through the use of shifts in footing (Goffman, 1981; as cited in Clayman, 1992) and the acceptance of the IR, the IE was able to disregard the question that is initially directed at him, and invokes a group of imagined participants (i.e. the vendors). Therefore, the IE could issue a talk that assumes a higher status than the participants and, thereby, might highlight his character as confident and decisive.

### Use of confirmation in part

**Extract** (22 Jan. 2013, IE<sub>3</sub>)

- 1 IR: =แต่บางคนบอกผู้ว่าต้องเป็นอิสระ
- 2 IE<sub>3</sub>: → เอ่อ:อิสระในระดับหนึ่ง
- 3 IR: อ้อ
- 4 IE<sub>3</sub>: → อิสระในระดับหนึ่งถ้า:เป็นอิสระแล้วทำงานได้จริงกรุงเทพไม่มีปัญหา=  
5 =หมักหมมมาเช่นทุกวันนี้
- 6 IR: อ้อ
- 7 IE<sub>3</sub>: นะครับปัญหาที่เราจะล้งพูดกันทุกวันนี้คือปัญหามาตั้งแต่ผู้ว่าราชการท่านไม่รู้มากี่ท่านแล้วแต่ปัญหา...

**Extract** (22 Jan. 2013, IE<sub>3</sub>)

- 1 IR: =but some say the governor should be independent
- 2 IE<sub>3</sub>: → ah:[the governor]must be **independent to certain degree**
- 3 IR: aye
- 4 IE<sub>3</sub>: → [the governor must be] independent to certain degree because if the  
independent=  
5 =governor is fully competent, there would be no chronic problems nowadays.
- 6 IR: aye

7 IE<sub>3</sub>: The problems we've talking are chronicle from many former governors' office...

After the IE finished discussing how his position as a member of a government party would be beneficial if he was elected a governor, the IR (line 1) declared that some people thought the governor should be independent. Although the IE's name is not mentioned as it was in extract A, the IE initiated his response in line 2. This was possibly because the IE was not an independent candidate so the statement was challenging to him perceptively and thereby the IR's statement functioned to invoke the IE's opinion (Heritage & Roth, 1995).

Accordingly, the IE (line 2) responded by sharing his opinion in the form of a partial agreement "*ah:[the governor] must be independent to certain degree*" ("เอ่อ:อิสระในระดับหนึ่ง"), followed by a declarative statement which implies disagreement to the IR's statement. In the statement, the IE first re-states his partial agreement then switches his position to disagree by referring to the incapability of the previous independent governor to manage the city's chronic problems. Accordingly, the altered focus of talk is produced to disagree with the popular belief that the governor has to be independent (i.e. not being a member of any political party), and in order to defend the IE's position as being a non-individual candidate. Despite the change of talk, the IE is allowed to continue his discussion, through the IR's sign of acceptance using backchanneling "*aha*" ("อ้อ").

Through the use of confirmation in part, the IE was able to produce disagreement without risk of being interrupted or giving more followed-up question by the IR. In other words, the IEs could deliberately explain in part where they agree with the IR before switching to a more detailed argument where they think differently. In addition, this technique could maintain the IR and the IE's relationship because it shows a certain degree of respect, while allowing a possibly different idea to be presented.

## **Conclusion**

This study is a micro-analysis of natural occurring data which provides an inductive observation on the IE's responsive turns in Thai political interviews. The analysis reveals that although the IR and the IE normatively fulfill their obligation through the act of questioning and answering, the IE's responses are largely produced indirectly. The discursive practice allows the IE to go off record either to assure the feasibility of certain projects or to reject possible accusation during air time. As a result, it could be perceived as a subtle way to congregate support from various groups of unknown audience while negotiating one's idea or stance without public unpleasant perception (e.g. rudeness and deviousness).

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## **A Survey of Technologies and Trends for On-line Communication, Teaching and Learning**

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### **Abstract**

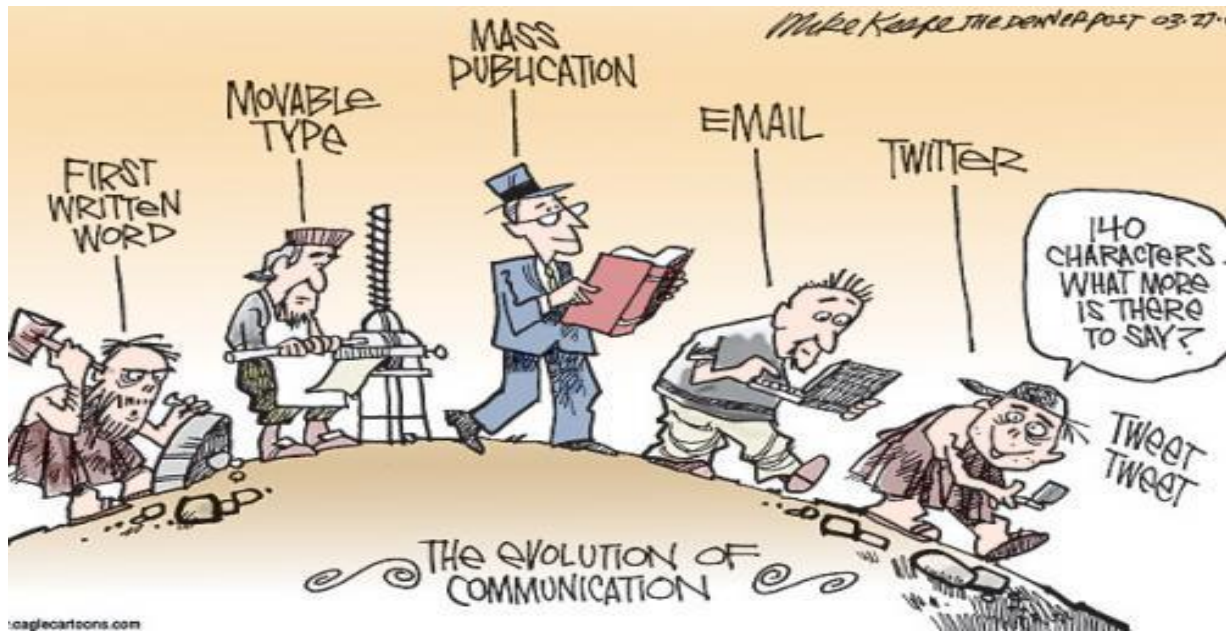
With so many technologies available today to help support and promote an institution's campus culture, students and instructors feel overwhelmed with what they should use for enhancing communication. Trends like "Facebook", "Twitter" "Google +", "Skype", "YouTube" and "Line" are making the rounds in education, but what do these trends mean for instructors and students, and how are they affecting teaching and learning practices and communication? For example, if smart devices and applications are popular among students, which ones are most popular, and why does this matter? And if emails were all the rage in the last few decades, what are the new modes of communication in the coming years? From having a good social media strategy to planning for better communication, there are at least a dozen or more technologies that every Thai university campus should plan for immediately. Many of these technologies may seem simplistic, but they can get caught in the campus policies and politics if ICT teams are not careful; for example, providing high-speed 3G/4G networks that can support multiple devices, or offering 24x7 ICT support to instructor and students. Some of the other trends mentioned in this paper may seem like frivolous, such as a targeted social media or learning analytics, but they are not only critical for enhancing communication for teaching and learning but also relevant for attracting prospective students.

Are there trends the Thai campuses are missing or perhaps trends they don't see necessary to invest and implement? This paper traces the history of various technologies and identifies different strategies for enhancing communication for teaching and learning.

*Keywords:* Communication, eCampus, Internet, Social Media

## **Introduction**

Communication is defined as the process of imparting or conferring, or delivering, from one to another person or people. Human communication is a means of expressing, exchanging feelings, thoughts and information by means of signals, visuals, speech, writing and behavior. Through centuries the evolution of human communication is well recorded. In this section the author has synthesized information from various web portals to provide important milestones. All sources for the facts and figures covered in this paper have been cited. Over centuries of evolution the modes of communication has undergone drastic changes. In the early days, the nomadic people communicated through signs. As human civilization progressed sounds were used to communicate. For example, fast paced drums sound indicated that some dangerous creature is approaching or a rhythmic melodic sound indicated joy. Later humans found chalk, charcoal, pigments and other painting materials. With the help of animal scales, bones, charcoal and pigments, the Neanderthal man started painting. Different tribes communicated through the means of paintings and drawings. Over the centuries of evolution human beings invented scripts, languages, paper, printing, books (Figure-1) and news papers to share information within their habitats. In the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, telephone, radio, television was born. In 1980 the birth of Internet revolutionized the modes of communication around the world.



**Figure 1:** Evolution of Communication

(Source: <http://www.techandbrands.com/tag/android/>)

In this new century, Internet, Social media and smart phones have taken human communication to an altogether new level. Voice messages are now replaced by SMS and static voice calls are replaced with live video conferencing. People all over the world now use various applications such as Google Talk, Skype, Line, WhatsApp, Viber, Wechat and many other services for instant communication. Before we discuss the importance of modern communication technologies in teaching-learning let us look at the brief history of audio devices, starting with the invention of the telephone.

### ***A Brief History of Communication Technologies***

#### *i. Telephone- a unicast medium for voice communication*

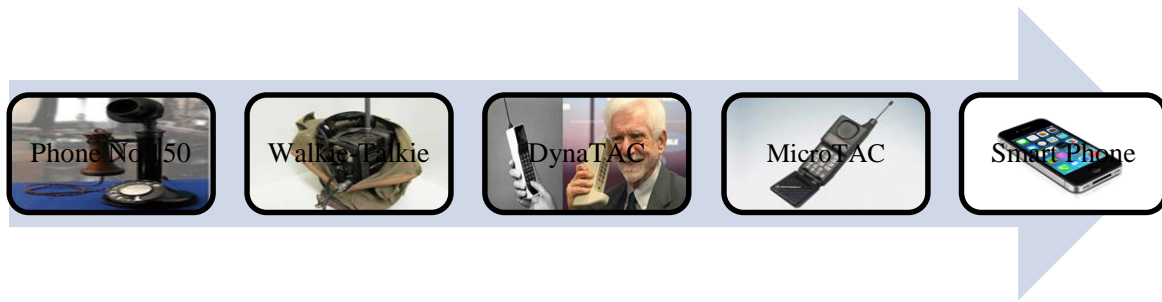
It was in 1876 Alexander Graham Bell invented the telephone giving a start to remote voice communication in USA. Western Union had first telephone line in operation between Somerville, MA and Boston, USA. In 1885 The Bell Telephone Company formed a new

subsidiary, American Telephone & Telegraph (AT&T). In the next 60 years lots of development occurred in the field on engineering leading to modernizing of the telephone.

The first design of upright telephone popularly known as a candlestick Telephone No 150 (Figure-2) was introduced in the 1920s but some remained in service into the 1950s and even beyond. 1956 Bell System and the British Post Office inaugurated their services on a transatlantic telephone cable, TAT-1. Not quite what one would consider a mobile phone, the SCR-194 and 195 were the first portable AM radios, produced by the U.S. Army Signal Corps Engineering Laboratories in Fort Monmouth, N.J. USA? They were widely used for infantry intercommunication during World War II and now they are replaced by smart phones.

Mobile radio telephone systems preceded modern cellular mobile telephony technology. Since they were the predecessors of the first generation of cellular telephones, these systems are sometimes retroactively referred to as pre-cellular (or sometimes called Zero Generation= 0G) systems. These mobile telephones were usually mounted in cars or trucks, though briefcase models were also made. They were sold through WCCs (Wireline Common Carriers, AKA telephone companies), RCCs (Radio Common Carriers), and two-way radio dealers.

In 1973 with a prototype of the DynaTAC (DYNamic Adaptive Total Area Coverage) portable phone, former Motorola Vice President Martin Cooper made the first private, practical mobile phone call in a non-vehicle setting. 10 years later after the prototype, Motorola's DynaTAC cellular phone was made available to the public, weighing less than 2 pounds, but costing nearly \$4,000 (almost \$9,000 today)-which is why it was strictly for the wealthy of the world.



**Figure 2:** Evolution of Smart Phone

(Source: [http://www.samhallas.co.uk/collection/bakelite/150\\_auto.jpg](http://www.samhallas.co.uk/collection/bakelite/150_auto.jpg))

Next up was Motorola's MicroTAC, which introduced the first flip phone design. By 1999 one of the most popular mobile phones in history was the Nokia 3210, with over 160 million sold. It was one of the first to allow picture messages, but only preinstalled ones like "Happy Birthday" and was one of the first targeted toward young people. In 2007 Steve Jobs introduced the Apple iPhone, a revolutionary touch screen Smartphone. It wasn't the first Smartphone, but it was the first to get the user interface right, eventually adapting 3G technology which was already available since 2001. At this time in 2014 there are more than 100 companies worldwide which are manufacturing a wide variety of Smart phones. Most popular among them are Apple, Samsung, Sony, Blackberry and Nokia which is now owned by Microsoft.

*ii. Television- a broadcast medium for video transmission*

While the telephone revolutionized the mode of unicast communication another revolutionary broadcast technology called television got introduced in 1920s. The television has come a long way from its initial 1927 avatar, that of a radio with visual projection capabilities. Since then the black and white television (Figure-3) has evolved into a powerful global media. The first mechanical television station in America was called W3XK. This station was the brainchild of Charles Francis Jenkins, who is also remembered as the father of American

television. The station aired its first broadcast on 2nd July, 1928. It was on July 1, 1941 when the first ever commercial broadcast took place in America. All broadcasts prior to this day were regarded as experimental by the FCC, thus making this day very important in American TV history. This day is also very special because the first American TV advertisement was aired. The commercial was for a Bulova Watch and lasted just for 10 seconds. It was aired on the NBC network in USA.



**Figure 3:** First Television (1934)

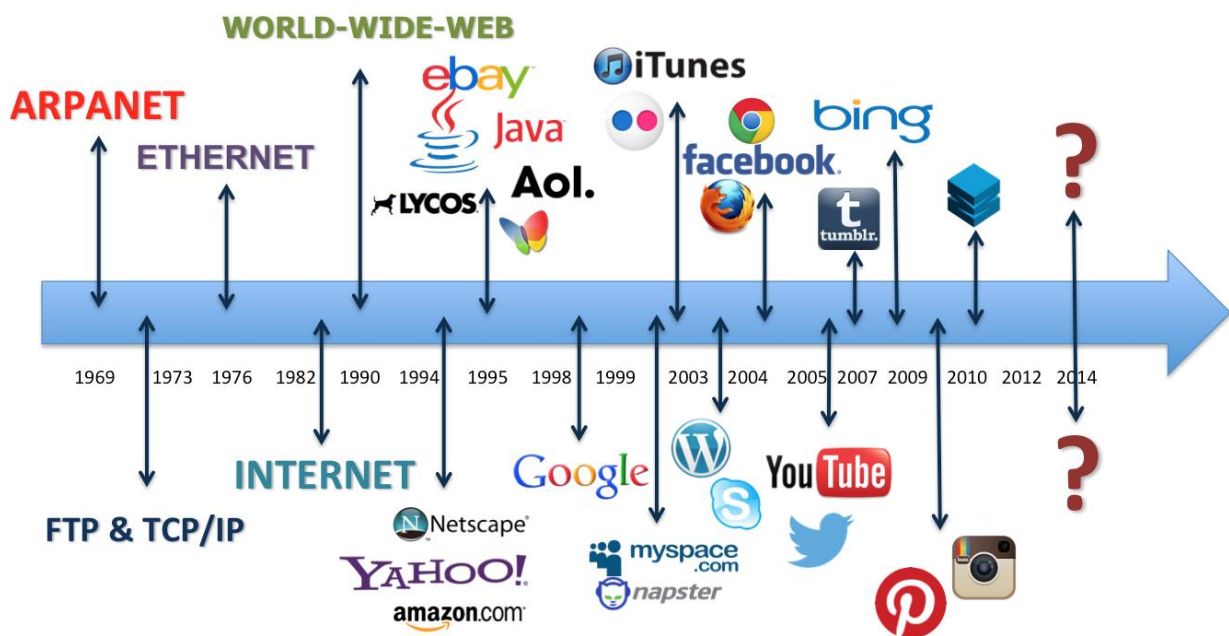
Source: [en.wikipedia.org](http://en.wikipedia.org)

With the expansion of cable networks the television became the most powerful medium around the world. For more than 60 years TV remained a dominant global broadcast medium providing news, entertainment and information to enhance education at all levels. With the advent of Internet in 1992 communication technologies have taken a new path. Portals such as You-Tube and many other streaming channels on the Internet are replacing television. Now anyone with a digital camera can record and upload a video on You-Tube and share it with people around the world in few minutes. Smart phones and various video

conferencing applications such as ooVoo, Skype, Tango, Hangout, Peer, Wiber, Camfrog and Line are changing the ways we use multimedia for communication.

### ***Internet –A New Medium for Global Communication***

In 1992 World Wide Web, the brain child of CERN physicist Tim Berners-Lee was born. Later in that year first audio and video multicasts are broadcast over the Internet. After a year the first Internet browser MOSAIC was introduced at the University of Illinois. Expansion of the Internet led to creation of Netscape and later many other browsers such Internet Explorer, Firefox and GoogleChrome



**Figure 4:** History of Internet- Time Line

Source: <http://malonemediagroup.com/>

In 1994 Real Audio was introduced to Internet which allowed one to hear in near real time. Radio HK, the first 24-hour Internet only radio station, started broadcasting. Now we have scores of 24 hour services such as iTune steaming audio on the Internet. A brief history of Internet is depicted in the Figure 4.

In this decade new technologies are growing at an unprecedented ways. New trends include Collaborative Environments, Mobile Applications, Social Networking, Augmented Reality, Learning Analytics, MOOCs, Personal Learning Environments (PLEs), Collective Intelligence Internet of Things (IoT), Natural User Interfaces and Wearable Technologies. All of these technologies are directly or indirectly involved with enhancing quality of communication, teaching and learning. They are also playing an important role in enhancing quality of life.

### ***New Technologies and Tools for Enhancing Teaching and Learning***

Now let us examine the importance of communication in educational settings. Djukic (2011) emphasized the role of communication in both F2F classroom setting as well as in on-line learning environments. 21<sup>st</sup> century is marked with advances in portable devices and smart phones. Advancement in technologies certainly have enhanced enrollment in on-line programs. It is clear that rampant growth in the use of portable devices and smart phones have made it easier to communicate from any place at anytime. However, exactly how has technology changed and what are some of the implications for teaching and learning remains to be seen. Looking through the lens of the 4 Cs- 1) *Connectivity*, 2) *Communication*, 3) *Collaboration* and 4) *Content Management System* we can understand their increasing role in day-to-day communication as well as teaching and learning in schools, colleges and universities. Let us examine them one-by-one.

#### ***1) Connectivity***

In this new century improved connectivity to the Internet around the world has resulted in drastic improvement in communication. Connectivity (figure-5) is so much easier and faster due to advancements in the areas of broadband, virtual private networking (VPN) and



expansion of 3G/4G wireless infrastructure. For example, it has been estimated that currently 90% of households in USA with a computer subscribe to broadband services. Broadband penetration has also increased in Thailand. Data shows that in 2013 there were more than 20 million Internet users in Thailand. According to Yuen (2014) these connectivity advances increasingly allow people to work from anywhere, and the greater bandwidth supports more data rich forms of communication.



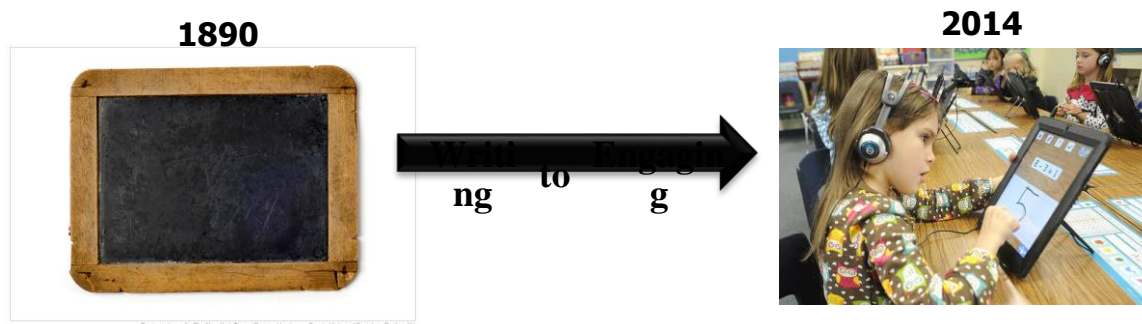
**Figure 5: Improved Connectivity**

The creation of web based services such as Wikis, Blogs, Social Networking sites such as LinkedIn, Facebook, and cloud based services such as Google Docs, and workflow systems make it easier for ordinary people, students and professionals to collaborate from remote locations.

## **2) *Communication***

Effective communication is an essential part of education. Lack of clear communication is one of biggest cause of misunderstandings. There's been an exponential growth in educational technology advancement over the past the last 2 centuries. Teaching and learning environment in 18<sup>th</sup> century was dominated by traditional methods of F2F lectures and note taking. Within a span of 125 years the use of slates (Figure-6), blackboards, and overhead projectors have

been replaced by portable digital devices such as iPads and dashboards. It is not only important to understand which new technologies is coming next but also know where it is all going to lead?

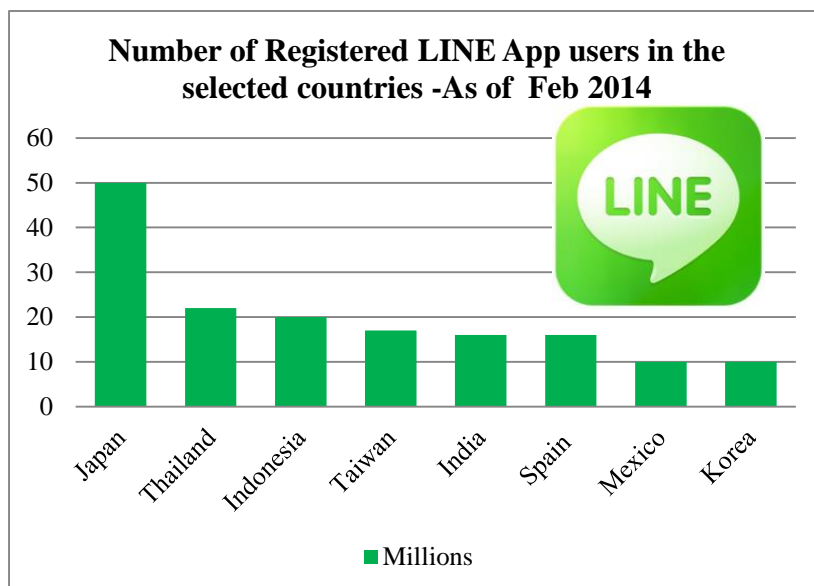


**Figure 6:** Tools of Teaching & Learning

As more and more educational institutions compete for enrollment, the on-line communication tools have become a key factor in their success. Using various tools and technologies can help an institution visibility on the medium such as the pages of the prestigious Google, Bing or Yahoo search engine results. Social media is becoming increasingly important for communication. Social media is a classification for a wide variety of popular technologies that are open, facilitate interactivity, and encourage connectivity. In the broadest terms, social media spaces exist as virtual places where people share; everybody and anybody can share anything from anywhere anytime.

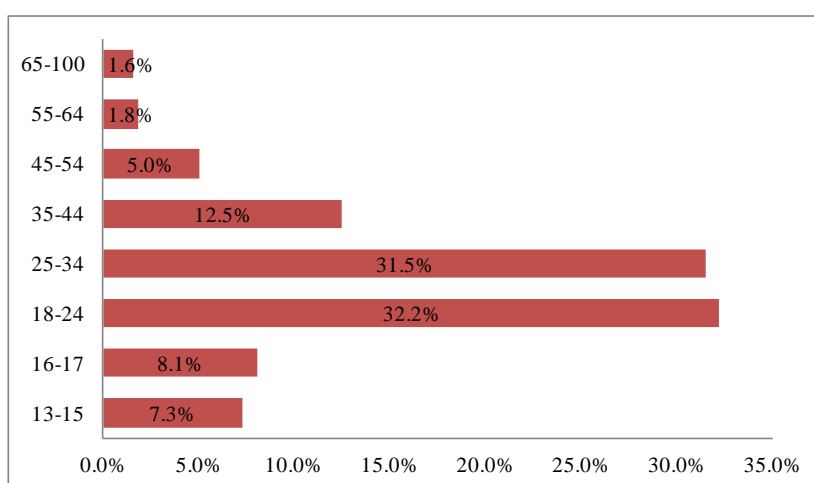
Khalil (2013) demonstrated that using social media increased retention of minority students in his Visual Basic courses. Djermanov, et al (2011) based on their empirical studies concluded that qualitative progress from techno-centric to more reflexive, innovative and creative use of technology is happening in higher education. Tsai & Shen (2014) suggest that teachers who do not have the knowledge or skills to build a course website or record digital content could now easily provide existing online materials (such MOOCs) for their students to improve their learning. Khan Academy ([www.Khanacademy.org](http://www.Khanacademy.org)) is one of best examples of a world class free portal available to enhance teaching and learning in science and mathematics.

Joosten (2012) noted that since many social media tools are not institutional enterprise systems, educators are concerned about using them in the classroom. As a result of rapid increase in the use of social media many new tools have emerged to serve the local population. As an there are more than 20 million users of LINE (Figure-7) in Thailand.



**Figure 7:** LINE Users in Thailand

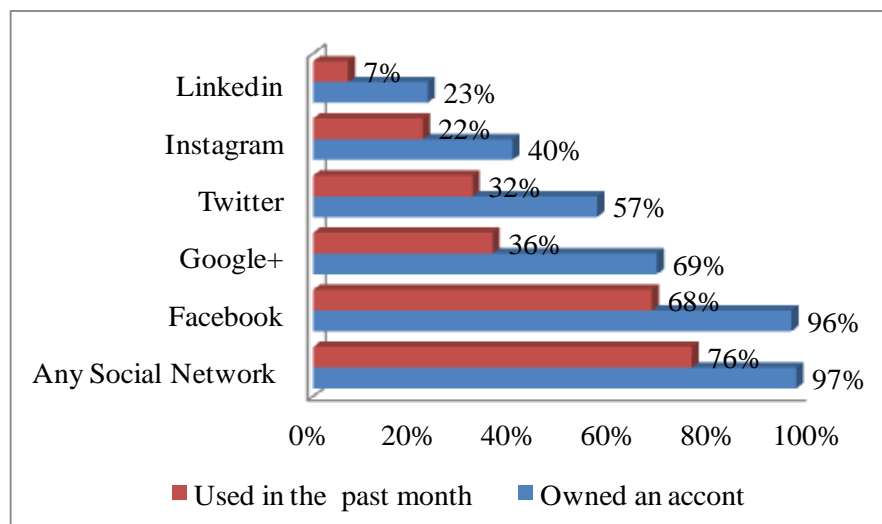
Thailand Facebook demographics (Figure-8) are another statistics that indicates the increasing use of social media for personal communication. The largest age group of Facebook is currently 18-24, followed by users in the age group of 25-34.



**Figure 8:** User Age Distribution- Facebook

Source: (Source: <http://www.socialbakers.com>)

There are many advantages of using social media in teaching and learning. Communication among the group members is much faster and cheaper than phone conversations. The communication data in social networks is easily stored and used for retention; it is also easy to monitor. Few other examples of various types of social media being used in Thailand are shown in Figure-9. A magazine advertisement may reach one person one time only. However, if students become fan in any social media the schools, colleges and universities can send a message to students over and over again. Traditional media is one way communication but social media is interactive. Social media makes it very easy to share content so the recipients can easily share messages with their network members. The effects of social media can be seen right away where in traditional media it may take months to see any media effect. Producing content is also faster in social media. It costs money to create a TV program or a radio program but maintaining a YouTube channel or a Facebook page does not cost much. The behavior of recipients in social media can be easily monitored hour by hour, day-by-day (such as likes, shares, views, comments, etc.).



**Figure 9:** Thailand: Social Media Use

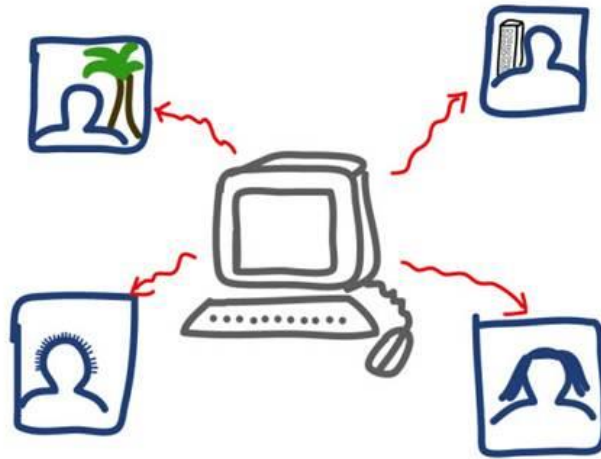
(Source: <http://globalwebindex.com>)

The surge in digital literacy (Hargittai 2005) indicates potential diversity and adoption of new devices affecting online behaviors. Growth of online content has enhanced the domains of social cohesion personal relations, group level interactions and macro social structures across the globe. There are 49% male users and 51% female users in Thailand, compared to 49% and 51% in France and 53% and 47% in Italy.

### **3) *Collaboration***

Silveira (2012) in his study found that learning changes with the construction of knowledge that is dynamic and shared, enabling new forms of practices which may enhance students' skills through cooperation and collaboration (Figure-10).

According to Robert (2005) improved connectivity and communication has also increased prospects of collaboration across national boundaries. To be collaborative is to disclose and make known both your knowledge and your perspective. An efficient collaborative partnership can honor, celebrate and embrace others for their contributions and lead to production of new knowledge. Collaboration knows no boundaries. We should also accept the fact that in social media collaboration will happen with strangers too. To yearn is to feel collaboration is an absolute necessity in education. Since the beginning of the Internet in 1997 various technologies and on-line services have been created to enhance collaboration among various organizations including schools, colleges and universities. In this decade, the expansion of Cloud Computing is providing a very powerful and cost effective framework for on-line collaboration.



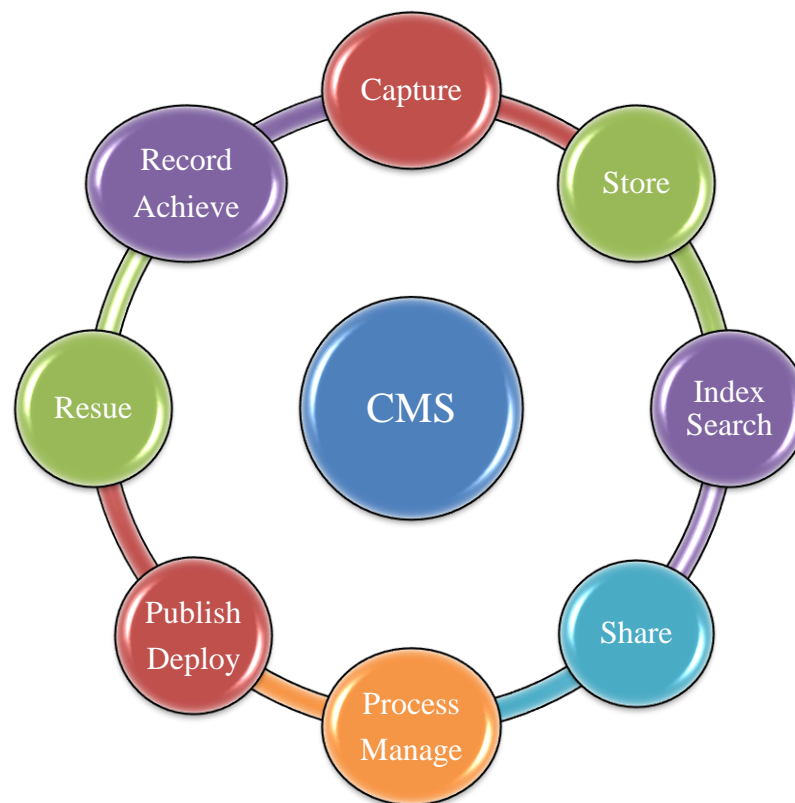
**Figure 10:** On-Line Collaboration

Various interactive, real-time collaboration tools that are available today make work easier- no matter where the people are located. Some of these tools are created specifically for designers, some serve as concept crafting whiteboards often with tools to make simple annotations, and some are all-in-one web applications that include facilities for project management. There are collaboration tools, from concept drafting and brainstorming to working on mock-ups and live project. Let us look at some of these tools. For example, *Yammer* is a social network for businesses owned by Microsoft. It provides a platform for anyone to communicate and collaborate privately with their colleagues. People sign in with a company email address and can use the platform via web, desktop or mobile devices to chat openly or privately, and share documents. Other important tools for online collaboration include *GoVisually* which allows people to comment, annotate, and discuss; *Mindmeister* is a collaborative mind-mapping tool; *ConceptBoard* is an instant whiteboard tool for teams and projects; *Scribblar* is more like a chat room- it even has audio available- and as such it is very useful tool indeed; *BinFire* is an all-round project management tool, it is designed for team project follow-ups and collaboration; *Basecamp* has been around for over 10 years and is an approachable yet powerful project management tool; the latest version of *Concept inbox* features visual feedback and real time collaboration; *Canvasdrop* is a file sharing and

annotating tool that supports many file types including MS Office documents, it's interface is very simple and easy to navigate. There are many more collaborative tools that are being used for in various businesses and academia.

#### 4) ***Content Management System (CMS)***

According to Sandeep (2013) Content Management Systems (CMS) at its heart is a front-end software platform. Let's say a school or college want to develop a learning website. The instructors need not possess technical knowledge of how web technologies work but must have very basic understanding of computing.



**Figure 11:** Content Management System

CMS are platforms (Figure 11) designed to manage the content of the web sites through an intuitive and easy to use interface Ion (2012). According to Svarre (2000) a Content Management System is composed of *Content Management Application - CMA* and

*Content Delivery Application - CDA*. As it turns out, that is all people need to design their website on CMS.

By using one, a user can upload images, format text, make navigation menus and more. In short, it gives an individual complete control over every aspect of their website, allowing them to add and remove features and functionalities without delving deep into code such as HTML, JavaScript, CSS, etc. That is not to say learning these languages is no longer important. But when time and lack of resources are a grim possibility, it pays to go for a CMS solution for personal as well as business needs.

### ***eCampuses for Better Quality of Communication, Teaching and Learning***

With large class size and increasing student expectations identifying effective feedback strategies and developing methods for providing feedback efficiently in courses remains a big challenge. Learning Analytics is new process to foster better pedagogy. According to - MIT Technology Review “big data and personal information are converging to shape the Internet’s most powerful and surprising consumer products. They’ll predict your needs, store your memories, and improve your life- if you let them.”



**Figure 12: Mobile Devices**



According to research, feedback on learning is a key factor in improved learning outcomes and student satisfaction. Kale (2013) examined pre-service teachers' potential use of Web 2.0 technologies for teaching and found that giving effective feedback (Figure-12) can help drive students towards success in a course, while helping them to better understand the material. However, feedback can also take a lot of time, so it is another factor to consider regarding faculty training and workload. Szatmary et al (2014) at the University of Washington, Seattle, USA found out that learning analytics automate data collection and mining and highlight areas that may need enhancement, repetition, or alternative strategies.

Denley (2012) has pioneered a wide variety of initiatives to improve college completion and students' academic success. These ideas stretch from institutional transformation and course redesign in a variety of disciplines, to the role of predictive analytics and data mining in higher education.

## **Conclusion**

The greatest challenge for educators who are trying to use Internet tools and technologies for enhancing communication is not falling prey to its ill advised failings, shallow comprehension, trivialization, passivity and lowered mental effort. It should be noted that task oriented, purpose based communication, where tools and technologies such as chats, forums, and social media are powerful means to cognitively engage them. Because of the immense capabilities of the Internet use of the right tools can generate interest and motivation to learn and explore a subject matter in greater depth. One approach to cultivating better communication for optimal learning outcomes is to develop a set of learning activities based on clear objectives. Consistent with research findings and suggestions put forth in this paper, using web based communication tools offer a promising approach to raising student's overall performance in an academic program or a courseware in F2F or on-line learning environment.

So in a nutshell, the issue is how can we make communication more effective? Many instructors struggle to engage students in a F2F environment. Can some of the online communication tools discussed in this article enough to engage students? The reasons for low level of communication can sometimes be attributed to cultural factors, diversity of devices and other limitations such as language barriers that can hamper overall learning process. It is also clear that there is an ongoing surge in the use of social media. Success of WhatsApp, Line, Google Talk, Microsoft Skype, Cisco WebEx and You-Tube indicates that quality of communication can be very instrumental in enhancing the quality of teaching and learning. Age of digital communication requires that every institution invest all its resources into creating its own portal and transform themselves into eCampuses. Engaging students with better communication tools will yield better learning.

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## **Language Choice and Code Switching Practices among Thai Students:**

### **A Case Study**

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### **Abstract**

In recent years, research on Instant Messaging has been growing with a shift from English-based CMC to multilingual CMC. As a result, two main features of multilingual CMC have been widely investigated: language choice and code switching. However, the investigations remain at the linguistic level, placing their attention on describing linguistic features and analyzing them statistically. Taking a different perspective, this study is grounded in new literacy studies, viewing reading and writing as human activities rather than just decoding letters and words. The study investigates the language choice and code switching practices in LINE application of 16 Thai postgraduate students at Lancaster University. The study incorporates both quantitative and qualitative research methods. The data were collected from a group of Thai postgraduate students at Lancaster University (16 participants) via three instruments: (i) questionnaires, (ii) semi-structured interviews and (iii) chat logs. The findings reveal that the topic of conversation and language proficiency are important factors contributing to language choice and code switching practices in LINE among Thai postgraduate students at Lancaster University. However, a non-linguistic factor such as technological constraint especially with the phone keyboard is also found to be influential

## Introduction

Synchronous computer-mediated communication has established itself as one of the most popular forms of daily communication in present society, especially instant messaging (IM). It has gained in popularity in the past few years with the enhancement of IM technologies on mobile devices. As a result, it is been integrated into many aspects of people's everyday lives (Barton & Lee, in press).

Generally, instant messaging is defined as “Internet-based synchronous text chat, with point-to-point communication between users on the same system. A window is dedicated to the conversation, with messages scrolling upward and eventually out of view as the conversation ensues” (Grinter & Palen, 2002, p. 21).

Early research on IM paid attention to the language of IM. Craig (2003) and Baron (2005a) both report positive effects from using IM in relation to the issue of language standards. Also, Flanagan (2005) investigated the uses and functions of IM in relation to other forms of communication. Moreover, Baron (2005b) studied the effect of multi-tasking on the structure of IM messages. However, early studies in the field were generally based on English CMC, which lacked an international perspective to account for different cultural and linguistic backgrounds. As a result, the research body in this field has recently been growing with a shift from investigating English-based CMC to studying multilingual CMC.

As the research in this field has become more multilingual-focused, two features of IM have been investigated in depth: language choice and code-switching in bilingual CMC. Siebenharr (2006) examined Swiss-German Internet relay chat (IRC), focusing on code-switching and language choice. Also, Warshauer, Said and Zohry studied online language choices of Egyptian Internet users. Lee (2007) investigated text-making practices in online instant messaging, ICQ and MSN messenger in Hong Kong. However, the main platform of the aforementioned studies was a computer screen, which is restricted in terms of its

portability and access to the Internet. In recent years, instant messaging communication has expanded its platforms from computers to smartphones or tablets, which function similarly to computers but have more portability and offer easier access to the Internet. They combine people's practices of text messaging and online chatting, which in turn changes the way people use IM in some crucial aspects. This is particularly true with modern IM platforms, such as LINE which has many distinctive features. As a result, it is logical to study people's practices in IM when they use it on mobile phones in order to better understand their digital literacy and practices in the modern age.

The research into multilingual IM has been constantly expanding; however, the research on Thai-English bilingual CMC is very limited. Therefore, as I have been actively involved in a group chat via the LINE application among Thai students at Lancaster University for the past three months, I have noted some linguistic features as well as some interesting meaning-making strategies in the group conversations. As a result, four main research questions were formed:

1. Is there any relationship between language choice and code-switching and the topic of conversation?
2. Does language proficiency matter for group members' choices?
3. Are virtual stickers good tools for mediating communication?
4. Does the context (being in an English speaking country) encourage participants to use more English in their IM conversation?

## ***Background***

### ***LINE***

As LINE is such a recent phenomenon in mobile phone communication, the literature about it is very limited; therefore, the description is drawn from my own personal experience as an

active user for the past two years. LINE is an instant messaging program which has evolved in terms of its features since its emergence. It is accessible via smartphones, tablets and desktop computers. However, most users use it on either a smartphone or tablet. It offers users a real-time chatting channel with a number of special features, i.e. texting, voice over Internet protocol (VOIP), sharing photos, audio messages, videos, music and links, and the most distinctive feature: virtual stickers which will be explained in detail in a later section. Also, LINE can be used by two users or in a group chat for up to 100 users simultaneously.

### ***Virtual Stickers***

Virtual stickers are one of the most distinctive features of LINE. Some are original characters while some depict well-known characters. Virtual stickers are mainly used to express emotions; in other words, they function as large-sized emoticons. However, in this study, they are also used as a tool to mediate communication, i.e. for asking questions (see Fig. 1). Therefore, it is well worth investigating whether virtual stickers are effective tools to mediate communication.

### ***Multimodality***

Even though multimodal practices are not novel and have been used as tools to create meaning throughout the history of written language, when it comes to online multimodality, it is very convenient for users to create multimodal texts (Barton & Lee, in press). Specifically, LINE is very multimodal, i.e. it allows users to use different modes to form coherent and meaningful texts. People can use texts along with emoticons or stickers. More interestingly, the use of virtual stickers along with photos is a fascinating phenomenon as a meaning-making strategy (again see Fig. 1). Also, other modes can be used to create meaningful texts, such as links, audio messages, videos etc.





**Figure1:** Virtual stickers when used to mediate communication

## *Theoretical Perspectives*

### *New Literacy Studies*

In the past, studies of CMC have focused on describing linguistic features and analysing them statistically (Lee, 2007, p. 288). However, this approach is not sufficient to understand CMC from users' perspectives so that we can explain why certain features are preferred by users in online communication. As a result, this study is grounded in theories of literacy as a social practice, particularly as such literacies are shaped by digital technologies. This area is frequently referred to as new literacy studies (NLS) (Barton, 2007; Barton & Hamilton, 1998, 2000; Gee, 1996; Street, 1993 as cited in Lee, 2007, p.225). For NLS, reading and writing are not only about decoding letters and words but should also be understood as human activity in a given context (Lee, 2007, p. 225). It highlights the role of text in use as well as trying to understand practices related to the use of text. Recently, IM has become integrated into

people's everyday lives and not separated from other types of human activity (Selfe & Hawisher, 2004 as cited in Lee, 2007). In this study, participants used IM to arrange travel plans, set up meetings, talk about academic matters, ask for support and so on. Lee (2007) points out that as these purposes are closely related to people's offline lives, it shows that the use of IM is socially constructed. Furthermore, examining code-switching and language choice in IM within an NLS framework allows the researcher to go beyond just looking at the linguistic features of switches and choices and to examine levels of practices in order to better understand the reasons behind those switches and choices.

In the light of NLS, 'literacy practices' is one of the main units of analysis. The term refers to "cultural ways of utilizing literacy" (Barton & Hamilton, p. 8). In this study, as the term is very broad, I only examine two particular elements of literacy practices, which are code-switching and language choice practices, seeking to understand the reasons behind code-switching and language choices as well as to find out about the relationship between participants' language proficiency and their choices.

## **Literature Review**

### ***Code Switching***

Code-switching has been much studied over the past three decades. Grosjean (1982) gives a general definition of code-switching as "The alternate use of two or more languages in the same utterance or conversation" (p. 145). However, different academics define code-switching differently, according to the focus of their research. On the one hand, Auer (1984) says that code-switching can occur either within or between sentences. On the other hand, Hoffman (1991) distinguishes between switches within a sentence and those between sentences, calling the former 'code-mixing' and the latter 'code-switching'. In this study, I adopt Hoffman's perspective by distinguishing between code-mixing and code-switching.

## ***Previous Research on Language Choice and Code-switching in CMC***

### ***Topic-related Code Switching***

Lexander (2011) studied the literacy practices of Senegalese students who use both Pulaar, one of the Senegalese languages, and French in their texts. The study shows that switching to French in conversation has inherent meaning potential, in this case signalling a change in topic to study-related issues. The study also reveals that the tendency whereby the first language of a speaker is used for personal matters is not always the case. Rather, both French and African languages have their own functions for marking different parts of a message, e.g. greeting as opposed to information, and both can be used to separate a more personal part from the rest of the message (p. 438). Also, Warschauer, Said and Zohry (2002) studied the online language choices of Egyptian young professionals and found that participants who engage in code-switching conversation tend to use Egyptian Arabic for highly personal matters where English could not be used well for clear expression. Additionally, in bilingual messages, Egyptian Arabic is frequently used in greetings and humorous or sarcastic expressions. (pp. 312-313). However, in professional writing, participants tend to use English as the language of communication even though the communication is between Egyptians. This runs parallel with the study of interactional alignment in email discourse by Georgakopoulou (1997), who found that switching from English to Greek was used to signal a shift from a professional to an informal manner of interaction and to assuage face-threatening acts.

However, a study of language choice and code-switching in German-based diasporic Web forums revealed that language choice is not fully determined by a particular topic but rather the negotiations of the participants (Androutsopoulos, 2007, pp. 353-357).

### ***Language Competence-related Code Switching***

Code-switching is not only governed by preference-related choice, it is also discourse and participant related. Preference-related choices of code sometimes related to the competency in certain languages (Androutsopoulos, 2007, pp. 353-357). Lee (2007) found that participants' language capability and education-related purposes were related to language choices in IM conversations in Hong Kong (p. 292).

However, there are other factors that contribute to code-switching and language choice. Durham (2003) found that the mode of communication influences people's language choices, particularly when group members in a communication circle speak different languages (p. 338). On top of that, Siebenharr (2006) found in a study of language choice and code-switching in Swiss-German IRC that switches take place at the edge of an interaction sequence, i.e. while opening and closing moves are in Swiss-German dialect, the main part of the interaction is in Standard German.

## **Methodology**

### ***Participants and Research Context***

A study was conducted with 16 Thai postgraduate students at Lancaster University. Participants are from a variety of master programmes, including finance, accounting, marketing, statistics, business administration and linguistics. Their language proficiency levels range from 6.5 to 8.0 in the IELTS examination. All the participants have been participating in a group chat for the past three months since it was set up following their arrival in England.

### ***Linguistic Context***

All of the participants are native speakers of Thai with an adequate level of English (equivalent to at least 6.5 in IELTS) to study master programmes at Lancaster University. As a result, the conversations are bilingual. Also, the linguistic resources drawn upon by the participants can be categorized as follows:

1. Standard Thai
2. Standard English
3. A combination of Thai and English (I call this “Thinglish”)
4. Romanized Thai (the use of Thai with English alphabetical representation).

### ***Data Collection***

Online questionnaires were sent to collect data via Facebook and email. The questionnaire was not anonymous so that the researcher could conduct follow-up interviews. The questionnaire focused on participants' online practices in terms of code-switching, language choice, the communicative efficiency of virtual stickers, the relationship between online and offline friendship and the role of context in participants' language use. The questionnaire included ten questions with nine five-point Likert-scale items, and one open-ended question about code-switching and language choice was also included to get more ideas from the participants. Individual interviews with five selected participants were conducted to gather more in-depth information

The scores for the five-point Likert-scale items are interpreted as follows: 1.00 is strongly disagree, 2.0 is disagree, 3.0 is neutral/don't know, 4.0 is agree and 5.0 is strongly agree. Then, the scores on each question are converted into percentages. The answers to the open-ended question are analyzed and used to support analyses of the survey data. As for

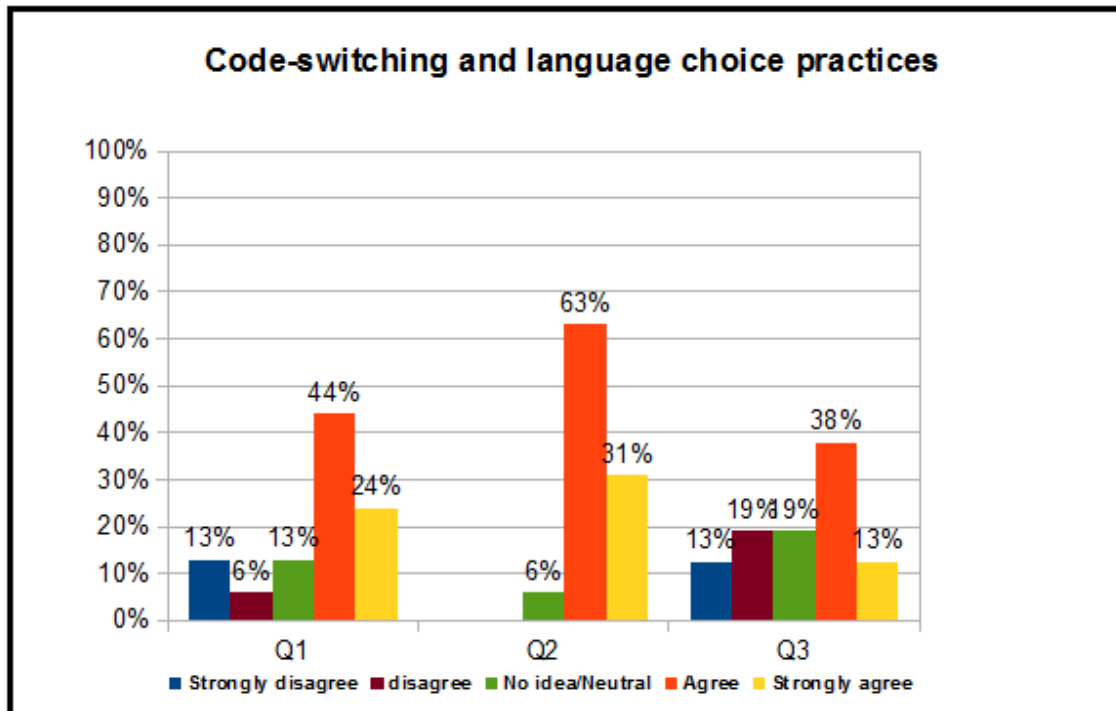
textual data, the researcher is also a member of the group chat and has permission to use any data that appear in the chat as examples in this study.

### ***The Researcher's Position***

As the chat group has only been running for three months and I have been in the group throughout the whole process, I consider myself to be an insider and to some extent one of the participants in my research, because some of the data collected include my participation in the group. Also, it is noteworthy here that, to my participants, I am considered as either their friend or brother, and my role as a researcher is only explicit when I conducting individual interviews with some of them. These interviews were, however, conducted in an informal manner. In other words, they are more like a chat between friends, rather than a formal process. As a result of my relationship with the participants, this affects the quality of my data in that I have had a chance to see their online and offline practices at the same time, which in turn has had a significant influence on the insights I have gained from this study.

## **Results**

The questionnaire results are analysed according to five categories: code-switching and language choice, the communicative efficiency of virtual stickers, language proficiency and the role of context in participants' language use.



**Figure 2: Percentages of participants' answers in relation to code switching and language choice.**

**Q1:** I tend to use Thai when I engage in a serious topic of conversation such as academic discussion.

**Q2:** I tend to use English in daily conversation.

**Q3:** If the preceding sentence is in Thai, I tend to respond in Thai and vice versa.

### ***Participants' Code-Switching and Language Choice Practices***

Two questions are devoted to code-switching and language choice practices. Figure 2 shows that participants mostly agree with the statements in this section. A noticeable number of participants (68%) agree that they prefer to use Thai when they talk about serious topics. Only a small number (19%) report that this is not the case for them. On the other hand, almost all participants (94%) agree that they use English in their daily life conversations. Furthermore, in Q3, half of the participants (51%) agree that if the preceding sentence is in Thai, they are likely to respond in Thai, and vice versa. However, almost a third of participants (32%) believe that this is not true for them.

In the open-ended question, the participants were asked to describe their personal practices in relation to language choice and code switching. Most of them reported that Thai is preferred when it comes to a serious topic, i.e. academic discussion or important issues (see excerpt 1). As can be seen from excerpt 1, Participant 3 switched to Thai because the topic changed to an important issue. Also, Thai is used for communicative purposes when the content is too complicated to explain in English. On the other hand, English is preferred for general conversation and when the content is not too difficult to say. Additionally, many participants reported that they sometimes prefer to use English because the English keyboard on a mobile phone is much easier to use than the Thai one. As a result, technological constraints should also be seen as one of the factors contributing to participants' practices.

### Excerpt 1

Participant 1: I'll be there in 5 mins n' bee

Participant 2: Ok ka

Participant 3: สรุป (to summarize)

Participant 3: กลาสโกว์ เอ็ดินะ (Glasgow and Edinburgh)

Participant 3: 17-20

Participant 3: รีบตัดสินใจนะ จะขอให้ลงชื่อ + เก็บเงิน (make quick decision and please tell me if you are going + pay your share).

Participant 3: ต้องการรู้จำนวนคนก่อน จะได้จองที่พัก (I want to know the number of people who are going so that I can book the accommodation)

As for 'Thinglish', little use of Thinglish was found in the chat group. Occasionally, it is used when equivalent words are not available among Thai linguistic resources (see excerpt



2). Also, the use of Romanized Thai is not popular either. This is because most participants find that it is extremely hard to understand. However, some participants use it when it comes to short answers and words which do not require much interpretation. Interestingly, the most frequently used feature is the use of Thai ending particles in Romanized form, such as 'ka(a)', 'krub', 'na', 'ja' and so on (see Fig. 3). Many participants mentioned this issue in their answers to the open-ended question, adding that such particles make sentences sound more appropriate and polite. Also, the use of such words can soften the tone of the voice in conversation.

## Excerpt 2

Participant 1: มีใครกำลังจะออกไป learning zone บ้างไหม (Is anyone going to learning zone?)

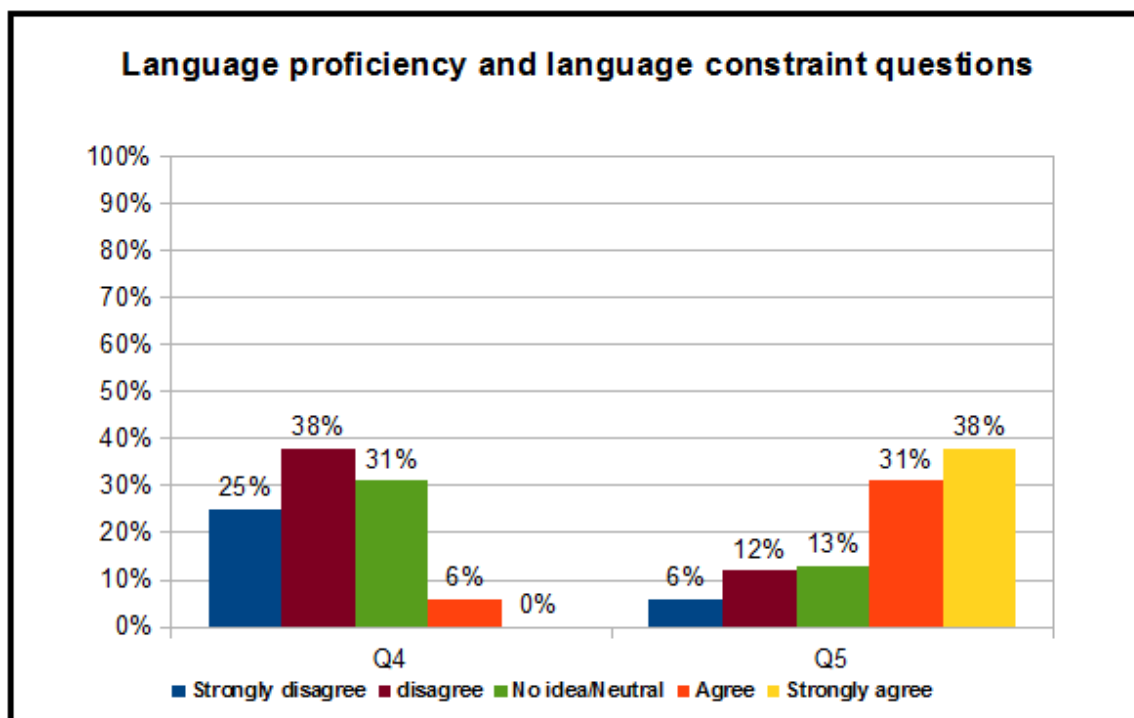
Participant 2: I and P'ja are at learning zone laew ja (I and Ja are at learning zone already)



**Figure 3:** The use of Romanized Thai to make the message more polite

In the follow-up interviews, selected participants reconfirmed their answers to the open-ended question, i.e. they will switch to Thai if the topic of conversation is serious or important. Also, one participant pointed out that, for Romanized Thai, there is no standard for

how words should be spelled and different people use different conventions. Consequently, it can be difficult for readers to understand messages.



**Figure 4: Percentages of participants' answers in relation to language proficiency and language constraint.**

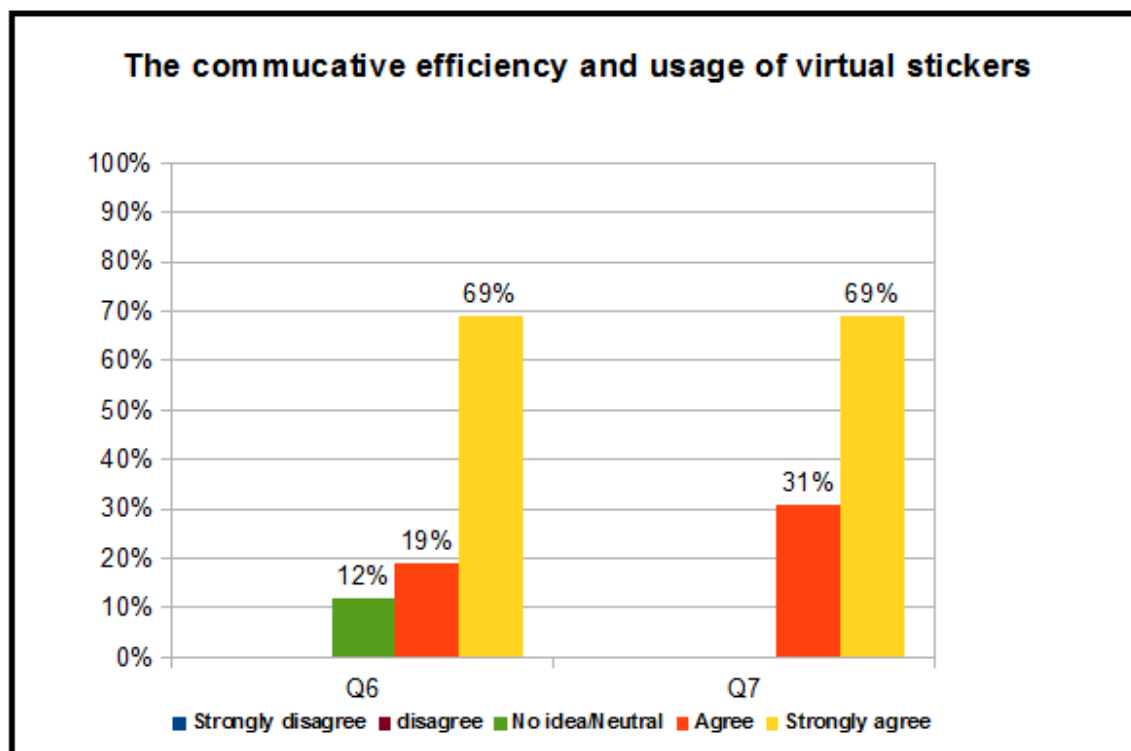
**Q4:** I don't use English because I'm not very competent in English.

**Q5:** I prefer to use English in the chat group because Thai spelling system is more complex in English

### ***Language Proficiency and Language Constraints***

The next two questions concern language proficiency and language constraints. In the first question, most participants (63%) feel that they are competent in using English in the chat group. Only six per cent of participants feel they are not competent enough. For the next question, a substantial number of students (69%) agree that their language preference is largely determined by the complexity of the Thai spelling system.

In the follow-up interviews, the researcher noted the differences between participants' answers to Q4 and their answers to the open-ended question, i.e. most participants reported that they use Thai when they want to express something in particular and the content is too complicated to say it in English. When asked to justify their answers, participants claimed that while they are quite confident with their English language proficiency they feel uncomfortable using English in the chat group; however, in real-time conversation when simultaneous response is needed, they, as non-native speakers of English, are unable to think of the proper words to use, resulting in a choice to revert to their mother tongue. Regarding the second question, participants reported that they find the Thai spelling system very complex to use. This is because Thai has 44 consonant forms and 21 vowel forms, plus tones that need to be marked in order to fulfil communicative purposes. As a result, when the content is not too difficult, English is preferred.



**Figure 5: Percentages of participants' answers in relation to the communicative efficiency and usage of virtual stickers**

**Q6:** Virtual stickers are good tools to mediate communication.

**Q7:** I like to use virtual stickers when I want to express my feeling.

### *Communicative efficiency and the use of virtual stickers*

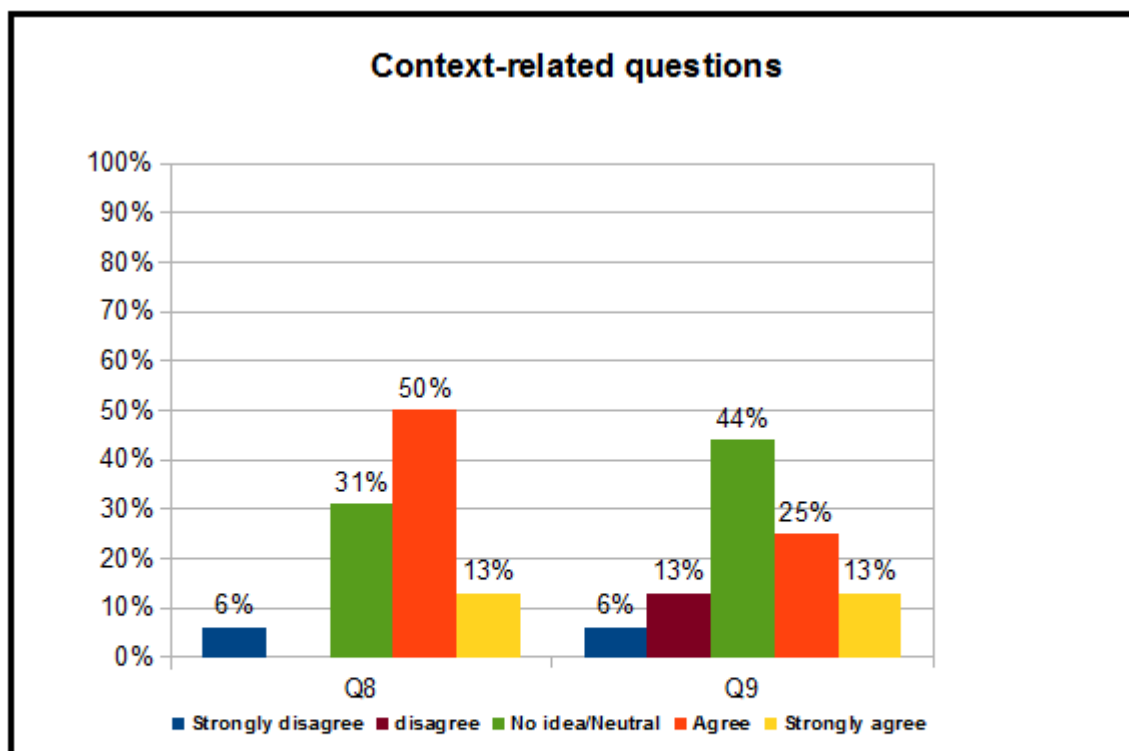
Two questions focused on communicative efficiency and the use of virtual stickers. In terms of communicative efficiency, a high number of participants (88%) thought that using virtual stickers is an effective way to communicate. In terms of usage, all participants (100%) agreed that whenever they want to express a feeling or emotion, virtual stickers are what they tend to use.

In the follow-up interviews, all the selected participants were very positive about the use of virtual stickers in the chat group. One participant thought that they make online chatting more like face-to-face conversation. This is because, with virtual stickers, people can indicate their tone of voice as well as their emotion when chatting on IM (see Fig. 6). In addition, another participant, the creator of the sticker in Figure 1, reported that she chose to use a sticker along with a picture to ask questions

because she believes that it saves time and provides a better way of communication in a specific circumstance. However, in order to ascertain its communicative efficiency, the researcher showed the picture in Figure 1 to people outside the group and asked if they understood it in the same way as the members. The results varied; some interpreted it in the same way as members of the group, some did not. As a result, it would be too presumptuous to say that the mere use of virtual stickers is a very effective communication tool and that, more importantly, its efficiency is driven by the context, meaning that they need to be used with other modes of communication or the reader has to have some background about the context in order to understand clearly.



**Figure 6:** The use of virtual stickers to express feeling



**Figure 7: Percentages of participants' answers in relation to the role of context**

**Q8:** I use more English in LINE When I am in England

**Q9:** Studying in England encourages me to use English more when I use LINE

### *The Role of Context*

Two questions concerned with this issue. A considerable number of participants (63%) felt that they used more English after they came to England. Thirty-one per cent were not sure and just six per cent felt that they did not use more English in England. Regarding the study environment, almost half of the participants (44%) had no idea if it encouraged them to use more English in the chat group, while a slightly lower number of participants (38%) thought that it did encourage them to use more English.

In the follow-up interviews, selected participants reported that they were often forced to use English with other foreign friends which, in turn, got them into the habit of chatting in English even when chatting with other Thais. Some of them also see using English in a chat

group as a way of practising their English. However, some participants did not think that they use more English here because they have always used English since they were in Thailand.

## **Discussion**

In this section, the findings of this study will be discussed in order to answer the research questions. Also, several interesting findings emerged in the process of comparing the answers in the questionnaires to the interviews with selected participants.

### ***Topic-Related Code-Switching and Language Choice.***

It is found that there is definitely a relationship between the topic of conversation and participants' language choices and code-switching practices. From the questionnaire, it is clear that Thai is preferred when the topic or issue is serious or important. Also, a switch to Thai signals a change of topic to a more important issue. On the other hand, English is preferred in daily conversation. However, when the content of the conversation is too hard to express in English, Thai or Thinglish is used to achieve communication. The findings parallel those of Alexander (2011), who points out that a switch from Pularr to French in conversation has some inherent meaning potential; and the study of Warschauer, Said and Zohry (2002) reports that the first language is used for highly personal matters which can not be well expressed in English.

The fact that the use of Romanized Thai is not so popular or preferred, apart from its use as a politeness marker, does not seem so surprising as there is no convention for its spelling system which in turn can cause difficulty in communication. However, the extensive use of Thai ending particles to mark politeness is very interesting. This is because the use of such particles is an important linguistic feature of Thai and has some cultural significance in Thai society where seniority and politeness are concerned. Also, the choice of language or

code-switching practices are not only determined by the topic or complexity of the content but technological constraints, especially the keyboard, which also make a significant contribution to practice.

### ***Language Proficiency and Language Choice***

As for language competence, even though most of the participants are confident with their language proficiency and feel comfortable using English in the chat group, when it comes to complicated expressions or certain emotions they tend to revert to their mother tongue. Also, in real-time conversation as in IM, the time constraint can encourage participants to choose or switch to the language in which they are more competent. These findings support Lee (2007) and Androutsopoulos (2007), who found a relationship between language capability and language choice in IM conversation.

### ***The Communicative Efficiency of Virtual Stickers***

Overall, the participants have a positive attitude to the use of virtual stickers in conversation. Their main function is to express feelings and emotions. Also, it was impressive to find that virtual stickers are used along with other modes as a tool to mediate communication. More importantly, they are also perceived as an effective way of communication. However, it is paramount to note here that the efficiency of virtual stickers is driven by the context, which implies that their use in isolation might not be sufficient in communication. What is more, the use of virtual stickers can potentially make a conversation more like a face-to-face one by adding emotions, feelings, facial expression and tone of voice. The findings about virtual stickers in this study show that they create a new mode of communication and provide more resources for users to make meaning across modes, which in turn makes LINE a very multimodal IM platform.



### ***The Role of Context***

Initially, it was hypothesized by the researcher that the fact that the participants were all studying in England would encourage them to use more English in the chat group. This is not quite true. Even though many participants indicated that they use more English in LINE when they are in England, the reasons for their increase in the use of English is not solely driven by the context. Another reason is also contributing to the increase, namely, technological constraints.

However, it is impressive to discover that some participants see LINE as a platform to practise their English, which may have some implications for language learning in the digital age. As for the study environment, one important finding is that one participant saw the platform as a place to relax and not be forced to use English after have been exposed to a lot of English in the classroom.

### ***Limitations, Suggestions and Implications***

This is quite a reasonably small-scale study, since the researcher had very limited time to conduct it. Also, even though a number of participants' practices such as language choice, code-switching, virtual stickers and context were focused, there are some other ideas that could be investigated regarding language use in IM that were omitted, such as affordances, text-making practices and so on. Furthermore, due to the fact that the group had only existed for three months, the data are pretty limited. In addition, regarding the context, this might not have a great impact in a short period of time. More individual interviews would have been done had time not been constrained.

A larger-scale study and a longer period of investigation are recommended to paint a clearer picture of people's practices on the LINE platform. A stronger focus on one or two areas of literacy practices in LINE, especially multimodality and the use of virtual stickers,

should be considered as this study is a rather general observation of overall practices. Also, different combinations of languages in the chat group would lead to different findings to some extent, as Thai is a very tonal language and its use is governed by seniority and politeness.

The findings in this study provide an overview of people's practices in the LINE application which may be used as a grounding for future research on this platform. Also, as it is seen as a space to practise English as well as the fact that IM is integrated into people's daily lives, it could later become a good pedagogical tool for language learning and teaching in the digital age.

### **Conclusion**

The findings demonstrate that topic of conversation is an important factor contributing to code choice and code-switching practices in LINE among 16 Thai postgraduate students at Lancaster University, UK. Also, language proficiency contributes considerably to their language choices, especially when certain feelings or emotions need to be expressed. Nevertheless, some non-linguistic factors, especially the technological constraint of the keyboard, are influential in their choices and switching. More interestingly, the use of virtual stickers to mediate communication is a very recent phenomenon in meaning-making strategies which emerged from the platform, partly due to the fact that LINE is very multimodal. However, as far as communication is concerned, virtual stickers do need to be used with other modes of communication while readers need to have some contextual background, either linguistically or situationally. However, studying in an English-speaking country does not actually encourage participants to use more English in a chat group as the platform is seen as a space to escape after having been overwhelmed by English in the classroom.

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## **The Effectiveness of Vocabulary Learning Strategies from the Views of EFL Students and Teachers in the Thai Learning Context**

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### **Abstract**

The purposes of this research were to explore which Vocabulary Learning Strategies (VLS) were perceived to be effective among the learners who have different English learning achievement, and which strategies were actually used by learners who have high achievement in Vocabulary Learning (VL). Another purpose was to investigate the perception of the Mattayom.2 English teachers about the significance of VLS in language learning achievement. The research utilised mix-method approach with a quantitative survey and semi-structured interview. The survey was conducted to examine perceptions about effective VLS perceived by M.2 students (Grade 8), and to examine the extent to which the perceptions vary according to the students' reported English learning achievement. The interview was conducted with participants selected from the total number of students based on their performance on a quiz. In addition, the interview was also conducted with individual M.2 English teachers. The findings revealed that the majority of students reported their perception of effectiveness toward overall VLS at the moderate level (mean score of 3.579). Considerably, there were 15 VLS out of 20 VLS reported in which students having different levels of achievement (low, moderate, and high) in language learning do significantly

perceive different VLS. In addition, the results from students' interviews showed that the actual use of VLS depended on individual variation of choosing strategies. Teachers believe that VLS play an important role in language learning, and also the teaching approaches are very significant for students' achievement.

*Keywords:* Language Learning, Vocabulary Learning, Vocabulary Teaching, Perception

## **Introduction**

English as a Foreign Language (EFL) is a compulsory course in the national curriculum in more than 100 countries around the world. Traditionally, the grammar rules and vocabulary have been the basic content of language teaching rather than language learning strategy. Learning strategies are the techniques employed by learners to understand, learn, and remember new knowledge. There are various types and categories of strategies which learners can choose depending on what they find appropriate for making sense of their learning and resulting in greater achievement. Learning vocabulary is important for every level of students; they have to acquire the meanings, forms, and the usage of the vocabularies. It is believed that when learners learn a wide range of VLS, they can select the strategies which suit the task and their preferences. Appropriate understanding of VLS may develop learning ability and simplify the process of learning new vocabulary among learners (Samian and Tavakoli, 2012). Therefore, this present research is about to examine the perception of students toward VLS which are given in the questionnaire to rate from students' agreement. Learners' perception of VLS might play vital role in determining the strategies usage and it may reflect to the actual use of VLS when they meet new vocabulary. Moreover, teachers can develop their strategies of teaching vocabulary to be the most appropriate for students according to the result of their perception.

### ***Research Objectives***

1. To examine Mattayom 2 students' perceptions of effective VLS.
2. To examine the significant difference of the students' perception of effective VLS according to their self-reported achievement in English learning.
3. To explore the actual use of VLS perceived among a selected group of students who have high vocabulary learning potential.
4. To investigate the Mattayom 2 English teachers' perceptions toward the significant role of VLS in language learning achievement.

### ***Limitation of the Study***

First, achievement could be a result of many complex factors which is difficult to find within one research;

Second, learners are expert at different skills. Even they are good at English language, they do not need to be good at every skills of English language. Moreover, the language achievement does not mean that learners are good at vocabulary learning skill;

Third, this research was asked on their perception of using VLS so it might not affect to the actual use of VLS.

## **Literature Review**

### ***Definitions of Vocabulary Learning Strategies***

Vocabulary learning strategies are part of general language learning strategies. Many scholars have given definitions concerning with VLS. According to Schmitt (as cited in Chiang, 2006, p. 23), one of the most common definitions is that VLS are used to facilitate the process through which new vocabularies are obtained, stored, retrieved, and used. Cameron also



described VLS as “actions that learners take to help themselves understand and remember vocabulary” (as cited in Kalajahi & Pourshahian, 2012, p. 138). In more specific, Brown and Payne defined VLS in a form of five steps in the process of learning vocabulary in a foreign language which are; (a) having sources for encountering new words, (b) getting a clear image of the forms of the new words, either in visual or auditory forms, (c) learning the meaning of the words, (d) making a strong memory connection between the forms and the meanings of the words, and (e) using the words (as cited in Samian & Tavakoli, 2006, p. 626).

### ***Importance of Vocabulary Learning Strategies***

Generally, people use language to communicate in social activities: the more vocabulary language users know, the more likely they will participate in communication activities successfully. Therefore, if one desire is to accomplish native-like language skills, it is essential to have knowledge of a large vocabulary. Wilkins, regarding the importance of vocabulary, stated that “without grammar, very little can be conveyed; without vocabulary, nothing can be conveyed” (1972, p. 111). This statement shows that vocabulary plays an important role in larger units like sentences. Even if vocabulary is combined with the wrong grammar structure, it is understandable. Learning vocabulary is a complex process. Strategies in vocabulary learning help achieve the abilities to memorize and recall words in both spoken and written form.

### ***Classification of Vocabulary Learning Strategies***

According to Schmitt (1997, p. 19), “there is no category in Oxford's taxonomy which adequately describes the kind of strategies used by an individual when faced with discovering a new word's meaning without recourse to another person's expertise”. Schmitt adopted four

categories of VLS from Oxford's (1990) classification of LLS, which are social, memory, cognitive, metacognitive. In addition, he added a fifth category called determination (DET). Schmitt divided these strategies in two major groups: the first group is called discovery strategies, which are determination and social strategies. This group is used to determine the meaning of new vocabulary when learners encounter words for the first time. The second group is called consolidation strategies, which are social, memory, cognitive, and metacognitive strategies. This group is used to consolidate the meaning of words when learners encounter them again. However, Schmitt includes social strategy into both groups because it can be used for both purposes. Discovery strategies are concerned about discovering the meaning of new vocabulary, so learners try to guess meaning from the context, sentence structure, and related materials (dictionary). Moreover, asking someone for help such as teachers or classmates is another method of acquiring meaning. Besides, consolidation strategies are concerned about vocabulary which is consolidated once it has been encountered. Memory strategy involves its use of materials such as word lists, flash cards, notebooks, and also repetition to help learners remember new vocabulary. Cognitive strategy is quite similar to memory strategy but it includes mechanics that link between new vocabulary and learners' previous knowledge. The last strategy is metacognitive, which is used to monitor, decide, and evaluate the learning processes themselves.

Another classification proposed by Nation (2001) was the distinguished group of three categories, which are planning of vocabulary learning, sourcing of vocabulary learning, and processing of vocabulary learning. Planning involves the selection of how and where to focus on vocabulary, for example; choosing words, choosing the aspects of word knowledge, choosing strategies and planning repetition. Sourcing is about getting the information of vocabulary, which probably comes from the context, dictionary, glossary, or the vocabulary

itself. Processing involves the method of noticing, retrieving, and generating to set up vocabulary knowledge.

Stoffer (1995) conducted an investigation of overall vocabulary learning strategies. She developed and administered a Vocabulary Learning Strategy Inventory (VOLSI) to University students. The results presented 53 items which were categorized into nine categories according to factor analysis as follows: strategies involving authentic language use, strategies involving creative activities, strategies used for self-motivation, strategies used to create mental linkages, memory strategies, visual/auditory strategies, strategies involving physical action, strategies used to overcome anxiety, and strategies used to organize words

### ***Principles of Teaching Vocabulary***

Blachowicz and Fisher (as cited in Behlol and Dad, 2010, p. 126) identified four principles of teaching vocabulary; and their principles mostly relate to learners' needs. The first principle states that learners should personalize their vocabulary learning. They should decide themselves which strategies to use and how to use these strategies when learning vocabulary. The second principle states that students should focus on learning vocabulary until they completely understand the words. The third principle relates to students' background knowledge as a resource for understanding new vocabulary. Moreover, learning vocabulary occurs over a period of time to add knowledge and use it in different contexts. The last principle emphasizes that students should be active learners and the teacher should

Nation and Moir (as cited in Zhelyazova, 2011, p. 150) also identified three principles of teaching vocabulary concerning content and sequencing, format and presentation, and monitoring and assessment of vocabulary. Regarding content and sequencing, the essential factors of vocabulary learning are learners' attention to the vocabulary, learning strategies and word frequency. For format and presentation, high frequency words should be focused on. In

addition, students should understand the vocabulary in depth and be able to produce more vocabulary by using them frequently. The best way to teach vocabulary is to give opportunities for students to use vocabulary as much as possible. In terms of monitoring and assessment, teachers should test students on vocabulary in order to evaluate them. Moreover, teachers should report the outcomes to students because assessment can reflect their vocabulary learning and help them to determine which vocabulary they should focus on in the future.

### **Methodology**

The present research applies a mixed-method of quantitative survey and semi-structured interview to study a case of Mattayom 2 English students' and teachers' perceptions toward VLS. The survey was conducted to describe the perceptions about effective VLS perceived by Mattayom 2 (M.2) students at a public school in Suphanburi province, and to examine the extent to which the perceptions vary according to students' reported achievement in English learning. The semi-structured interview was conducted in a form of a focus-group. The participants are selected students based on their high performance on a vocabulary quiz. The aim is to explore the actual use of VLS perceived by the students in this group. The semi-structured interview was also conducted with individual M.2 English teachers at a public school in order to clarify their perceptions about the significant role of VLS to language learning achievement.

### ***Data Analysis***

For the quantitative research, SPSS was used to find statistical results to the pre-designed research questions, and to test the hypotheses. Moreover, the descriptive statistics analysis was conducted by using mean, S.D., One-way ANOVAs, Post hoc (Multiple Comparison), and LSD (Least Significant Difference). For the qualitative research, all questions were grouped into 4 themes; opinion, teaching method, activity and method, and developing independent learner, in order to analyzing with interpretative approach.

## **Findings**

### ***Students' Perception of Effectiveness of Overall VLS***

From the result of each vocabulary learning strategy perception, the highest mean score is 4.09 (SD 1.014), which is the perception of effectiveness of using pictures to remember the meanings of new words. The second highest mean score is 3.88 (SD 0.988), which is the perception of effectiveness of using a bilingual dictionary to translate the meaning into Thai language. Whereas, the lowest mean score is 3.25 (SD 1.135), which is the perception of effectiveness of using a monolingual dictionary to translate word meanings into English. However, the effectiveness of this strategy was still perceived at a moderate level. There is no perception of effectiveness of any strategy at a low level.

### ***The Significant Difference of the Students' Perceptions of Effective VLS According to their Self-Reported Achievement in English Learning***

From the results of the variation of vocabulary learning strategies perception and language learning achievement as shown in table 4.17, it can be revealed that there are 15 VLS which have a p-value less than 0.05; therefore, the results of 15 VLS confirms the hypothesis. In

other words, there are 15 VLS that reported students having different levels of achievement in language learning and significantly perceiving different overall VLS. It can be said that students of all English language achievement levels; low, moderate, and high, believed that 15 VLS were very effective and should be considered when learning new vocabulary. Moreover, the results revealed that students with high English language achievement show a high mean score in almost every strategy except; item 8 (ask classmates for the meaning), item 12 (use physical actions while learning new words), item 18 (listen and watch English media for learning new words). Students believed that those strategies were moderately effective. Interestingly, there are 4 VLS items which students in every level highly perceived should be used to learn vocabulary; item 1 (use bilingual dictionary to translate the meaning into Thai language), item 4 (use pictures to remember the meaning of new words), item 6 (ask the teacher for L1 translation), item 20 (practice vocabulary size with online word tests by yourself).

### ***Actual Use of VLS among the Selected Group of Students who Have Excellent Vocabulary Learning Potential***

The result showed that all students think that using a bilingual dictionary is very effective; whereas using a monolingual dictionary is useful only for high proficiency level students. Likewise, the interview result of actual uses of VLS by the 5 selected students who have excellent vocabulary learning potential also revealed that when they are faced with unfamiliar words, they immediately use a dictionary. Three of them chose to use bilingual dictionary as it is easy to look up words in their mother tongue. Two of them chose to use monolingual dictionary as it provides more detail of words such as affixes and its usage. However, bilingual and monolingual dictionaries both have advantages. A bilingual dictionary is simple and brief as learners can look up the meaning in their native language as well as see the direct

translation immediately. On the other hand, a monolingual dictionary not only provides much more information about words, but also provides comprehensive information too. The researcher also believes that a monolingual dictionary is more effective than a bilingual dictionary because learners neglect using a monolingual dictionary because it is difficult to access and it does not show the meaning in the native language. Consequently, the best solution to support students to use a monolingual dictionary is to provide them a training program for using a monolingual dictionary at the earlier stage of language learning. In their free time, the selected group of students improves their vocabulary learning skill by watching movies, listening to music, and playing the English version of games. These are alternative ways to expand the vocabulary size with fun and enjoyment. Moreover, it can improve a wide number of skills as students can have both visual and auditory memory. Therefore, teachers should aid their students in learning English vocabulary from movies, music, or games at any level of proficiency, not only for high proficiency level students. Moreover, teachers should know the recent movies, music or games which are interesting to students to have a topic in order to talk in class with the students. When students practice English by watching movies, listening to music, and playing the English version of games, they are developing their English skills. Hence, their English skills are improving continuously until they become high proficiency level students. This can explain why the selected group of students can get very high scores of quizzes and also receive high grades in all four skills of English.

### ***Teachers' Perception about Vocabulary Teaching and Learning***

Vocabulary plays an important role in language learning achievement; it is essential for developing other English skills such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing. As can be seen from the students' results, the using pictures strategy was selected to be one of the most effective strategies which should be used for learners to learn new vocabulary. In the same

way, teachers also perceive that using pictures should be presented while teaching new vocabulary. Using pictures to present new vocabulary is the most popular strategy used by teachers because it can be seen and understood easily by students. In addition, the use of pictures is visual instruction which can help students to learn abstract words or words which are rarely found in their native language; for example, Christmas, Halloween, or Thanksgiving. Moreover, using pictures as a means of instruction can help students enjoy and remember the class. Most of teachers did not mention using real objects to present new vocabulary in their instruction at all. This may be because finding pictures online is easier nowadays. It would be more challenging if the teachers encouraged the students to find pictures by themselves. Besides, teachers also mentioned that when students learn new vocabulary, memorization is a simple strategy to help them remember vocabulary in the first step. Afterward, building vocabulary should be taught to help them understand and expand their knowledge of word families. Building vocabulary is about expanding the vocabulary size by learning its functions such as affixes, roots, and word formation in order to form new words from the existing words. Even though, the teachers believe that vocabulary building is effective, they do not use it substantially in their classroom instruction.

### **Conclusion**

This present research study has been conducted to explore the perception about effective VLS perceived by Thai students with different English language proficiencies as well as to investigate the perception of teachers about the notable role of VLS to the learning achievement. Thus, the finding of the research would be beneficial for both EFL students and teachers especially in Thailand. The teachers could utilize the result of the VLS perception perceived by students to guide them the ways to support the students who have high achievement and encourage students who still have low achievement in learning vocabulary.



For this reason, the results may be helpful for the teachers or education planners who want to train on vocabulary development in the EFL curriculum. In addition, the students or other people who have interested in VLS are able to learn from this research in order to expand their VLS knowledge and succeed in the future academic life.

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**The Vietnamese Scholarship at the Turn of the Millennium:  
A Study of Pioneer Works by Gustave Emile Dumoutier (1850-1904)**

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**Abstract**

History begins with hate and love. What we do know in the recent history is the impact of Westernization of the world which did not occurred without humiliation, conflicts, social problems, but also honors, adoption and adaptation. While engaged in military conflicts, one might also embrace the other's culture as heritage. In the spectrum of globalization, the world's cultures come together. The cultural adoption and adaptation, during the period of colonization in Vietnam, involve a set of changes in the concept of technology, artistic, economic, social, and political organization which influenced a great deal, if not etched forever in the minds of people.

The colonial army and the catholic church, as viewed by Bruno Nettl in his book *Western Impact on World Music* (1985), promulgated the intensive diffusion of Western elements derived from European values to the colonies. As factual as the history could be seen, the European modern imperialism began in Vietnam in 1787 when Monseigneur Pigneau de Béhaine, a Catholic Priest, convinced the French King Louis XVI that it's time to conquer Vietnam. He led the Seminary of the Holy Angels and relocated the Paris Foreign Missions Society in Hà Tiên, Vietnam, from Ayutthaya, Thailand. (Mantienne, 1999: 49) The conquerors' army was led by General Thomas de Conway. The French fleets captured the port

of Tourane (now Đà Nẵng) in 1858 and Saigon in 1859. Subsequently, Vietnamese emperors had to grant the French the control of the first three (in 1861), then more southern provinces, made the Catholic missionary work legal, and opened the ports to commerce with the West. (Cima, 1989: 24)

This paper is the first to focus on Gustave Dumoutier, a great educator and scholar, whose substantial works have unfortunately not been studied. It also refers to the period of time from which the modern scholarship began and from which the Vietnamese history witnesses a lasting and contrasting Western influence. Indeed, the last two centuries of the second millenium AD, depicts an irreversible picture of change in the domain of research and education in Vietnam.

## Introduction

### *The Traditional Background*

Before the modern education, during the Chinese annexation (intermittently from 111 B.C. to 939 A.D.), regardless of many efforts of diverting through resistance and hostility toward Chinese rule, Vietnamese elites were indoctrinated in Chinese cultural, religious, political system, and the Han character. The Han-Viet is an assimilation of the Chinese language and local Vietnamese pronunciation. It is based on the Chinese writing system known as *Hán Văn* 漢文, which was also adopted in Japan as *Hambun* and in Korea as *Hanmun*, and localized and vocalized in Vietnamese, Japanese or Korean way that is not comprehensive to the Chinese.

Following the fall of the Han Dynasty in China in 220, the Han-Viet scholar-officials gained a sense of strength as being accepted to the administration. Indeed, the scholarship in classical Chinese dates back to the time of introduction of Buddhism by sea from India to Giao Châu (now Vietnam) during the first three centuries AD. The spread of the Mahayana

Buddhism strengthened both the study of Han-Viet language and a nationalistic engagement. This new religion was blended and quickly integrated in the traditional customs of Vietnam and Asia as their own. In the third century, historical records revealed that ten sutras were translated from Sanskrit for a community of five hundred Shanga members, and in twenty temples (see Nguyen, 1982). This is a landmark of the religious and philosophical studies. The Buddhist scholarship was later included in the national education of the Three-Pillar Foundation (Buddhism, Confucianism and Daoism) of which the Confucian examinations served as standard through out the history. Students studied canonical texts such as *Nhân thiên tự* (Study in Thousand Words), *Sử học vấn tân* (New History Inquiry), *Ấu học ngũ ngôn thi* (Preliminary Five-Word Poetry), *Minh tâm bảo giám* (Clarity of Heart), *Minh đạo gia huấn* (Great Morality Instruction), *Tam tự kinh* (Book of the Three-Word Recitations), *Tứ Thư* (Four Books), *Ngũ Kinh* (Five Classics), and Buddhist and Daoist books.

Triennial examinations in the Chinese classics provided an opportunity for students to be accredited as degree holders, scholars or eligible for positions in the government. They were real leaders in the fields of cultural studies, politics and administration, especially since the independance of the country in 939 from the Chinese. The last national examination of this kind, however, took place in the City of Nam Định in 1919. The total number of graduates with doctoral levels since the Lý Dynasty (1010 – 1225) recorded at the Temple of Literature in Hanoi amounts to over a thousand to that year. This marks the end of the classical studies in Vietnam. Unlike Japan and Korea, Vietnam, since then, no longer requires the study of Chinese in its national education system. It began to engage a modern scholarship which involves basically two kinds of writing systems: The French and the *quốc ngữ* (lit., ‘national language’). They are the official languages at the turn of the millenium. The *quốc ngữ*, which was invented by both European missionaries and Vietnamese, is a Romanized

character used in research and gradually replaced the French in schooling, cultural studies and administrative documents since 1940's.

### ***Dumoutier and the New Era***

In this paper I will examine the French works by one of the earliest and prominent scholars, Gustave Emile Dumoutier, who contributed to the opening of Vietnam's modern scholarship. It takes into effect in the artistic and academic disciplines and changes the intellectual order in the contemporary Vietnam forever.

Gustave Emile Dumoutier was born in Courpalay, France, on June 3, 1850. Graduated in Chinese and Vietnamese languages from the *Ecole de langues orientales* (School of Oriental Languages), he was later appointed by Dr. Paul Bert, whom he met at a museum in Paris, to various important positions in the colonial government in Hanoi where Bert became Résident Général (in Vietnamese, 'Thống sứ'). Dumoutier was Inspector of Education of Annam and Tonkin and Correspondent of the *Ministère de l'Instruction publique et des beaux arts pour travaux scientifiques et historiques* (1886) (Ministry of Public Education and Fine Arts for Scientific and Historic Works). Until the time he completed his major book on education (published in 1887), he had been Interpreter for the Vietnamese and Chinese languages of the Residence General of the French Republic in Hanoi, Organizer and Inspector of the Franco-Annamite Schools in Tonkin. He was honored by both the French government with the title of "*Officier de l'Académie*" (Academy Officer) and the "Protectorate" government of Annam in Huế as Officer of the "*l'Ordre impérial du Dragon de l'Annam*" (Imperial Order of Dragon of Annam). Like in the old Vietnamese society, he was a scholar-official.

Dumoutier was among the first to explore the multifaceted cultural expressions of the colony. His philosophical approach was strikingly different from many others. Rather than

terming “exotic,” “strange” or “peculiar,” Dumoutier, throughout his works, considered the colonized people’s culture as *vrai* (true) and *humaine* (human). In his book on folk songs, he wrote “*La chanson populaire est l'expression spontanée d'un sentiment intime et vrai; c'est l'âme humaine vibrant sans contrainte et donnant toute sa gamme, criant ses joies, ses douleurs, ses préférences, ses répulsions. C'est le cœur d'une nation mis à nu.*” (Folksong is a spontaneous expression of the intimate and real sentiment; it is the human soul, vibrating without restraint and giving all the spectrum, calling out joys, sufferings, preferences and repulsions. It’s the heart of a nation all exposed). (Dumoutier, 1890).

Furthermore, he attempted to understand the culture by its original value and to close the gap between the two peoples, within the allowed context of colonization. “*Ce livrée n'est pas une œuvre littéraire, c'est un document psychologique. Nous ne souhaitons pas qu'il plaise, par son originalité, nous désirons qu'il soit, comme document, utile aux annamites et aux français en faisant mieux connaître au peuple Protecteur la nation protégée*” (This book is not a literary work; it’s a psychological document. We are not expecting that it pleases, by its original value; we hope, as a document, it would be helpful to the Annamites and, also, the French to better understand to the the Protecteur people that of the “protégé” nation), he wrote.

*L'Académie tonkinoise* (Tonkinese Academy or ‘Bắc kì hàn lâm viện’), founded by Paul Bert, by a governmental decree on July 3, 1886, manifested not only a policy, but an ideal nurtured with great ambitions by academics-administrators like him and Dumoutier. It could also be viewed as resulted from the scholarly interests of the circles which had been established in France particularly like *Académie des sociétés savantes* (Academy of the Elites) and *Association française pour l'avancement des sciences* (French Association for Advancement of Sciences). In the gravity of colonialism-imperialism in the late nineteenth century did, however, a fertile domain opened for an interest of cultural learning. In the

process of conservation of monuments did their task open a window to a new world of amazing values. It is that diligent aspiration that made Dumoutier a responsible leader in taking measures for preservation of steles, inscriptions and monuments, and ethnographic researches.

It is worth noting that, from a political point of view, the first colonial period was characterized by the elements of association, inter-influence, and collaboration. The *Académie Tonkinoise* called on a council of forty local elites (*hào mục*) serving as advisors was quickly organized. (Phan, 1961: 110-12; Maître, 1904: 702) Naturally, this act wouldn't happen without purpose of impressing and recruiting them to serve the colonialists' goal. Thus, ideological elements of Dumoutier's study was grounded on this basis.

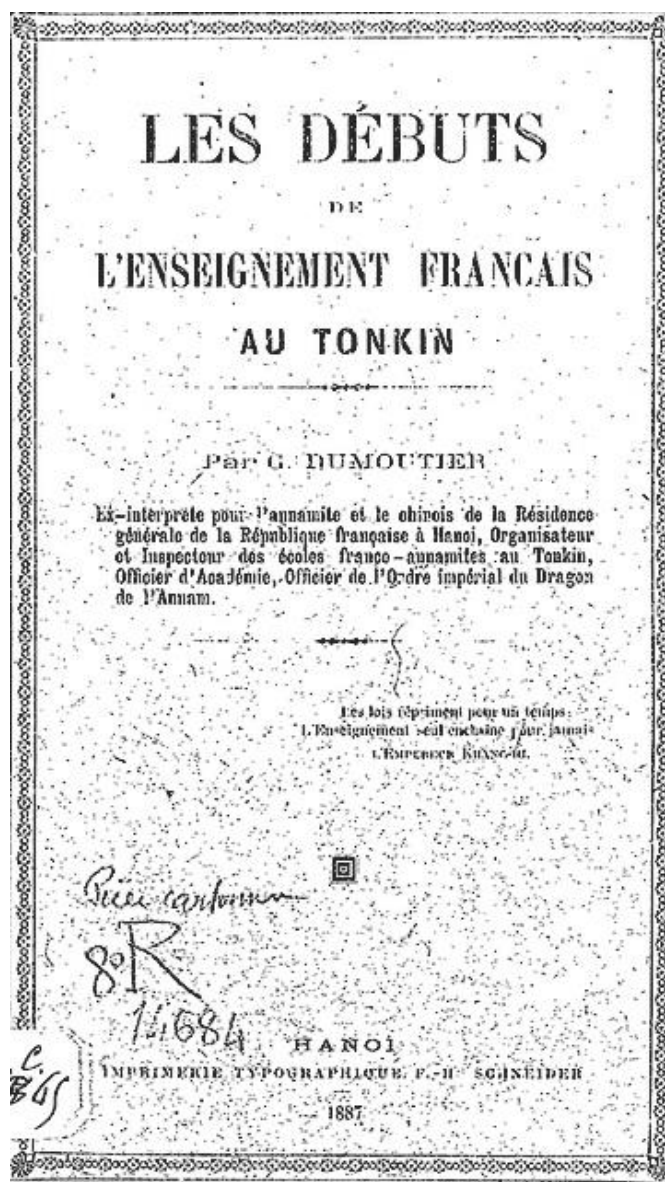
### ***The Scope of Research***

Dumoutier appeals to the readers of the turn of the millenium with a large scope of interest. As Inspector of the Public Education, his writings began with assessment and restructuring method and policy of education system. He subsequently approached other specific fields: religion, historical monuments, rituals, language, music, folk and traditional customs. With the development of modern printing technology and graphic art in Vietnam, many of his books and articles were printed in the colony before they were published in Paris for a larger sphere of readers. In a chronological order, we can follow the streamline of his methodological approach on the topics:

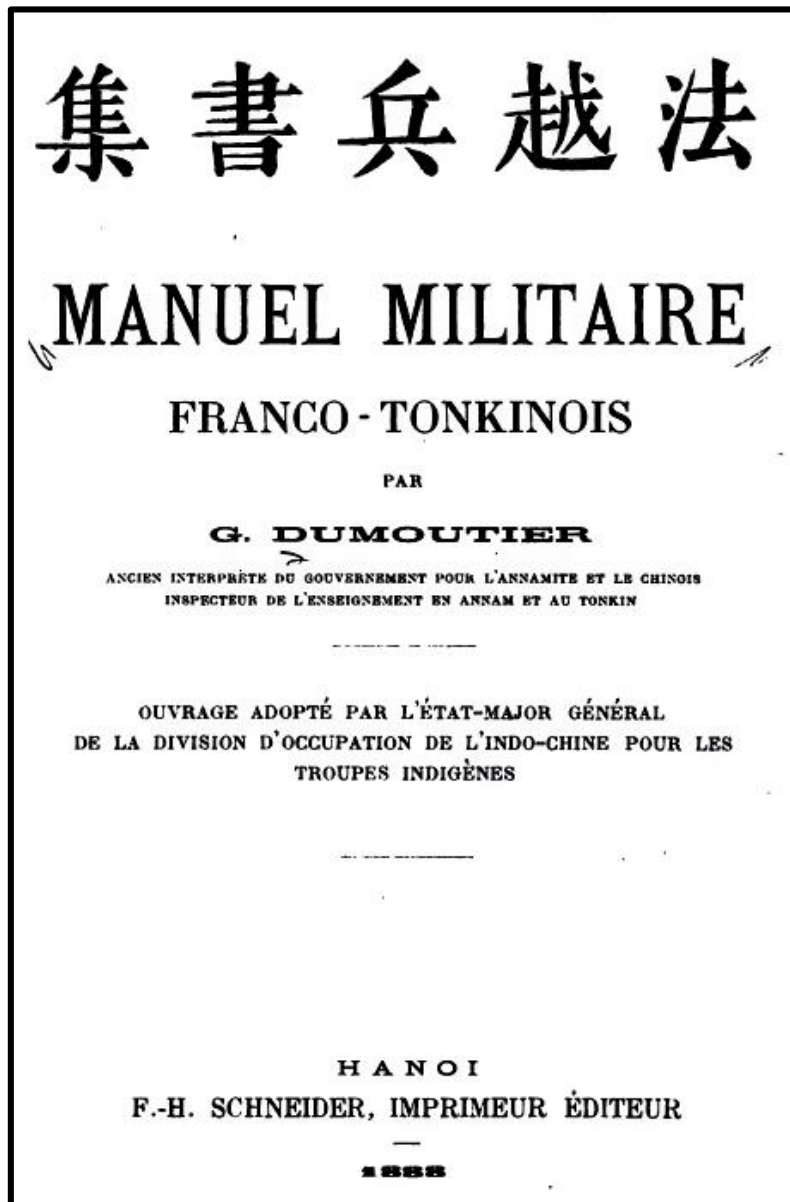
*Les débuts de renseignement français au Tonkin* [The Beginning of French Education in Tonkin] (1887) is the first statement on the new education which breaks up with the past system that was installed for nearly two thousand years. It bridges Vietnam to the world through new languages, research techniques, and conceptional approaches. Above all, this wouldn't have done without having a thinker like Bert, a graduate of the Sorbonne, who had



been known with an atheistic belief against the norm of French society. As a colonialist, Bert knew how to deal with the Vietnamese and Dumoutier qualified them as *intelligent et doux* (intelligent and subtle). Bert's advocacy was to assemble all parties around "l'école" (schooling, education). It was the most powerful instrument of the conquerer. Both Bert and Dumoutier spruced up that they were not knowing enough the Vietnamese and their country, and only served as *de guide et d'appui* (guide and assistance). (ibid., p. 2)



Cover of the book *Le début de l'enseignement français au Tonkin* by G. Dumoutier



Cover of the book *Manuel militaire Franco-Tonkinois* by G. Dumoutier

In this study, Dumoutier reported that there were only three French schools founded at the time of Bert's arrival. One year after that, there were one College for Interpreters, 9 schools for boys, 4 schools for girls, one school for paintings, and 417 free schools using Latin character. In any case, language is the most important means of communication, particularly during the colonization. It is noticeable to Dumoutier that the *quốc ngữ* or Romanized Vietnamese, in the late 19th century, became increasingly more applicable over

the French. Its strength and completeness were sensed by him when he noted that “teaching the Vietnamese to five hundred French is easier than teaching the French to millions of Vietnamese.” (ibid., p.11) Indeed, he wrote *Bai Tap Tieng An-Nam - Exercices Pratiques de Langue Annamite* [Lessons of Annamite – Exercises and Practise the Annamite Language] (1889) for this purpose. He recognized the fact of its growing diffusion and later openly admitted without hesitation: “We must study the people among whom we are living, learn their administration, their customs, their language in order to gain their trust; there is no possible pedagogy without that [...]. We should remember that the base of moral influence, mother of command, is in the knowledge, the sentiment of duty, the respect of oneself.” (ibid., p. 14) Based on this theory, Dumoutier focused on other topics.

In the first two years in Hanoi, he was also in charge of conservation of historical monuments in northern and central Vietnam (Tonkin and Annam). He wrote *Les pagodes de Hanoi: Etude d'archéologie et d'épigraphie annamites* [Temples in Hanoi: An Archeological and Epigraphic Study in Annam] (1887). “Le Nam-Giao de Hanoi,” a featured article in *Revue d'Ethnographie* (1887: 81-84), was another statement of his interest in Vietnamese historical monuments.

Not only so had he a special interest in herbal study and thus published a book entitled *Essai sur la pharmacie annamite* [Essay on the Annamite Pharmacy] (1887) which studied 300 medicinal plants with names in Vietnamese, French, Latin and Chinese. The study also indicates therapeutical quality according to Vietnamese and Chinese pharmacology.

It is fascinating to observe his early experiences in the field of education and monument conservation that sharpened his linguistic techniques in every moment. He felt a need to understand the Vietnamese in military usage. A manual, which may be seen as politically sensitive to someone, but helpful to the colonialists, would interest a community of scholars by his analysis of the terms and phonetics. *Manuel militaire Franco-Tonkinois*

[Franco-Tonkinese Military Manual] was published by the same Hanoi publishing company, F.-H. Schneider, in the following year in which Dumoutier meticulously explained all necessary phonetics and usage the reader could learn in an easy manner. “The Vietnamese language is not a language with stresses (recto-tonic), it’s a language that requires, to speak correctly, a certain delicate ear, a natural musical feeling,” acknowledged Dumoutier in his forward. (Dumoutier, 1888: III).

Only an insightful scholar of both Vietnamese and Chinese languages like him could clarify the complexity of terms in four types of language: French, *quốc ngữ*, Chinese, and also *chữ nôm*. The latter is a Sino-Vietnamese written system which combines sound and sight effects for the meanings.

Dumoutier’s writings, eventually encyclopedic output of his research, reached a deeper level. That is the study of the minds. His works show an enormous collection of observation, description and analysis ever found in the the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in Vietnam. They offer the richness from which many scholars can benefit today.

*Les chants et les traditions populaires des Annamites - Recueillis et traduits* [The Songs and the Folk Traditions of the Annamites – Collected and Translated] was published Paris by Ernest Leroux Editeur in 1890. This is viewed by today’s ethnomusicologists as a pioneer work in the history of the field. It is an extensive study in term of fieldwork experience, social and singing customs, instrumental descriptions, musical notations, and meanings of song texts. Forty-one folk songs, a piece of theater, and a number of folk tales and riddles were translated for the first time into French. Notation of instrumental music was also included. His musical ethnography holds a place in his larger cultural scheme. This study precedes that of Gaston Knosp (*Etude sur la musique annamite* – A Study of Annamite Music) which took place in Hanoi ten years later. Knosp took a different approach in his

investigation of the music and theater in Vietnam which was based on a composer's Western musicological analysis. (see Mayaud, 2010)



Annamite singers (*Les chants et les traditions populaires des Annamites - Recueillis et traduits* [The Songs and the Folk Traditions of the Annamites – Collected and Translated])



3. *Les cultes annamites* [The Annamite Cults] (1907).



Funeral procession in the street of Hanoi

(*Le rituel funéraire des Annamites: Étude d'ethnographie religieuse* [Funeral Ritual of the Annamites: An Ethnographic Study], 1904)



Chinese, Sanskrit, Quốc ngữ, and French are used in Dumourtier's research

(*Le rituel funéraire des Annamites: Étude d'ethnographie religieuse* [Funeral Ritual of the Annamites: An Ethnographic Study], 1904)

Those books reflect the common scenes of the Vietnamese society in his time. One could find in those works a new mode of ethnography and representation. At the time when photography wasn't at its full application, he extensively utilized meticulous drawings by



artists whom he knew locally available. For those who want to see how the old society look like could find his books vividly represented.

Dumoutier took the lead in several directions and clearly became one of the giants during that period of time, thanks to the growth of publication venues which came all together: *F.-H. Schneider, Revue d'Ethnographie, Musée Guimet, Bulletin de l'Ecole française d'Extrême Orient*, and others. Among them was the Bulletin de l'Ecole française d'Extrême Orient an academic discipline that set theoretical bases for intellectual order that represent the first institution of scholars with specialized research on Asia. Founded in Saigon in 1898 under the name of Mission archéologique d'Indochine, the denomination changed to Ecole française d'Extrême Orient in 1900 and moved to Hanoi from 1902. (BEFEO, Tome 1: 67-69) It gathered the “savants” (elites) in the field of area studies covering not only Indochina, but also stretching from India to Japan to become one of the most well-known institutions in the world. French and Vietnamese writers were instrumental to most research projects. Dumoutier’s article entitled “Etudes sur les Tonkinois” [Studies on the Tonkinese] was featured in the first volume of this journal. (BEFEO, Tome 1: 81-98)

Dumoutier was a prolific writer and translator. He is also well-known as an educator who protects the traditional and cultural values of the local people. He excelled in and was a guardian of the traditional scholarship of *chữ Hán* (Chinese), *chữ nôm* (Sino-Vietnamese) and promoted the *quốc ngữ* (Romanized character) while training the French. To him, an interpreter must have also been a scholar. This task of an educator took most of his time in the first two years after arriving in Hanoi with the Resident General Paul Bert to set up and inspect the new education system. In fact, he encountered several difficulties with other officials and some Catholic clergy who wanted to convert all into the colonialist system to abolish the old educational heritage. One incident happened when Bert and Dumoutier had to confront with colonialist hardliners. They both voiced out to their adversaries a moral

education in which local languages should not be abolished. The duo strongly defended their position in Vietnam and voiced it out at the International Colonial Conference in Paris. To them, suppression those languages mean “la suppression de l’enseignement de la morale” [suppression of the moral education] and risk to make the students become “étrangers dans leur propre pays” [foreigners right on their own country]. (Maître, 1906: 793)

He explicitly tried to bring the culture of Vietnam to a European readership. With scientific experimentation, Dumoutier approached each and every detail of the research targets in systematic way of writing. Apart from 63 titles listed by himself in *Catalogue des publications de G. Dumoutier* (1900), he contributed to a large number of prestigious journals: *Revue d’Ethnologie*, *L’Anthropologie*, *Revue de Deux Mondes*, *Bulletin de géographie historique et descriptive*, *Courier de Hai Phong* and others.

His research could be summarized in two categories: (1) Historical archeology and geography, and (2) Ethnology and folklore.

1. *Historical archeology and geography*. Dumoutier’s interest in archeology began as early as when he studied in France. The young Gustave-Émile wasn’t fond of a career his father, an industrial, wanted him to follow. In the twenties, he quickly joined the Mutual Education Society of Coulommiers, a local organization in the neighborhood of Courpalay, then the Archeological Society of the Seine-et-Marne in Île-de-France Region, where he became reputed with his gilt-edged publications:

(1) *Découvertes d’archéologie préhistorique: Les Briards avant l’histoire*.

Coulommiers, 1877.

(2) “Le Swastica et la Roue Solaire dans les symboles et dans les caractères chinois,” in *La Revue d’Ethnographie*, 1885: ?

(3) *Les vestiges paléolithiques de Montapeigne et de Beauthail*.

Coulommiers, 1878.

(4) *Les stations de l'homme préhistorique sur les plateaux du Grand-Morin.*

Paris, 1882.

(5) *L'âge du bronze dans les Gaules.* Paris, 1885.

(6) *Le vexin avant les Vellocases.* Pontoise, 1888.

His robustness in the field of historical archeology found a new land of promise since he arrived in Hanoi. He had then an opportunity to apply his knowlege of the Chinese and Vietnamese in his field expeditions. Scholars nowadays became appreciative of his astounding discoveries and relocations of historical sites (see attached Bibliography). Among many of his projects, he relocated the ancient spiral citadel of Cổ Loa (in 255 BC) as reported in his *Étude historique et archéologique sur Cổ-Loa, capitale de l'ancien royaume de Âu-Lạc (255-207 BC)* [Historical and Archeological Study on Cổ-Loa, Capital of the Ancient Kingdom of Âu-Lạc (255-207 BC)] and discovered, in 1888, an important Vietnamese portulan in 25 sheets of military land and sea itineraries of King Lê Thánh Tôn's army from Hanoi to the capital of the Cham Kingdom in Phan Rang. His exceptional finding of this 15th-century fascinating sea instructions, the coastal points of interest and Vietnam's Pacific Islands was awarded with a Jommard Prize by the Geographic Society, later in 1896, in his memory.

2. *Ethnology and folklore.* Two years after his arrival in Vietnam, Dumoutier turned his attention toward ethnological and folklore research which follows his projects on education and historical monuments (1886-1887). His investigation into the colossal treasure of the legends, literature, royal annals, Chinese and Sanscrit classics, and the translation of them. Not wasting time, he took up a new ground plan. He began to translate and comment on *Lĩnh Nam trích quái liệt truyện* or *Légendes historiques*

*de l'Annam et du Tonkin*, an important old book of historical legends, as early as 1987. Since that year were his wealth of works published and caught attention of international Asianists. On the other hand, he showed a keen interest in Vietnamese religions and folk cults. He studied the Buddhist scriptures in Sanscrit and Chinese and the monastic life of Buddhist monks and novices. His treatment of subjects is comprehensive encompassing such as cult, magie, ceremonies, festivals, rites, temples, shrines, religious objects, divinity, geomancy, etc. He was a vibrant contributor to *Bulletin de l'École française d'Extrême Orient*, a major research journal in the world at that time, with a monograph on Vietnam's habitation, sculpture, lacquer, and inlay of mother of pearl. Leading the colonial delegation from Vietnam to the Exhibition Universelle (World Fair) in Paris in 1889, he brought a group of monks and musicians to perform ritual ceremonies for the first time.

### **Conclusion**

To merit a full understanding of the foundation of modern Vietnamese studies, one must seek to comprehend the process of changes in the Vietnamese society which is both complex and complicated. Many factors of change and adaptation, indeed, affected not only in Vietnam, but in many countries, specially in Southeast Asia, the Americas, and Africa along with the implementation of colonialism. Vietnam may be best exemplified as a case in which tragical confrontation and tolerance came before adoption and adaptation of a new culture. This could not be realized without the spirit of innovation initiated by a movement of Westernization when the new education and learning were institutionalized. Thus, French is viewed as a transitional language that steps into the threshold of a new era.

Gustave Dumoutier's contribution to the scholarship in Vietnam proves to be significant and influential that no one among the colleagues in his time could be equal. His ground-breaking critical practice using the French language started when that in Chinese faded out. Incontestably, he was a leading scholar who discovered and reconstructed traditional values in the winds of modernity. His research was a landmark, if not the first, which definitely inspired the succeeding generations of scholars like Louis Finot, Henri Parmentier, Paul Pelliot, Henri Maspéro, Dr. Gaide, Sylvain Lévy, Claude Maître, and others to expand their scope of interest on, to name a few, the Cham monuments in Annam (Central Vietnam), the Buddhist studies (India, China, Japan and Vietnam), the Indian theater (India), the ethnic groups (Laos), Cambodian grammar and Angkor Wat (Cambodia), the Sipsong Pana (Southern China), the Sinology (Japan), etc.. (BEFEO 1901: No. 1). This large diaspora was centered in Vietnam through the colonial foundation of the *École Française d'Extrême Orient*.

Again, the movement of innovation was staggering due to the intensification of both the Vietnamese struggle for independence and the increasing French assimilation by the colonialist-hardliners against whom the cultural advocates, Dumoutier and Bert, were combatting. Some view this fact as an internal revolution. With an open mind, the duo came to the colony with a cultural mission.

Refusing the recommendations by his friends and colleagues to return to his home land, Dumoutier remained in his adoptive land. After eighteen years of residing in Vietnam, he passed away in his peaceful coastal residence in Đồ Sơn, Tonkin, on August 2, 1904. In his solitude, he brought with him a great treasure of Vietnamese culture he loved and admired. In an obituary, which was a short study on his life to date, in *Le Bulletin de l'École Française d'Extrême Orient* 1904 by Claude Émile Maître, Gustave Émile Dumoutier was honored by a sincere comment: "Ce savant laborieux, ce fonctionnaire loyal, et ce parfait honnête homme,

un autre fin” [this hard-working elite, this loyal official, and this perfect honest man, another ending]. (Maître, 1904: 790-903)

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## **Hedging in Discussion Sections: A Comparative Study of ELT Research**

### **Articles Published in International and Thai Journals**

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### **Abstract**

Hedging is one of the strategies authors use to express their stance towards the issues being discussed. The purpose of this study is to explore the use of hedges in the discussion sections of English language teaching (ELT) research articles (RAs), focusing on the differences and similarities in frequency of hedge markers and the styles of hedging employed by authors whose RAs were accepted for publication in leading international journals and Thai institutional journals. The discussion sections of 10 ELT RAs from both types of journal were collected by pairing the research focuses, making a total of 20 RAs with 10 research aims. The results showed that the proportion of hedged clauses per total clauses was higher in the Thai-published RAs. Modal auxiliaries were the most frequently used markers in the RAs from both sources. A salient hedging style detected in the data from the Thai journals was the use of double-hedging, while this practice was rare in the internationally-published data set. The authors of the internationally-published RAs tended to employ active clause hedging with first person pronouns (*I, we*), whereas the authors of the Thai-published RAs used impersonal structures when discussing results. The findings are discussed in terms of the degree of the

authors' commitment to and detachment from the statements made as well as the reliability and strength of claims.

*Keywords:* Hedging; Research Articles; Discussion Sections

### **Introduction**

Hedging is one of the strategies authors use to express their stance towards the issues being discussed. A large number of research studies have investigated the use of hedges both in written and spoken discourse in which hedges were viewed as tools to lessen the authors' degree of confidence in committing to statements (Crompton, 1997), to present personal opinions rather than facts (Hyland, 2005) or to avoid any possible conflicts that may originate from the expression of absolute truth (Vazquez & Giner, 2008). Many previous studies investigated hedges in research articles (RAs) examining how they are used throughout the article; however, the present study focuses on the discussion sections only. The reason behind this decision is that some recent studies (e.g., Yang, 2013; Varttala, 1999; Vassileva, 2001) reported that hedges were most frequently found in the discussion sections where the authors give explanations for and make claims about the findings. RAs from the field of English language teaching (ELT) were chosen as the data of this study based on the findings of some studies comparing the use of hedging across disciplines which indicated that hedging was found more frequently in soft-science RAs (e.g., ELT) than in hard-science ones (e.g., mechanical engineering). In combining the two claims mentioned above, discussion sections in ELT research articles were deemed a rich data set of hedge devices to be studied.

### ***Research on Hedging***

In academic writing, many researchers have been interested in exploring the frequency of hedging devices employed in cross-disciplinary RAs (e.g., Hyland, 2005; Varttala, 1999;

Vazquez & Giner, 2008; Vold, 2006). It was found that, in comparing hard-science RAs (e.g., mechanical engineering) to soft-science ones (e.g., ELT), more lexical hedges were detected in the latter than in the former. The possible explanations for this phenomenon were that researchers of hard sciences, because of the nature of the experimental procedure itself, base their studies on specific methods of analysis and solid measurements; and therefore, they could demonstrate their claims concerning the findings with a stronger commitment. As the results of research in the soft sciences fields can be interpreted and explained using various tentative deductions, hedges are more frequently used to leave room for negotiations.

In addition to the effects of the nature of different disciplines on the use of hedging, other possible factors also need to be considered. Recently, there have been some studies focusing on comparing hedges used by authors from different cultures with an aim to find out whether cultural background affects the authors' manner of implementing hedging devices. The results of a cross-cultural and cross-linguistic study on the use of hedging praise in English and Japanese book reviews showed that more hedged praise was found in Japanese reviews both in the forms of epistemic lexis and the use of passive sentences (Itakura, 2013). These findings were explained from a socio-cultural perspective, namely, that "Japanese culture tends to emphasize negative politeness and encourages distant social relationships and modesty to a higher degree than in English" (p. 145). With book reviews essentially being evaluations of other people's work, hedging enables the reviewers to express politeness towards the book authors, which corresponds to Brown and Levinson's theory of negative face work, where hedging is one of the strategies employed (Varttala, 1999).

Interestingly, the results came out quite differently when it comes to the analysis of hedging in RAs. A higher frequency of hedges was found in the articles published in English-medium journals. In a comparative study of hedges and boosters in the abstracts of applied linguistic RAs published in English and Chinese journals, more hedges and fewer boosters

were reported to be used in English-medium journals (Hu & Cao, 2013). Similar findings emerged in research into the use of hedges in English and Chinese scientific articles in terms of linguistic and cultural variations. The results showed that English-authored RAs published in English-medium journals contained more lexical hedges than those authored by Chinese researchers published in English- and Chinese-medium journals (Yang, 2013). Another study suggested that English and Norwegian authors used more hedges in writing their research articles when compared to French authors (Vold, 2006). The findings in these studies were discussed in terms of rhetorical conventions, second language (L2) writers' lack of linguistic knowledge of appropriate hedging, and the cultural background of the authors that shape their academic reporting style. For example, in the study where more hedges were detected in Chinese-medium than the English-medium RAs, the researchers pointed out that culturally Chinese authors are expected to be authoritative when asserting knowledge or reasoning, whereas Anglo-American cultures value argumentation and debates as the way to construct knowledge, and thus are more cautious when making claims since they expect counterarguments. When Chinese authors reported their claims in English, they also used fewer hedges when compared with the native speaking authors.

Hedges were found most frequently in the discussion section, which is the section where arguments are constructed and claims made. In a study of the moves in discussion sections of cross-disciplinary RAs, the results showed that, of all the conventional moves, claims, or generalizations of the findings, were found in most RAs in the corpus (Peacock, 2002). Therefore, it is likely that the frequency of hedges employed in this section could be related to how strongly the authors commit to their claims concerning the findings. In research on argumentative linguistic features used in the discussion sections of scientific laboratory reports and physics RAs, there were two different styles in explaining the results (Parkinson, 2011). The purpose of the laboratory report is to “demonstrate knowledge and ability in

performing process skills, and ability to relate their finding theory” (p. 165), thus the writers tended to use hedging sparingly. On the other hand, the aim of the physics RAs is to present new findings; therefore, the writers used more hedges to “gain acceptance of a new knowledge claim from the research community” (p. 165). Nevertheless, research into discussion sections of RAs has mostly focused on rhetorical moves and styles of persuasion. Hedging in this section has rarely been a focus of research and more work is needed in this area.

### ***Internationally-published vs. Thai-published ELT Research Articles***

Recently, Thai academics have been required to conduct quality research in their field of expertise, including ELT, and to publish their research in international journals as a part of the institutional assessment implemented by the Ministry of Education. Jaroongkhongdach et al. (2012) mentioned in their analysis of ELT research that RAs written by Thai academics had comparatively poor quality, which was the reason why few Thai authors succeeded in having their RAs published in international journals. One factor attributed to this was the low level of strength of discussion. In other words, Thai authors did not produce strongly convincing supports for their claims, which made their arguments less persuasive. The researchers used a content analysis approach to focus on quality issues, and did not investigate the linguistic features associated with aspects of quality. Hedges are a set of linguistic features that authors can use to make arguments persuasive, and thus research into hedging could shed light on how linguistic features are related to quality issues in RAs. Comparing the use of hedging in ELT RAs published in Thai journals with hedging in internationally published ELT RAs should allow us to see differences in the frequencies and styles of hedging which may be related to the quality of the RAs. This study therefore attempts to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the differences and/or the similarities in the frequency of hedging in the discussion sections of the RAs accepted for publication in international and Thai journals?
2. What are the styles of hedging applied most frequently in the discussion sections of both sources?

## **Methodology**

### ***Data***

The discussion sections were gathered from 10 ELT research articles published in international journals and the other 10 published in Thai journals. The “international” journals were identified based on the principle that they were produced by the leading publishers known and accepted globally (e.g., Elsevier). Thai journals, on the other hand, included those published locally by Thai institutions or universities. All RAs were published in English during the years 2007-2014. The time span was quite long to ensure that the articles formed pairs of RAs (one international, one Thai) with the similar focuses. The criteria for selecting the articles were that their focuses of study were relevant to ELT and they had clear discussion sections. In order to limit the possible variables which may affect the differences in hedges used in the discussion sections, each pair of RAs was selected on the basis of equivalent focuses; that is, 10 RAs picked from the international journals contain the similar research aims as those 10 from Thai journals. Following are the research focuses of the 10 pairs of selected RAs. The 20 articles used are listed in the Appendix.

- 1) Cooperative writing
- 2) Directives constructions in various languages
- 3) L2 students’ acquisition of relative clauses
- 4) L2 students’ attitudes towards native speaking teachers



- 5) First language (L1) use in English classrooms
- 6) Students' use of learning strategies
- 7) Speaking anxiety in class
- 8) Self-access learning centers and English proficiency improvement
- 9) Students' self-regulated learning
- 10) Teachers' beliefs in learner autonomy

### ***Method of Analysis***

Most taxonomies of hedging devices focus on epistemic modal auxiliaries (e.g., may, might), verbs (e.g., seem, suggest), adverbs (e.g., possibly, perhaps) and adjectives (e.g., possible, likely). While most of the previous research has investigated and reported the frequency lexical items only, this study comparatively investigated the presence of hedges both in the form of lexical items and “hedged clauses”. By identifying lexical items, the types of markers employed the most in each type of RA can be seen. However, more than one hedging-oriented lexical item often occurs in the same clause; for instance, “It *seems possible* that the effects of experience on preferences *may* depend on whether the experience was positive or negative.” As well as counting the frequency of lexical hedge markers, the frequency of “hedged clauses” needs to be counted to avoid over-counting the number of propositions that the authors wish to hedge. Therefore, the above clause will be counted as only one hedged clause. By identifying these hedged clauses, the authors could see the level of strength of the authors' commitment to the propositions from the lexical frequency and style of hedging that exist in each clause.

This study took a corpus approach starting with a list of lexical items frequently associated with hedging. This list was expanded through repeated reading of the data to identify potential hedging markers not included in the original list. All instances of these

items were collected and checked for whether they were used for hedging by examining concordance lines. In the clauses where epistemic modal auxiliaries and verbs were found, the distinction between the epistemic and root meaning were checked. For example:

- a) In addition, the results of this study *appear* parallel to the notions of many scholars.  
(Thai journal)
- b) This technique even *appears* in a course material for Brands Summer Camp. (Thai journal)

In clause a), “appear” functions as an epistemic marker since it expresses tentativeness of the finding explanation. Crompton (1997) proposed a test for hedged proposition by replacing “appear” with “are”, which becomes “In addition, the results of this study *are* parallel to the notions of many scholars...” The statement becomes stronger in terms of the author’s commitment. Therefore, clause a) is hedged. In the context of clause b), “appear” provides root meaning as a lexical synonym of “to exist”, so clause b) is non-hedged. The reliability of the identification of the hedging markers was checked with an inter-rater until agreement at the 95% level was reached. From the analysis, the lexical items shown in Table 1 were found in the data functioning as hedge markers.

**Table 1:** List of hedge markers found in the data

Types	Markers
Modal auxiliaries	may, might, could, would
Epistemic verbs	seem, appear, tend to, suggest, believe, think
Epistemic adverbs and adjectives	possibly, perhaps, probably, somehow, sometimes, presumably, roughly, likely, possible

Clauses	it is not clear to us (that) , we can be only sure (that)
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## Results

### *Frequency of Hedges*

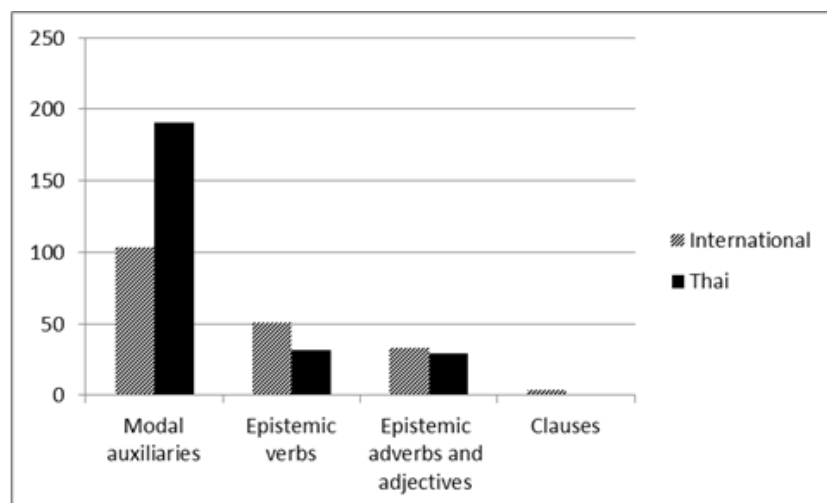
Hedged clauses as a proportion of all clauses were more common in the discussion sections of the RAs in Thai journals than those in the international ones as demonstrated in Table 2. Although the discussion sections from international journals contained more words, resulting in a higher clause count, the total number of hedged clauses was roughly the same as in Thai journals.

**Table 2:** Summary of hedged clauses in the discussion sections

	No. of words	No. of clauses	No. of hedged clauses
International journals	22,180	1,171	170 (14.52%)
Thai journals	14,973	868	166 (19.12%)

As shown in Figure 1, the most frequently used markers to hedge statements in the discussion sections are modal auxiliaries, especially in the RAs published in Thai journals, whereas clause markers were found only in the international RAs.

**Figure 1:** Frequency of lexical hedge markers



### *Styles of Hedging*

In addition to investigating the frequency of hedges, another focus of this study is to investigate the styles of hedging in the two sources of data. It was found that the authors of RAs in Thai journals used more double hedging style; that is, they employed more than one hedging word in the same clause, resulting in a high number of epistemic auxiliaries in the RAs in Thai journals. This style of hedging was rarely found in the data from the international journals. The following are clauses containing double hedging from different Thai journals:

- 1) Another *possible* factor *possibly* reinforcing the results lies in the frequency of SX.
- 2) This technique *could perhaps* be ascribed to tutorial school instruction.
- 3) Instead, effective teaching *could possibly* depend on other factors.
- 4) Thus, it *may be possible* that students did not feel much anxiety.
- 5) It *may be possible* that speech rehearsal was important in building students' confidence in public speaking and decreasing their anxiety level.
- 6) This *may suggest* that Thai students *tend not to* set goals or reflect on their learning.

Furthermore, unlike the authors in the international journals, the authors in the Thai journals rarely represented themselves by using the first person pronouns I, we, me or us and tended to write the hedged statements as passive, impersonal forms. For example: *It may be concluded that..., it can be roughly answered that..., this could be implied that...*

When examining the data from the international journals, one style of writing which was different from what we found in the Thai journals was that the authors used active clause hedging quite often; whereas in the Thai data, this type of marker was rarely used. Below are examples of clause hedging with personal attribution found in the data from the different international journals.

- 1) *We think that* the different methods used are responsible for it.
- 2) Therefore, *we think that* it is more appropriate to consider it a preference.
- 3) *It is not clear to us* how this doubt can be dissipated in a simple way.
- 4) *We think that* our approach is compatible with theirs.
- 5) *We think that* the underlying reason must be the same.
- 6) *We believe that* this result is valuable and needs to be elaborated on.
- 7) *We believe that* these advanced college students have developed important study skills.
- 8) With the mean scores, *we can be only sure that* people with high- numbered responses are more in agreement with the questionnaire items than those with low-numbered responses.
- 9) *I believe we should* be cautious in concluding that the teachers employing the grammar-translation method do not have any of the characteristics of language teacher autonomy.

## **Discussion and Conclusion**

By examining the frequencies of lexical markers and styles of hedging applied by the authors of both sources, the differences in the hedging statements of the authors can be seen. Modal auxiliaries were used the most, especially by authors of Thai journals, perhaps because of the fact that these items are the default unmarked form of hedging, so they are likely to be more common in non-native speaker writing. That the authors in Thai journals used double hedging in the same clause may reflect their adoption of a more tentative stance. Double-hedging is used to ensure that hedges in statements are clear, which may reflect authors' preference for applying politeness strategies in reporting results and making claims. Impersonalization of hedged statements was also found more in the RAs published in Thai journals, perhaps because Thai research culture is conservative in its preferred style of writing and reporting research. Impersonal hedging, in which authors avoid self-reference, is a formulaic style that Thai authors may have been taught to use when writing academically. The authors of the RAs in Thai journals may be following these traditional forms; while the authors of the international RAs seem more open to using non-traditional forms such as engaging themselves explicitly with their statements by using first person pronouns.

The results of this research showed that the authors of the RAs from both sources of publication used substantial amounts but different styles of hedging in explaining their results and making claims in the discussion sections. Hedging can make claims more persuasive in that the claim itself is weaker and the use of hedging shows the authors' willingness to welcome counterarguments and alternative explanations; however, excessive unnecessary hedging can create readability problems and perhaps suggest a lack of conviction from the author. To enable Thai researchers to produce internationally-accepted RAs, a key issue is how to construct powerful, persuasive arguments. Learning how to effectively hedge statements is a good start.

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## **Grumpy Men vs. Fussy Women: Differences in Online Complaints**

### **By Gender**

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### **Introduction**

Tourism is one of Southeast Asia's essential industries. With the increasing growth of global tourism, travelling abroad for a holiday is almost the norm and is no longer limited to the rich and famous. Budget airlines have mushroomed, and the majority of tourists opt to fly that way between countries to experience an adventure. Many budget airlines have expanded their routes and services to cope with the competition. However, while some of them may have started their operations smoothly, only to ultimately shut down, to date a few have managed to stay popular. In the case of Thailand, AirAsia and Nok Air are the only two that have remained in neck-and-neck competition, with AirAsia operating to many more destinations than Nok Air. Furthermore, AirAsia could be considered the most popular budget airline in Southeast Asia, with its destinations reaching as far as London, Paris and other distant locales.

Wherever there are services, there are complaints. Complaints are crucial as they are a type of direct feedback from customers to a particular organization. Complaints are a channel for customers to submit their comments and, at the same time, allow the organization to acknowledge what its customers are feeling and thinking. Complaints are expressed in different ways and by different groups of people. Thus, the characteristics of complaints can vary, depending on variables, particularly gender. Complaints submitted by regular mail or

phone are constructed using long word patterns, highlighted in previous studies of genre analysis (Trosborg & Shaw, 1998). Complaints using the platform of online communication, on the other hand, are unrestricted in nature, and thus are worthy of investigation using different parameters. The present study pays particular attention to the characteristics of complaints made through the method of computer-mediated communication (CMC). By focusing on the differences in the nature of the complaints made by gender, the issue of gender was also considered a variable of interest in this project, based on the assumption from previous studies that men and women employ different linguistic strategies (Tannen, 1995, for example).

Complaints made by customers and non-customers on AirAsia's Facebook page were used as the data for this research. This strategy was employed because 1) AirAsia is considered the largest budget airline operator in the region with customers from a range of ASEAN countries; 2) the language used for communication is mainly English; and 3) AirAsia, like a few other airlines in the region, provides this platform of communication for its customers without blocking negative comments. In addition, Facebook is one of the channels that shows comments from users in real time, and can be seen as a forum where users are able to comment freely. From the perspective of discourse analysis, this type of data source may accurately reveal the characteristics of online behaviour reflected in the form of language.

### **Literature Review**

In sociolinguistics, the reasons men and women use language differently may include their responsibilities, background, and social status. Language use constructs gender difference as a social category connected closely with masculinity and femininity (Ehrlich, 1997b). Women are taught to use gentler language so they are seen to be not as tough as men. Boys are

thought to be more concerned with status and self-possession, which makes their conversation style competitive, while girls are more prepared for involvement and understanding, which results in a cooperative conversation style (Coulmas, 2005). Women tend to use language which is close to the standard form rather than the vernacular or slang, making them sound less informal but still inferior (Fasold, 1990). Previous studies also found that men use a direct and forceful style of interaction, while women are more indirect and use a more intimate style (Tannen, 1995). However, women are found to use graphic patterns such as emoticons to express their emotions in online conversations more often than men do (Witmer & Katzman, 1997). This could be attributed to men's tendency to hide their feelings, particularly their sadness (Ruble & Martin, 1998). Hence, differences in women and men's communication styles and strategies can be noted.

Online communication, especially today's social media, is an effective way for organizations to build good relationships between themselves and their customers. It can support interaction between the customers and the organization. Customers can benefit from online information, news feeds, promotions, etc., and at the same time, the organizations themselves can receive feedback, as well as complaints, from their customers to improve their operations, products and services. Facebook and Twitter are two online channels which can be seen to have changed how people communicate. When people talk about a company's products and services, in either negative or positive ways, a strong presence is created. Moreover, since online language can be both written and spoken, it can be perceived as flexible and dynamic. One explanation is that a digital presence allows participants to have more freedom in communication (Rodino, 1997). The Internet language is sometimes referred to as *Netspeak*, or the language of the Internet, with its characteristics borrowed from traditional linguistic forms mixed in with adapted features, including slang and non-standard forms, all shaped by the creativity of the user communities (Crystal, 2001). Thus, CMC plays

important roles in communication and language style; people not only express their ideas and feelings but also present their identities via online communication (Huffaker & Calvert, 2005). Moreover, in CMC, there is almost no gender restriction to voicing online opinions. It allows women and men to participate equally and anonymously which makes the gender of online interlocutors invisible (Graddol & Swann, 1989).

Various studies have found that gender was an important variable affecting online communication style; some indicate that men were more assertive in CMC, even under a condition of anonymity (Koch et al., 2005). Other studies have found that women are more likely than men to thank, appreciate and apologize, and to be upset by violations of politeness (Herring, 2000). Traditionally, gender roles organize men as active, where self-expansion and individuality are the main principles, whereas women are defined as emotional, organized, expressive and focused on the needs of others (Bakan, 1966).

Complaints are hard to define in formal terms (Edwards, 2005). In fact, any type of comment with even a single slightly negative word could be treated as a complaint (Heinemann & Traverso, 2009). Many studies have analyzed complaints by using a taxonomy originally developed by Olshtain and Weinbach (1987). This categorizes complaints into five strategies; 1) below the level of reproach; 2) expressions of annoyance or disapproval; 3) explicit complaints; 4) accusations; and 5) warnings, immediate threats (Vásquez, 2011). Some researchers have focused on variables such as gender (Geluykens & Kraft, 2003, 2007), social status (Boxer, 1993a,b), and cultural-ethnic differences (Cohen & Olshtain, 1993). The previous studies presumed that complaints are regularly addressed to individuals responsible for some offense or mistake, and also found that complaints seemed to co-occur with speech acts such as warnings or threats (Vásquez, 2011).

Genre is a communicative event in which the participants in the interaction usually understand its communicative intentions (Swales, 1986). Genre studies tend to offer only

linguistic explanation rather than other perspectives; the important point seeming to be to focus on the way the participants use language (Nkemleke, 2004). Most of the studies from this approach tend to emphasize long patterns of text. However, more recent studies seem to take an interest in shorter texts. Not many studies have focused on complaints in CMC in particular, with the genre approach. Thus, the present study aims to investigate how complaints are constructed in the CMC sphere, with a focus on the issue of gender.

### **Methodology**

The data for this study consists of 30 complaints (15 from males and 15 from females) collected from [www.facebook.com/AirAsia](http://www.facebook.com/AirAsia) in November 2012. Each item from the posting creator allows customers and non-customers to comment on a particular topic. The particular period of data collection was selected due to the approaching New Year festival with its promotions to attract more customers' attention. All complaints from this selected period (classified from a search for any comments with shared negative experiences and expressions) with 30-60 words were downloaded and saved. Genre studies require texts of an appropriate length for data analysis, and in this case 30-60 words was determined to be a sufficient length. The data was analyzed based on a data-driven method so that 30-60 words would highlight patterns to be used in the analysis. The collected data included complaints from people regardless of age, nationality and country. The gender classification in this study was based on the profile presentation on the individuals' Facebook pages. To analyze the data, each complaint was first screened for objectives and strategies to achieve the communication purpose and, secondly, coded for moves and steps.

The present study focuses on the gender differences in complaints by using a genre-based framework (Trosborg, 1994) to investigate their characteristics. In the service industry, complaints can be important customer messages to the service providers. As well, social

media sites such as Facebook offer a forum for people to communicate, and as mentioned previously, AirAsia is one of the most popular budget airlines in Southeast Asia that allows its customers to express their comments freely, and be responded to.

The present study is guided by the following research question: How do the characteristics of the complaints made by men and women differ? Complaints would provide various patterns to express different characteristics. By focusing on moves and steps, data analysis reveals that complaints may be constructed in patterns. For example, a complaint may consist of a statement of praise together with a contrasting utterance, followed by another statement (Sacks, 1992). The data analysis framework of the study was inspired by the complaint strategies in the study of Trosborg (1994) which proposes four moves: 1) no explicit reproach; 2) expression of annoyance and disapproval; 3) accusation; and 4) blame. However, later analysis reveals more moves found to be relevant in understanding this particular set of data with greater insight. The present study's data is categorized in Table 1. Regarding the categorization, **"IN"** stands for **"Informing,"** **"MA"** is **"Making Inquiry,"** **"EX"** is **"Expressing"** and **"CO"** is **"Complaining."**



**Table 1:** Moves and steps of online complaints made by males (M) and females (F)

Gender	Extracts	Moves	Steps
M	<u>I have the problem on the booking HCQ72K in Thailand(IN) on the problem the time departure it not correct on I choose, so that the system error(IN) and no respond from your staff please contact me in urgent on 0845553867.(MA)</u>	1. informing  2. making inquiry	1. giving information 2. stating problem  1. asking for a response
M	<u>What happen to inflight meal?(MA) we have booked it but it wasn't served until the plane descend.(MA) No notice at all which force us to call flight attendant.(MA) Dissappointingly,(EX) all theysid there are not informed.(IN) Where the management out of this issue.(EX) They left us starving especially when we have plan to have breakfast inflight.(IN)</u>	1. making inquiry  2. expressing  3. informing  4. expressing  5. informing	1. posing a rhetorical question 2. giving information 3. stating problem  1. showing frustration  1. stating problem  1. showing resentment  1. stating experience
F	<u>Didnt find any 'free' tickets this time around.(IN) Tmits funny(IN) that the cheapest tickets for next year</u>	1. informing	1. stating experience 2. giving opinion 3. giving information

	<u>are for Jan-March travel instead of May-Sept which is the 'free' period.</u> (IN) I checked at 1am on the day the promo began but found nothing 'free'. <u>Wonder where have all the tickets gone to...</u> (MA)	2. making inquiry	1. posing a sarcastic question
F	<u>Free Seat my FOOT</u> (co)..AA is not free anymore. <u>Big time promo but cheat us.</u> (co) <u>Day 1 of promo but still expensive.</u> (co) <u>AIR ASIA was is actually ur meaning FREE SEATS.</u> (MA) <u>Use to be able to fly to Clark for less than RM100</u> (IN) but now no more. Got RM0.10 to Medan.. <u>now where is it???</u> (MA)	1. complaining  2. making inquiry  3. informing  4. making inquiry	1. insulting 2. accusing 3. stating problem  1. posing a sarcastic question  1. comparing with other airlines  1. posing a rhetorical question

### *Data Analysis*

The findings can be explained in reference to Tables 2-4. Regarding the analysis, “**M**” stands for “**Move**,” “**S**” is “**Step**,” “**Ma**” is “**Male**” and “**Fe**” is “**Female**”.

**Table 2:** Frequent moves in common, by gender

Moves	Male	Female
<b>Expressing feelings (M4)</b>	<b>Step 2</b> - Showing resentment	<b>Step 1</b> - Showing frustration
<b>Threatening (M5)</b>	<b>Step 1</b> - Expostulating  <b>Step 3</b> - Revoking trust	<b>Step 1</b> - Expostulating

### *Frequent Moves In Common*

Complaints were constructed differently according to gender. The findings reveal that several distinct moves and steps occurred. The frequent moves from both genders were

**Move 4** (Expressing feelings) and **Move 5** (Threatening). To achieve these moves, men and women used different steps to conduct the moves. In **Move 4** (Expressing feelings), women often achieved the move by using **Step 1** (Showing frustration) while men would use **Step 2** (Showing resentment) instead.

Examples:

- *Felt being cheated. (M4-S1-Fe23)*

- *The One hand carry baggage policy is truly disappointing. (M4-S2-Ma28)*

Focusing on **Move 5** (Threatening), both women and men used threats, which can be categorized as **Step 1** (Expostulating) to achieve their complaints equally. However, men also achieve the move by using **Step 3** (Revoking trust) more than women.

Examples:

- *And I rather buy MAS ticket nowadays due to not much diff and sometimes its total price is cheaper than AA! (M5-S1-Ma4)*

- *Must report PPIM la like this... (M5-S1-Fe19)*

- *Goodbye AirAsia, I will fly MAS instead! (M5-S3-Ma26)*

To express their complaints, males and females used different strategies to complete them. Some moves and steps are used distinctively by women as described in Table 3.

**Table 3:** Women's moves

Moves	Female
<b>Making Inquiry (M2)</b>	<b>Step 3</b> - Posing a rhetorical question <b>Step 4</b> - Asking for improvement
<b>Complaining (M6)</b>	<b>Step 1</b> - Insulting <b>Step 2</b> - Accusing <b>Step 3</b> - Stating problem / difficulties

### ***Women's Moves***

Focusing on **Move 2** (Making Inquiry) and **Move 6** (Complaining), the women clearly engage these two moves more than men do. To complete **Move 2** (Making Inquiry), the women used **Step 3** (Posing a rhetorical question) and **Step 4** (Asking for improvement) frequently, whereas the men rarely responded in this way. The women completed **Move 6** (Complaining) through various and distinctive steps: **Step 1** (Insulting), **Step 2** (Accusing), and **Step 3** (Stating problem and difficulties)

Examples:

- *Has anyone been able to access the 5 hour birthday sale that starts today?? (M2-S3-Fe9)*
- *AirAsia, please resolve the issue with your payment system soon. (M2-S4-Fe14)*
- *Free Seat my FOOT.. AA is not free anymore. (M6-S1-Fe6)*
- *I will NEVER believe your promos again, they are simply NOT TRUE !!!! (M6-S2-Fe11)*
- *It is very annoy changing all the time and even web check in take too much time to key in all information again and again (M6-S3-Fe8)*

**Table 4:** Men's moves

Moves	Male
<b>Informing (M1)</b>	<b>Step 1</b> - Giving information <b>Step 2</b> - Stating problem <b>Step 7</b> - Giving opinion <b>Step 8</b> - Giving a compliment
<b>Blaming (M3)</b>	<b>Step 2</b> - Stating problem

### ***Men's Moves***

While the women made their complaints by engaging **Move 2** (Making Inquiry) and **Move 6** (Complaining), the men tended to make their complaints differently. According to the data, the notable moves from the men are **Move 1** (Informing) and **Move 3** (Blaming). The men achieved **Move 1** (Informing) by using various strategies: **Step 1** (Giving information), **Step 2** (Stating problem), **Step 7** (Giving opinion) and **Step 8** (Giving a compliment); while the women arrived at this move frequently by **Step 4** (Stating experience) and **Step 6** (Describing the problem). Moreover, in using **Move 3** (Blaming) for making complaints, men employed **Step 2** (Stating problem) the most.

Examples:

- *Hello AirAsia , KUL-HND, March2013. I have checked the price and there is no promo price. (M1-S1-Ma25)*

- *On the problem the time departure it not correct on I choose, so that the system error and no respond from your staff. (M1-S2-Ma1)*

- *If you are checking in multiple passengers, this is a big issue, the old site was fine. (M1-S7-Ma15)*

- *COOL ... but cannot see ' VIEW ' tab on active list under ' MANAGE MY BOOKING '.*

*(M1-S8-Ma12)*

*- Imagine I had to enter again all the details including dob for 28 pax during web check in last week. (M1-S4-Fe22)*

*- Manage Booking 500 - Internal Server Error. and your premium line CANNOT GET THROUGH. (M1-S6-Fe21)*

The analysis results, focusing on *Frequent Mutual Moves*, indicated that both genders engaged **Move 4** (Expressing feelings) differently. The women used the step of showing more frustration, whereas the men expressed resentment to show their feelings. From this point, the women tended to show their emotions intensely, while the men rarely did, but instead showed their disappointment. Actually, the women went into specific, more lengthy details while commenting on any issues they had encountered, and this with emotion; while the men got to the point concisely. Both the women and the men used similar steps to achieve **Move 5** (Threatening). Although, again, both expressed threats by expostulating to deliver their complaints, the men took a more distinctive step by revoking trust, more often than the women did. Men directly stated their intention to no longer fly with AirAsia when they felt disappointed, while the women would show emotions without declaring the end of their business with AirAsia.

Furthermore, some of the moves commonly made by the women were rarely found in the men's complaints. The women frequently completed **Move 2** (Making Inquiry) by posing a rhetorical question and asking for improvement, while the men would instead state what they wanted to find out. Based on the research data, the men rarely posed a rhetorical question. Similarly, there were moves unique to the women. To achieve **Move 6** (Complaining), the women employed the following strategies: insults, accusations, and statement of problems and difficulties. From this point, the women tended to clarify their

opinions and any other messages that they wanted to deliver in various ways. All of the feelings, problems and experiences would be presented using a high level of expression, including insults and accusations.

On the other hand, the men's moves included some distinctive ways to complete individual moves. For example, the men achieved **Move 1** (Informing) by giving information, stating the problem, giving an opinion and giving a compliment. Also, **Move 3** (Blaming) was uniquely employed by the men most often with the step of stating the problem. The men completed these distinctive moves by stating some difficulties together with their opinions and additional information, while the women arrived at **Move 1** (Informing) by stating their experience and describing the problem. The men tended to employ facts and support them with explanations, whereas the women would emphasize the problem together with their negative experiences. According to the data, the women rarely gave supporting information when making complaints.

Although these moves and steps were constructed to analyze the complaints strategies, it was seen that the men had a greater tendency to be reasonable by providing additional information and stating the problem that had occurred. Even though the men were complaining, they still continued to provide information. This may be considered a distinctive feature of male complaints. Moreover, one unique step made by a man was a compliment within a complaint, which was never found in the women's complaints.

## Discussion

Complaint making is one of the most frequently occurring activities in the service industry. Complaints are prominent as a reaction from customers to a particular service. Moreover, complaints, like any other form of discourse, are presented differently according to gender. This study investigated the differences found in the complaints made by women and men.

According to these findings, women and men constructed complaints by employing different strategies. The women generally made complaints by making an inquiry, and complaining without offering any further information. In addition, the various techniques used by the women to achieve complaints included posing a rhetorical question, asking for improvement, insulting, accusing and stating problems and difficulties. On the other hand, men frequently established complaints by informing and blaming. The men used different steps to make a complaint: giving information, stating the problem, giving an opinion and giving a compliment. The present study conforms with previous studies as it reveals that women are more indirect and use more intimate styles of interaction, whereas men are more direct and interact in a more forceful style (Tannen, 1995). In this study, the women made complaints indirectly through insults, making accusations and questioning in order to evoke emotions; whereas the men seemed to be more direct by giving information and opinions relevant to the problem. Surprisingly, one single compliment was found to be made by a man, while the women never displayed any satisfaction while delivering their complaints. These results contradict a previous study, which states that men are competitive in communication, whereas women are more involved and more cooperative (Coulmas, 2005). Coulmas mentions that, currently, men tend to adjust their communication style depending on the particular circumstance and channel, and that men are not always forceful.

However, this study found that in making complaints, both genders expressed feelings and threats. The findings indicate that women express frustration in order to display a strongly felt emotion, while men show resentment to express their disappointment. These results conform to a study which found that women used more emoticons in CMC than men to express emotion (Witmer & Katzman, 1997). In addition, some studies have demonstrated the tendency of males to deny their feelings, thus they would not express emotion as intensely as women (Ruble & Martin, 1998). Moreover, both women and men tend to manifest threats by



expostulating, but men used a more distinctive step to complete their threats: revoking trust. Women mostly showed emotions without stating an intent to take action, whereas men directly reinforce their demand by stating their intention to take an alternative action. This is in line with the study of Tannen (1991), which argued that women are passive and do not give orders, while men are active and always give orders and take action.

### **Conclusion**

Complaints can be constructed by using many different verbal styles and approaches. Women and men both use various strategies to make complaints. According to this study's findings, most of the women participants were more indirect, while men were more direct and made complaints in a more forceful style. Women expressed more emotion, where men refused to show their feelings stating, instead, alternative actions. However, one distinctive step observed was that when men made a complaint they often accompanied it with a compliment, which seems to display men's contradictory soft side. However, from the single occurrence of a man's use of a compliment within a complaint, it would be an unjustified leap to conclude that women are, therefore, more abrasive and men more gentle.

Due to the distinctive features of CMC, both women and men can express complaints freely without having to reveal their real identity. Online communication allows women and men to express almost everything in ways that other channels of communication cannot. For example, in a conventional complaint letter, the language of expression would not be regarded as dynamic and flexible. Online communication may allow women to show more intense emotions than we would normally observe with in-person communication. Apart from this, there are other features of online communication that may be important factors in changing the nature of language, such as the degree of freedom, synchronicity and asynchronicity, anonymity and accessibility. Nevertheless, online complaints may not be as threatening and

robust as verbal complaints, such as complaints made by phone. This is perhaps because of the limitations of space and time. Online messages may be considered to be simultaneously both synchronous and asynchronous. Users have more time to plan their messages than they usually might with verbal complaints.

Thus, the channel of communication could be an important factor which reveals the level of differences in the complaints made by both genders. Using CMC, women show their intense emotions because this mode of communication allows them to do so independently. Men persist in taking forceful action but, then conversely, can become more polite.

In conclusion, the differences between women and men's style in complaint delivery may occur due to roles, responsibilities, backgrounds and social status. The current state of society paves the way for women to have more space and opportunity to speak up. Thus, this research's results indicate that women are becoming more expressive and assertive of the right to show their feelings. In addition, CMC, to an extent, may intensify their degree of expression, especially of emotions. From this point, women may appear more uncompromising and vocal about their rights as customers. On the other hand, men can appear less expressive and more concise in their explanation of their problems and more willing to take action to solve them, more direct and avoiding redundancy. Men are stronger by nature, but this study has shown that women have become more assertive than they may have seemed in previous eras. Women know and understand their rights, and exercise their power to maintain their status in today's society.

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## **Sexism in Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC):**

### **The Case of Yingluck Shinawatra in the Media**

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#### **Abstract**

During her time as Prime Minister of Thailand, Yingluck Shinawatra was criticized on several occasions regarding her femininity. We pay particular attention to the launch of her campaign “Smart Lady Thailand” in October 2013, which was followed by the insulting remarks of Mr. Abhisit Vejjajiva (the current leader of the Democrat Party) widely believed to target her. Because it allows almost unlimited freedom through anonymity, computer-mediated communication (CMC) usually involves heated expression of arguments and strong use of language. In this study, postings in reaction to Bangkok Post news articles about Abhisit's remarks towards the female politician in question can be viewed as sexist in nature. One hundred and nineteen posted comments were filtered utilizing Mills' framework of sexism, and then these comments were analyzed for implicated meanings according to the Gricean Maxims respectively.

*Keywords:* Sexism; Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC)

## Introduction

The world has seen a number of women in positions of political power who are subjected to sexism and stereotypes by way in which their professional responsibilities are attacked. Julia Gillard, former first female Prime Minister of Australia, can be viewed as an extreme example of this. During her period as prime minister, she battled and was insulted by not only male politicians, but also the press and the Australian society in general (Summers, 2012; Woodward, 2013). Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, the first female President of Liberia, is another example. During the Liberian elections of 2005, both the African media and the international media insulted Johnson-Sirleaf about her appearance, maternal and marital status rather than her political background and capability (Anderson, Diabah & hMensa, 2011). In the case of Thailand, Ms. Yingluck Shinawatra, Thailand's first female Thai Prime Minister, is no exception.

As prime minister, Yingluck Shinawatra was criticized on several accounts on issues concerning gender when gender may not have concerned the matter at hand. Three following incidents may help to illustrate this. First, after a private meeting with a group of businessmen on the 7<sup>th</sup> floor of Four Season Hotel in Bangkok on 8<sup>th</sup> February 2012, it was reported that "Yingluck went to a hotel, to take in 'Sperm Fluid' from a secret lover" (Chulavachana, 2012). Second, in October 2012, she was criticized for wearing a pair of expensive Burberry rubber boots during a flood inspection. The press reported, "The boots went great with her black slacks. That wasn't the problem. The problem was that expensive clothing brands tend to clash with human catastrophes." Also reported was, "Those boots are made for walking on the streets of Paris, not the flooded streets of Bangkok." (The Nation, 2011). The last incident not to be missed was the result of President Barack Obama's visit. Thailand was the first stop of his three-day tour of Southeast Asia on 18<sup>th</sup> November 2013. It was reported in the news that "The Prime Minister of Thailand, Yingluck Shinawatra, has fallen madly in love with



President Obama”, and ”The Prime Minister doesn’t care if she is the second wife to Michelle, she just wants to be with Barack Obama and will do anything for him. She’s madly in love” (Seengern, 2012).

Later, in October 2013, True Visions launched a campaign titled “Smart Lady Thailand”, a 24-hour reality TV program, on channel 60 aired from 16<sup>th</sup> November to 15<sup>th</sup> December 2013. The purpose of this campaign was to empower Thai women by enhancing their potential to be leaders. PM Yingluck was invited to chair the opening event. In response to her involvement in the campaign, the opposition leader, Mr. Abhisit Vejjajiva remarked insultingly, “...I wonder why there is a contest to find smart women? If there were a contest to find ‘e-ngo’ (stupid lady or dumb bitch) then no one would enter the contest.” The public believed that Mr. Abhisit’s controversial remark referred to PM Yingluck.

Nevertheless, the discourse between the two politicians will not be discussed directly in this study, however, it will serve as the starting point for data collection, as we investigate people’s comments in response to the news reports of Mr. Abhisit’s insulting remark towards PM Yingluck because the comments, especially ones which can be regarded sexist in nature, can reveal through the use of language whether or not Thai society has accepted the change of women’s roles (Mills & Mullany, 2011). Therefore, the purpose of this study is to find out how sexism is constructed through the computer-mediated discourse.

## **Literature Review**

### ***Computer-mediated Communication***

Computer-mediated communication (CMC) is a process of human communication and interaction through computers by written words or text. More and more people around the world utilize text-based CMC through the Internet. Perhaps due to the fact that the Internet does not require personal information such as gender or race or social class, the language use

in CMC is replete with emotions and therefore demonstrates some forms of identity. In addition, people can speak openly, and sometimes express more than they actually feel or know in reality (Herring, 1996; Thurlow, Lengel, & Tomic, 2004).

### ***Sexism***

“A culture is made up of structures (also called institutions) and practices (also called activities) that reflect and uphold a particular social order” (Wood, 2009, p. 32). The social structures and practices are shaped by the society’s view of the importance placed on men and women in different roles in the society. It is general knowledge that men have more possibility of being successful and powerful in their professional and public lives than women who, in almost any society, have to push their limits to compete with their male counterparts. Sexism or gender stereotypes occur in all societies: both Western, Asian; urban and rural. One may consider that due to globalization, sexism may have decreased in its influence and more opportunities are now offered to both genders alike. However, in reality this is not the case. Sexism is a form of discrimination against women or men because of their gender. In other words, sexism is baseless and instances of it are made on irrelevant grounds, such as that women are different and inherently subordinate to men (Graddol & Swann, 1989; Talbot, 2010). In this paper, the researchers decided to use Mill’s framework (Mills, 2008), as this framework is linguistically rich in that it provides the concrete evidence for our analysis. The framework includes four elements: Naming (lexical items/adjectives), Generic pronouns and nouns, Insult terms, and Semantic derogation terms.

### ***Conversational Implicature***

The theory of conversational implicature, proposed by Grice (1989), is mostly situated within the conversation. Grice’s theory (1989) focuses on the Cooperative Principle (CP), which is a

key element of utterance interpretation. CP points out that the speakers should behave cooperatively. In addition, Grice developed the maxims of the CP, which included four maxims: maxim of quality (saying the truth), maxim of quantity (providing enough information), maxim of manner (making their contribution clear), and maxim of relevance (saying relevance). Somehow people may attempt to maintain the assumption of cooperative interaction by saying things indirectly, especially when they want to insult or make fun of other people or make the communicative situation more effective. Oftentimes, these utterances violate the maxims of the CP, which are Quality (saying a lie), Quantity (providing too much/less information), Manner (saying unclear/ambiguous) and Relation (saying irrelevant) (Johnstone, 2008; Levinson, 1983; Yule, 1996).

## **Methodology**

### ***Data***

During the process of making the decision of whether or not to use Thai or English, the researchers did an initial survey on Pantip.com, the largest Thai forum about a large number of topics, and Bangkok Post, most read English language newspaper in Thailand. On Pantip, there was only one topic related to the campaign “Smart Lady Thailand”, but it was for a promotional purpose. However, there is one topic on Pantip that represented the reactions of people towards Abhisit’s insulting remark to the campaign. Nevertheless, this topic seemed to consist of biased reaction from one side, while the Bangkok Post discussion forum that followed the news reports provided a richer environment for linguistic analysis. In addition, all comments in Bangkok Post were deemed lengthy and substantial. Thus, the comments from Bangkok Post were seen as fit for our investigation.

The 119 comments in this study then came from three forums in Bangkok Post related to the “Smart Lady Thailand” campaign. All comments were filtered by Mills’ framework of sexism, and Grice’s theory of conversational implicature.

### ***Methodology***

The two frameworks used in this study will be explained in this section. Firstly, Mill’s framework of sexism (Mills, 2008, pp. 41-61) was used to find and analyze the sexist comments. This framework includes four elements for linguistic analysis:

- 1) **Naming**: these are the lexical terms and/or adjectives that are used to refer a woman rather than her professional life, for example, feisty spinster and shrill.
- 2) **Generic pronoun** (i.e., he/him/his/himself) **and noun** (i.e., villager): are used to refer to both men and women. However, these generic pronouns and nouns often referred to men only.
- 3) **Insulting term**: i.e., insulting word/phrase (e.g., bitch/ho/pimp).
- 4) **Semantic derogation**: uses words or phrases to refer to feminine personality, e.g., the phrase “lollipop lady” is used to refer a job that is not considered serious or worthy.

Once the dataset was filtered, what remained was a collection of 15 sexist comments. The analysis of conversational implicature was based on Grice (1989, pp. 22-57), Levinson (1983, pp. 97-118) and Yule (1996, pp. 35-46). The description below illustrates how our framework was defined based on the three aforementioned authors to reveal how insults were constructed through online comments. Violation of four maxims are elaborated as follows:

- a) **Violation of maxim of quality** – the speaker may violate this maxim when s/he says a lie. For example, *Queen Victoria was made of iron*. The fact is that Queen Victoria does not have

definitional properties of iron. But she may have some of the metaphorical characteristics associated with iron such as hardness or durability.

b) **Violation of maxim of quantity** – the speaker violates this maxim by giving too much or too little information such as *somewhere in the South of France*.

c) **Violation of maxim of manner** – the speaker speaks unclearly or ambiguously. For instance, Miss X produced a series of sounds that corresponded closely with the score of “*Home sweet home*”.

d) **Violation of maxim of relevance** – speaker says something irrelevant such as A asks B whether B has read *Long Walk to Freedom* yet. Then, B replies to A that *I find autobiographies fascinating*.

### Data Analysis and Discussion

The results of data analysis are provided in this section together with discussion.

**Extract 1:** “Yingluck has certainly not proven that she is smart. An advanced degree from a degree mill in the US and she cannot even speak English? She avoided debating Abhisit because **she knew how “stupid” she would look. She can;t go to the bathroom without calling big brother?** Thailand needs the truth occasionally and I applaud Abhist for having the courage to speak it.”

The statement in bold is classified as an insulting term. It implies that PM Yingluck is so stupid that even going to the bathroom can be difficult for her. This statement is clearly untrue. By stating the untrue it violates the maxim of quality. The writer of this comment obviously intended to mock PM Yingluck by making her look incapable of doing even simplest things and personal matters.

**Extract 2:** “The sickening and self-glorifying propaganda of this government is unbelievable...Frustrations must be running very high, very deep...look at the number of posters **glorifying this puppet PM and her ministers**..everywhere, with taxpayers money...The French have a saying... Le nom d’un fou se trouve partout...”

The pronoun “her” in this posting can be seen as a generic pronoun to insult the PM in a sexist manner. Moreover, the metaphor “puppet PM and her minister” is used to insult the PM and her cabinet. Thus, it is considered as violation of maxim of quality. The use of metaphor can be taken as this type of violation by nature.

**Extract 3:** “I don’t really know much about Yingluck’s intelligence level, but I know she’s smart enough to get out of Thailand and put on that **‘Hello Kitty’ persona** when the political situation heats up in Bangkok.”

“Hello Kitty” is a semantic derogation used which has negative implications regarding the appearance of PM Yingluck. The writer creates a persona for PM Yingluck as a childish girl who cannot be taken seriously. Similar to the previous posting, the maxim of quality is violated.

**Extract 4:** “I think Yingluck should apologize for insulting woman. As Thailand’s first woman PM she has done nothing more than be a **puppet for a man**.”

In extract 4, naming PM Yingluck a “puppet for a man” implies that PM Yingluck does not have the ability to be prime minister. She can only be used by a man who is the

power behind her. On her own, she is of no use. Therefore, once again the metaphor used is the violation of the maxim of quality.

**Extract 5:** “Maybe she should be referred to as the **ghost lady** as she is never here.”

In extract 5, Yingluck is named the “ghost lady”. This implies that PM Yingluck did not do her job properly and perhaps disappeared from the job. Using this metaphor violates the maxim of quality.

**Extract 6:** “Have we ever heard our dear PM debate during the meeting? exactly, enough said. A world leader who doesn’t, can’t, won’t debate. Better to call her **scaredy cat** out of respect.”

The phrase “scaredy cat” in extract 6 is considered as semantic derogation. Its meaning refers to cat behavior when they become scared and hide from others. This also implies that PM Yingluck is afraid of having to debate. Also, using the word “cat” shows that PM Yingluck is of no significance or importance. Thus, the maxim of quality is violated.

**Extract 7:** “IF Mr. Abhisit was thinking about the PM when saying STUPID I will agree with him. Leaving her country for a weeks travel around Europe when so many important things are to be debated in 335resden335335t is not what I call being SMART. To call her a Lady is in my opinion also wrong. **She is a woman . . . . no Lady** and for the same reason I mentioned before. This is however something she has done many times before. Using a helicopter that cannot fly at night is just one such time. A Lady will do anything for her country. Spening more time out of the country than in si not a good sign.”

The statement in bold in extract 7 is what we consider as an insulting term. From the context, we can see that in this posting PM Yingluck is accused of spending most of her time running the country from abroad. Thus, according to the writer of the posting, she should be disqualified as a lady. This assumes that a lady will do anything for her country and implies that PM Yingluck did not do anything for the country. Therefore, she did not deserve to be considered or regarded as a lady. This statement violates the maxim of quantity because the posting omits a link to how to qualify somebody as a lady and there is not enough evidence to disregard PM Yingluck as not being a lady.

**Extract 8:** “Do you know if you google “**stupid woman**” in Thai, who has the most hits? Don’t blame Abhisit, blame google!”

We consider the term “stupid woman” as naming from the context as it uses an adjective to insult the noun “woman”. By omitting the answer to the question, the reader should be able to determine that the answer is “PM Yingluck”. This comment purposely leaves out the missing information to achieve the insult, therefore, it violates the maxim of quantity.

**Extract 9:** “We expect better from you, we demand more from you, we need the best from you. Millions of disaffected women and children out there could actually use your help”. Well said. She has to give up her globetrotting habits and concentrate more on domestic affairs, even if she doesn’t give habits and concentrate more on domestic affairs, even if she doesn’t give a damn about the average Jack and Jill. She was elected to take care of the country and its entire people. Women and children in need are the real reality show, not some fancy TV show “Smart Lady”. **She is most certainly not smart but blatantly ignorant.**”



The real meaning of this posting wants to conclude that PM Yingluck is not smart, but it does that by adding “blatantly ignorant” to intensify the insult. This is, in a way, saying too much. Only the first part of the statement “she is most certainly not smart” would suffice. This statement, then, violates the maxim of quantity.

**Extract 10:** “A Mrs Charoensri said “A leader must be more careful in making remarks and being respectful to others. Everyone has his or her dignity. If we don’t respect other people, it’s hard for us to be respected,” she said. Too 337re right. PTP and its paid red hooligans can call AV a murderer and other things that cannot be printed, curse with words and tainted blood him, his wife and daughter and then get on their high horse if they think he offended an elected politician for her thoughtless 337resden337 such as **zipping over to Montenegro for a “meeting” with her brother instead of leading the constitution debate.**”

In extract 10, although sexism can come incognito as there is no use of pronoun or qualifier that would signify the sexism, we can see the use of terms and words that show the weakness of PM Yingluck. For example, the phrase “zipping over to Montenegro”, “meeting with her brother”, the choice of words here are to signify her qualities as a weak woman running over to her big brother for help. Thus, ambiguity hidden in the choice of words is used in this posting. This posting also violates the maxim of manner.

**Extract 11:** “Abhisit has a good point. I find the idea of Yingluck being used as a “smart woman standard” rather insulting for the average Thai women. **She only drags them down to her level.** So far, **Yingluck has failed to show any signs of wisdom.** Being more interested in fruitlessly traveling and holidaying overseas rather than running the country, as she should.

Every times she talks, She never misses the opportunity to prove that she's not the sharpest knife in the drawer. **As for her beauty, it fades and she's no exception”**

The figure of speech “drag them down to her level” is used to imply that PM Yingluck is not at to the standard of other Thai women. The use of “her level” gives the sense that PM Yingluck herself has a very low standard and that leads to the readers’ imagination. Therefore, it is considered as a violation of maxim of manner. The statement “Yingluck has failed to show any sign of wisdom” is considered an insulting term. This statement uses an exaggeration as it implies that PM Yingluck is regarded as a stupid woman. This statement violates the maxim of quality due to the degree of exaggeration. The last statement in this posting “As for her beauty, it fades and she’s no exception” shows that the word of “beauty” is used to insult PM Yingluck. The writer brings it up with no relevance to the topic of discussion. It clearly has nothing to do with her being PM, therefore, the maxim of relevance is violated.

**Extract 12: “What is amusing about Yingluck is that it is quite clear which initiatives are her idea and which ones come from Thaksin. This one is definitely hers. lol. She should be under fire for this, not Abhisit. He must be wondering what has happened to his country to be down at this level.”**

Ambiguity is used in extract 12 by implying that PM Yingluck does not normally have initiatives and it states that Taksin is the master mind behind all her actions. Saying “this one is definitely hers” and “lol” are used to ridicule the initiative “Smart Lady”. The reader can further infer that it is a bad idea. The maxim of manner is violated in this posting.

**Extract 13:** “It doesn’t seem Mother Teresa of Calcutta or neighbor country Aung San Suu Kyi were role models, inspiration, or even known to YL She is a prime (no pun intended) example of how influence/cronyism/connections/surname get otherwise unqualified and or incapable people into positions of authority, etc etc. The actual PM resides abroad and the people were actually voting for him. At least she didn’t make another cooking show like some past politician.”

The first half of extract 13 sets an expectation that PM Yingluck should have taken other female leaders in neighboring countries as her examples. The writer implies that those other female politicians are admirable and she is not. By doing so, it indirectly discredits PM Yingluck as being an incompetent prime minister. This posting violates the maxim of manner.

**Extract 14:** “It was not wise or smart what Mr. AV told commenting the smart women show, the same it not wise or smart to leave the country for globetrotting in the time of very important debates and decisions. **Ms. YS is only intelligent follower**, definitely not smart; otherwise she will be there, where she is needed. Lady? ... Thais call every women lady, in this context she is.”

Naming PM Yingluck “follower” is to insult her in that she does not have capability to be prime minister. In addition, the word “intelligent” is used to emphasize that she is good at being a follower. However, the Smart Lady campaign is discarded in this posting. Thus, it is considered a violation of maxim of relevance.

**Extract 15:** “So our PM is both a jet setter (at our expense) and now a reality TV show host and producer (also probably at our expense). Abhisit makes a comment about the show and

the red brethren are on him like ants on honey. Perhaps since the red brethren think so highly of YL, one of them can name **a noteworthy job that she has had that she obtained without her brother's help.**"

In extract 15, PM Yingluck is accused of only achieving many things with her brother's help rather than discussing the Smart Lady campaign. Therefore, it violated the maxim of relevance.

### ***Limitations of the Study***

This study is limited in that we may have affected our data analysis and results. For example, there are a few comments that are not clear-cut cases of sexism after they were analyzed by Mills' framework. Therefore, we decided to discard those comments.

### **Conclusion**

From the results, we can see how sexism and insults were constructed through online discourse. As with many past politicians, Yingluck might not be ideal in terms of administration, however, society paid more attention to her identity. From the study, many comments focused on her sexuality and her femininity rather than her political leadership skills and sometimes drew on her sexuality to draw conclusions regarding her political weaknesses. In addition, different techniques, e.g., saying untrue, providing much or too little, using metaphors, saying ambiguously, and stating the irrelevant were strategies used in the comments in our data; comments that aimed at discrediting her position and her involvement in the Smart Lady campaign.

One important point from this study regards the nature of CMC. It is not an understatement to say that CMC has changed the way people communicate and interact. We

can see from the results that these online comments are examples of the typical nature of heated arguments during online communication where anonymity is given. When a number of writers shared the same opinion towards PM Yingluck, they formed a group that influenced the discourse. The two frameworks used in this study could give the researchers a firm understanding of data analysis rather than by the use of intuition or linguistic evidence alone. Other researchers interested in further investigation may explore similar discourse using frameworks that are relevant to the topic in question.

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**Effectiveness of Collaborative Learning in the ESP Classroom:  
Perceptions of Thai University Student**

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**ABSTRACT**

Collaborative learning has been used in the area of language learning for quite a long time; however, its benefit in language teaching / learning has been questioned by some language teachers. At present, in EFL learning contexts, students' group work seems to be favored by EFL teachers, especially in ESP classes, as a useful teaching device. It is thought that group work can help develop language skills, be it oral communication, pronunciation, and listening comprehension. The present study aims at investigating benefits of collaborative learning in ESL classrooms by examining 25 Thai university students' perceptions and drawing conclusions for its suitability in EFL learning for tertiary education. The research methods used were a questionnaire and an interview. It was found that collaborative learning to discuss challenging topics is beneficial to the students as it can help improve listening and speaking skills and raise awareness of problematic language areas. Also, group work was said to create a friendly learning environment in which students collaborate in small groups. However, it was pointed out that students' general proficiency in English should be taken into account. The implication of this research for language practitioners is that collaborative learning in the language classroom comes with several advantages and it is a useful strategy to help students develop their overall oral and aural skills in English.



*Keywords:* Collaborative Learning, ESP (English for Specific Purposes), EFL (English as a Foreign Language)

## **Introduction**

Collaborative learning has been proved to be an effective strategy to both the teacher and learner. It encourages learning to take place and allow communication skills to foster among learners (Jacobs & McCafferty, 2006). In addition, it provides a non-threatening learning environment which encourages EFL learners to overcome their apprehension in communicating and expressing their points' of view in a foreign language (Slavin, 1995).

Collaborative learning can be characterized as a social process in which knowledge is acquired through the successful interaction between the group members (Cohen, 1994). Slavin (1995, p. 2) defines it as:

a variety of teaching methods in which students work in small groups to help one another learn academic content. In cooperative classrooms, students are expected to help each other, to discuss and argue with each other, to assess each other's current knowledge and fill in each other's understanding.

According to Gillies (2007) collaborative learning has five elements crucial to enhance both the social and learning processes among the participants. First, individual accountability involves students' understanding that they will be held accountable for their individual contributions to the group. Second, social skills refer to interpersonal and small group skills such as effective communication which are needed to cooperate successfully. Third, face-to-face interaction involves working in small groups where students can see each other and are engaged in face-to-face interaction. Fourth, positive interdependence which encourages

students is established when everybody understands that each member's contribution is important in helping the group to achieve its goal. Finally, group processing refers to the assessment of cooperative learning. It can be described as a formative assessment that focuses on students' feedback on the learning process, including the students' reflection on what they still need to do to accomplish their objectives.

However, some language teachers have questioned its benefit in language teaching and learning since there are views that independent or self-reliant learning should be an actual goal of ESL or EFL. Randall (1999) affirms that placing the responsibility of student learning on other students is prejudicial and impractical. Also, with mixed ability levels of students in class, high-achieving students usually become bored of helping low-achieving students and low-achieving students become passive members of the group. Research comparing whole class instruction and collaborative learning in the teaching of higher order thinking skills (Ross, 1988) found that collaborative learning was less effective than whole class instruction, particularly in promoting problem-solving skills.

In light of this, this present study is conducted to investigate the benefits of collaborative learning in the ESP classroom and to find out the extent to which collaborative learning can actually help EFL students with their English proficiency and content-based learning.

### **Literature Review**

Collaborative learning has long been used in the area of language learning. In EFL learning contexts, students' group work seems favored by EFL teachers, especially in ESP classes, as a useful teaching device. It is thought that group work can help develop language skills, be it oral communication, pronunciation, and listening comprehension. The related literature

presented in this section is both for and against collaborative learning, in both EFL and ESL contexts.

Most of the literature supports the use of collaborative learning. For instance, Cohen & Kulik (1981) examined 65 collaborative learning studies and reported the outperformance of 87% of the collaborative learning classes as compared to their traditional learning classes. Also, Momtaz and Garner (2010) in their meta-analysis of 41 studies found that 63% of them supported collaborative learning while 34% showed no significant difference between the experiment and control groups using collaborative learning and traditional learning methods, and 2% was actually against collaborative learning.

Zuo (2011) examined the effects of three methods of collaborative learning on reading comprehension and recommended it as a useful device for classroom use. Hajilari (2001) compared collaborative learning with traditional instruction in his study with some Iranian junior high school students regarding their academic achievement. He reported the success of the collaborative learning class.

In an Iranian context of university students, Behjat (2011) compared individualistic reading comprehension to collaborative one and reported the success of the collaborative approach. Zarei and Keshavarz (2011) studied the effects of two models of collaborative learning on reading comprehension and vocabulary learning, with 132 Iranian participants. They reported the success of the collaborative models as compared with the non-cooperative control groups.

Rahvard (2010) investigated the effects of collaborative learning on 16 Iranian students' reading comprehension ability. She proved collaborative learning as successful compared with the individually working control group. Momtaz and Garner (2010) focused on some Iranian students' reading comprehension through collaborative learning and proved it to be successful as well.

In spite of its widespread popularity, collaborative learning is not reported as very successful in non-western contexts (Johnson & Johnson, 1999). The results of a meta-analysis of a series of studies about collaborative learning in Eastern contexts by Thanh (2011) revealed that more than half of those studies were against collaborative learning, as compared to the traditional instruction. Thanh (ibid.) in a survey interviewed 40 university students and 40 teachers from Vietnam on the use collaborative learning. The majority of the both the teachers and the students understudy expressed their disapproval of collaborative learning. Cultural barriers were reported as the main reason for this failure. Kuo (2011) studied collaborative learning in an EFL setting and found that collaborative learning was not facilitative to language acquisition.

Few studies have been carried out on the effects of collaborative learning on the acquisition of grammar. For instance, Wang (1992) reported the superiority of the collaborative learning group to the traditional one in the study regarding grammar acquisition. In addition, Sharifi-Ashtiani (2010) examined the effects of cooperative test-writing on 60 female Iranian high school students' grammar acquisition. It was revealed that the collaborative learning class outscored the traditional class in their post-tests.

Hajilari (2001) studied a sample of Iranian students' academic achievement and concluded that not only is collaborative learning superior to traditional instruction, but also both the high achieving and underprivileged students developed likewise in the collaborative learning class.

Overall, a goal of collaborative learning is to shift learning from a teacher-centered to a student-centered approach. Besides, collaborative learning can take place only in the classroom, but also in the laboratory, or online. It is a popular instructional method in the English for Specific Purposes classroom. Keen interest in students' academic skill practices by researchers, linguists and teachers has led to emphasis on academic literacy and English

used in specific professional fields. As stated earlier that it seems that there are opposing views on the advantages and disadvantages of collaborative learning in EFL contexts, the present study attempts to investigate this issue from the views of Thai EFL university students with a hope that the findings would add to an existing body of literature related to collaborative learning.

### **Methodology**

The study focuses on an EFL university environment where English is used as a medium of instruction. It is a qualitative study and is based on an interpretive approach. It is concerned with subjective meaning in a particular context as it aims to understand and make sense of the participants' views and positions. It also fosters the social constructivist viewpoint, examining the practice of collaborative learning from the viewpoint of a group of Thai EFL university students. Two research questions are developed as follows:

1. What are Thai university students' views about the benefits of collaborative learning?
2. To what extent can collaborative learning help EFL students with their English proficiency and content-based learning?

Two methods were used: a survey questionnaire and a semi-structured interview. The survey consisted of two sections. The first section asked about the participants' background. The second section required the respondents to define what collaborative learning is and to list out all its advantages. With the semi-structured interview conducted afterwards for crosschecking the questionnaire data and further exploration, the respondents were able to give in their own words their views on collaborative learning and discuss how much it helps

with their EFL learning in detail. Combining these two methods helped to obtain unbiased and more complete data.

The participants in this study consist of 25 junior and senior Thai university students majoring in Business English who studied in an ESP class for one semester. The investigation was undertaken in the last two weeks of the semester, which as a rule lasts for 15 weeks. These participants are 18 females and 7 males whose age ranged from 19 to 24 years and their Grade Point Average (GPA) was between 2.53 to 3.40 on a 4-point scale.

With regards to data collection procedures, the survey questionnaire, excluding the demographic questions, the questionnaire consists of two main items. These items are open-ended questions which ask: 1) the definition of collaborative learning and 2) the usefulness of collaborative learning in EFL learning.

For interviewing, 10 participants were selected. The interview was used to gather data to answer the second research question and to elicit and clarify responses from the survey questionnaire. All interviews were audiotaped and transcribed. The interview results were first analyzed then written out in phrases, after which groupings and overarching constructs were formulated.

## **Findings**

In attempt to find out the definition of collaborative learning from the viewpoint of the participants, it was found that the participants have diverse perceptions of collaborative learning and some viewpoints overlap each other. Most participants defined collaborative learning as group work or discussion or group learning. More than half also pointed out that it is teamwork that focuses on active participation. Several stated that collaborative learning deals with sharing resources and ideas and brainstorming and agreeing on something together. A few perceived that it concerns shared goals and action to achieve something while a few

directed it to student-centered learning. Interestingly, one participant stated that collaborative learning is a risk sharing method as everybody in the group or team shares equal responsibility so it reduces any possible threat or risk which can emerge. The response of how the participants defined collaborative learning is presented in Table 1.

**Table 1:** Collaborative learning defined (N=25)

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-group work/discussion/learning (n=15)
-teamwork that focuses on active participation (n=13)
-sharing resources and ideas (n=8)
-brainstorming and agreeing on something together (n=8)
-shared goals and action to achieve something (n=5)
-student-centered learning (n=3)
-risk sharing method (n=1)

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NB. N= total number of participants n=number of participants having certain views

As for the benefits of collaborative learning, most participants agreed that it is useful for active participation in class. Many also stated that it sometimes allows for a change of roles between students and teachers. Collaborative learning also promotes respect given to every member as some participants addressed. Several pointed to its advantage as it helps generate interesting and challenging projects and questions while diversity is valued for all contributions made. A few participants claimed that learning skills for resolving conflicts can be acquired with group learning and drawing from past experience and knowledge is made possible with it. Two participants indicated that with collaborative learning goals can be

clearly identified and used as a guideline. One participant said that collaborative learning advocates individuals to invest in their own learning. Table 2 shows the participants' views on the benefits of collaborative learning.

**Table 2:** Benefits of collaborative learning (N=25)

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- Active participation (n=16)
-Students as teachers and teachers as students at times (n=13)
-Respect given to every member (n=10)
-Interesting and challenging projects and questions (n=8)
-Diversity valued and all contributions counted (n=7).
-Learning skills for resolving conflicts (n=3)
-Drawing from past experience and knowledge (n=3)
-Goals clearly identified and used as a guide (n=2)
-Investing in their own learning (n=1)

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NB. N= total number of participants n=number of participants having certain views

With reference to the interviews which were used mainly to find out to what extent collaborative learning helps EFL students with their English proficiency and content-based learning. It was found that seven participants believed in collaborative learning as an effective way for promoting communicative competence, both aural and oral skills, and critical thinking ability in some subjects or tasks that require group efforts and dynamics. Five others perceived that collaborative learning is a risk reduction strategy, minimizing any possible threat when conducting group presentations or discussions in English. Although four



participants valued collaborative learning more than traditional classroom learning, they specified the importance of agreeing on fair and equal workloads between members for greater effect. A few added that task difficulty should be used as a determinant for student evaluation. For example, teachers should consider whether to assess students as a group or as an individual on a basis of the difficulty of tasks assigned. There were also concerns raised by some participants on 1) having too many members causing a lack of cooperation and solidarity within the group and 2) shortcomings of collaborative learning as a result of students' different levels of English proficiency; therefore, these should be taken into consideration as well.

### **Discussion and Implication**

From the findings, several aspects of collaborative learning could be drawn. Firstly, the participants appear to have diverse opinions of what collaborative learning means to them. All in all, they regard collaborative learning as positive and are likely to support its use in the ESP classroom and other English classes. Also, many benefits of collaborative learning are reported. These findings are in line with other research studies revealing affective benefits of collaborative learning in addition to cognitive improvements. In fact, according to Slavin (1986), higher achievement in students who learn through collaborative learning is found across ability levels, grade levels and subject areas, including second language learning.

This way, collaborative learning is found to have a positive impact on students' English competence and general classroom learning. The latter comes into terms with creating criticality in students. However, as reflected from the results, for collaborative learning to succeed, there should be both group goals and individual accountability to ensure that every group member has learnt something. With assigned concepts or notions learned, each member should be responsible for explaining or teaching this to other members of the group. As

Strickland and Feeley (2003) assert, when students use a language for learning tasks, they must work together to complete a particular objective and make their ideas clear to others and somewhat extend themselves to appreciate another's perspective on a problem or issue under investigation. To add to this, research has consistently found that EFL students who learn most are those who give and receive elaborated explanations about what they are learning and how they are learning it (Webb, 1990).

It can be implicated from this study that collaborative learning is beneficial if the purpose of instruction is to enhance communicative skills and critical-thinking and problem-solving skills. One thing for certain is that for collaborative learning to be useful and effective, the instructor or teacher needs to first view teaching as a process of developing and enhancing students' ability to learn.

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## **The Impact of CALL in Teaching English Grammar to Sri Lankan ESL Learners**

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### **Abstract**

For the past two decades computer assisted ESL teaching and learning have been experimented in educational institutes in many countries. Yet the computer assisted language learning (CALL) is still at the threshold level in Sri Lanka. This study seeks to discover the impact of Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) in teaching English grammar to Sri Lankan ESL learners. It explores the influence of CALL in improving the language acquisition process among the ESL learners. The sample for this study was collected from 200 students of Advanced Technological Institute, Jaffna who are reading for their Higher National Diplomas in English, Accountancy, Management, Information Technology, and Engineering. The sample represents all the districts of Northern Province of Sri Lanka, and they are in mixed gender with age varies from 20- 25 and all of them are having Tamil as their first language. The sample was grouped into two, namely the non- technologically assisted group (group A) and the technologically assisted group (group B). Both groups received a one-week course in Simple present tense, together with a pre- and post-test of grammar. All the tests consisted of multiple-choice, cloze, and fill-in- the blanks. This experimental study also comprised classroom observations and teacher interviews. Through the elicited data, the inter-relationship between the competence in grammar and the two different methods of

learning was explored. Accordingly, the results of the study revealed that students supported by CALL, showed a remarkable improvement in their competence in grammar compared to students who received the same course only with the assistance of the teacher. The findings suggest the need for introducing at least a minimum level of Computer Assisted Language learning among the ESL learners of Sri Lanka

*Keywords:* Computer Assisted Language Learning, ESL learners.

### **Introduction**

Sri Lankan educational system has realized the fundamental role of information and communication technology in the global economy where knowledge is becoming the primary engine of growth and development. The technological developments are so widespread that one feels outdated if not using them. The influence of these over powerful technological tools has pervaded all aspects of the educational, business, and economic sectors of our world. There is no doubt that just as the computer has established itself firmly in the world of business and communication technology, it has also succeeded in acquiring a fundamental role in the educational process. This role is becoming more powerful as computers become affordable, more compact and more adaptable and user friendly. Computers are becoming more appealing to teachers because of their huge capabilities and extensive effectiveness. The idea of using computers for teaching purposes in subjects like foreign / second languages arouses mixed feelings and meets with a variety of reactions. The fact that computers are used in the teaching of other subjects and are put to a great many applications in society makes one suspect that no field lies completely outside their scope and that they might indeed be of some use. To many, the prospect of using computers is not without appeal; it is the kind of challenge which one feels drawn to respond to. At the same time the technology frightens us; we are afraid that it may come to dominate us, we have qualms about dehumanization in a

subject which is concerned above all with human communication, and we may even be afraid of losing our jobs. It is also known that language teaching does not escape the waves of fashion; we remember the errors of the past, the theories and inventions which failed to come up to expectations. Is the use of computers in language teaching, as some critics say, “The language laboratory all over again?” Such anxieties can be dispelled only by a proper acquaintance with the facts. To begin with, a computer is nothing more than a tool, an aid to be used or not, as the teacher thinks fit. The computer, like any other electrical or mechanical gadget, provides a means of amplifying, or extending the effectiveness of, our natural talents and capabilities. And like other such machines, without the human input and control they are useless. Used properly, however, they can be very effective indeed, enabling the individual to carry out tasks inconceivable by other means. Finally, computers are technologically different from language laboratories. Not only do they involve primarily the written language, they are much more versatile; their impact on language teaching and language learning is therefore likely to be very different. There is no reason to believe that history will necessarily repeat itself; everyone is aware of the mistakes which were made, and those engaged in computer assisted language teaching are the first to stress that computers are not a universal panacea. Few teachers nowadays, at least in some parts of the world, rely solely on chalk and blackboard. Over the years, more and more technical inventions have taken their place among the educational aids with which teachers surround themselves, so as to make their teaching more effective. What distinguishes the computers from other pieces of equipment, such as tape recorders and film projectors, and what forms in fact the basis of its being an educational aid is its interactive capability: “The unique property of the computer as a medium for education is its ability to interact with the student. Books and tape recordings can tell a student what the rules are and what the right solutions are, but they cannot analyze the specific mistake the student has made and react in a manner which leads him not only to

correct his mistake, but also to understand the principles behind the correct solution". The computer gives individual attention to the learner at the console and replies to him. Traditionally, it acts as a tutor assessing the learner's reply, recording it, pointing out mistakes and giving explanations. It guides the learner towards the correct answer, and generally adapts the material to his or her performance. This flexibility, which can include allowing the learner to choose between several modes of presentation, is something impossible to achieve with written handouts and worksheets; it would require huge "scrambled books" with pages and pages of mostly unnecessary explanations, together with an extremely complicated system of cross-references. Nor would the learner get the instant feedback so beneficial to the learning process which the computer provides. The computer thus promotes the acquisition of knowledge, develops the learner's critical faculties, demands active participation and encourages vigilance. Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) is the acronym for computer assisted language learning and it is related to the use of computers for language teaching and learning. Significant use of CALL began in the 1960s. Since then, the development of CALL software has followed the changes in teaching methodologies. As teaching methods changed to audio - lingual and communicative approaches, CALL software included simulations and more interactive programs. Research has shown that learning strategies employed in CALL can affect the quality of learning the language. However, it still lacks methods and a clear theoretical foundation.

### ***Statement of the Problem***

In the light of the information revolution and the scientific challenges of the 21st century, there is a sweeping trend to use computers in all aspects of life and education is no exception. On the other hand, the world is heading towards knowledge economy and a lot of money will be invested in computer assisted language learning instructional software programs. But the



Sri Lankan educational system is still at the threshold level in introducing CALL to Language teaching process. Therefore, it is worth investigating the effectiveness of CALL programs on the performance of learners with respect to ESL / EFL learning in Sri Lanka.

### ***Objectives of the Study***

The main objective of this study is to investigate the impact of CALL in teaching English grammar to Sri Lankan ESL learners. To achieve the above said objective the study seeks to answer the following question: Are there any statistically significant differences between the students' achievement in grammar attributed to the instructional method of teaching (traditional& computerized)?

### ***The Significance of Study***

The domain of CALL in Sri Lanka is in need of more research. To the researchers' best knowledge, studies about computer-based instruction in Sri Lanka are not so many. A few studies about the use of CALL in teaching grammar to Sri Lankan ESL learners have been conducted. It is anticipated that this study will shed light on the benefits of using computers in language learning in general, and in learning English grammar in particular. This study also attempts to bridge the gap between the theoretical and practical sides of using CALL in teaching grammar. Thereupon, the findings of this study may be functional for different categories of people; it may help ESL curricula designers and ESL methodologists develop teaching materials which suit various ways of teaching and match students' level of achievement in English language in general and in grammatical structures in particular. Moreover, this study may help teachers by facilitating their role as well as students by helping them absorb the structures and rules of English quite easily and smoothly. Finally, this study

may encourage other researchers to conduct further studies on the same topic, which will enrich both the local and international literature.

### ***Limitation of the Study***

- The study was conducted with only a limited number of samples (200).
- The study is limited to only one province in Sri Lanka.
- The study is restricted to one aspect of language which is the simple present tense.

### **Literature Review**

As the use of computers in language teaching increases, it gains much of the attention and interest of researchers and language practitioners. Second Language Acquisition (SLA) researchers have asserted that the computer should be used to replicate what they believe ought to occur in the classroom (e.g. Quinn, 1990; Underwood, 1993; Figueredo and Varnhagen, 2006). Many proponents of Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL) have advocated the development of communicative computer programs that provide opportunities for meaningful communication (Garrett, 1991; Lavine, 1992; Lambek, 2004; Fukushima, 2006). Although some educators have decried the use of computers as electronic workbooks for drill and - practice exercises (Chun & Brandl, 1992; Underwood, 1993), others have advocated their use for tutorials and drills to free up more classroom time for real communication (Gilby, 1996; Hoffman, 1996).

Although computer-based grammar instruction offers many potential benefits, the use of computers to teach grammar has not received the same amount of attention as communicative CALL. Nutta (1998) suggests that:

“Although it is currently impossible for the computer to engage learners in authentic two-way communication, it is, in fact, possible for CALL to provide rich input in the form of integrated multimedia programs and to provide explicit grammar explanations that can be viewed and reviewed at the learner’s own pace.” (p. 50).

In a research on the use of multimedia to teach a variety of subjects, Ragan et al. (1993) found that, in general, multimedia instruction reduces learning time by 30% compared to traditional instruction. They further demonstrated that features of multimedia instruction, such as learner interactivity and learner control over programs, produce improved outcomes in achievement.

Ewing (2000) also believes that students find chances for improvement in a CALL environment which are unavailable in traditional L2 classrooms. Learners can receive immediate feedback about their answers and correct their errors from the system. CALL also allows each student to work at his own pace.

There is an increasing interest in the use of computer-assisted language instruction because it has several advantages as summarized by a number of researchers (e.g. Hall, 1998; Nagata, 1996, 1998; Nutta, 1998, Taraban, 2004; Torlakovic and Deugo, 2004; Meskil and Mosoop, 2003; Bikowski and Kissler, 2002; Gruba, 2006; Vilmi, 2003; Toyoda and Harrison, 2002; Wang and Beasley 2002):

- The computer adds variety to the language learning experience.
- The computer individualizes learning. The learner is not dependent on other members of a class, but can choose the pace at which he or she progresses, control the degree of

difficulty (e.g., by leaving out elements which are too easy or too difficult), decide whether and how often to repeat an exercise, and so forth.

- In CALL exercises, the computer can give immediate feedback for each answer.
- Many aspects of work with the computer have an interactive element which is missing in books, tapes, television, and so on.
- Using the computer can save teachers time and work, with routine marking, for example, that can then be used for more creative aspects of language teaching (thus benefiting the learner).
- CALL is a helpful environment for student-computer interaction.
- Interaction via computer facilitates language acquisition.
- CALL provides interactive computer activities for language learning which helps learners to interact in a communicative way.
- Students are motivated to use the computer for all types of activity.
- By using the computer for the presentation, explanation, and application of grammatical structures, more classroom time could be dedicated to real communication that focuses on expressing meaning and using appropriate grammatical structures to express that meaning.

In spite of the abundance of comparative research on computer-assisted instruction (CAI) in other academic fields such as reading (Rachal, 1995) and the growing body of research on methods of teaching grammar, as far as the literature review is concerned, a few research studies have investigated the use of computer-based L2 grammar instruction. For example, Nagata (1996) conducted similar studies whose results indicated that computer-based grammar instruction can be more effective than traditional instruction (e.g., workbooks). Nagata (1996) claimed that self-study computer-based instruction based on

natural language processing technology which provides full-sentence production exercises and detailed grammatical feedback to learners' errors is more effective than the non-CALL workbook instruction.

Nutta (1998) also conducted a study that compared post-secondary ESL students' acquisition of selected English structures based on the method of instruction: computer-based instruction versus teacher-directed instruction. The results showed that for all levels of English proficiency, the computer-based students scored significantly higher on open-ended tests covering the structures in question than the teacher-directed students. No significant differences were found between the computer based and teacher-directed students' scores on multiple choice or fill-in the-blank tests. The results indicate that computer-based instruction can be an effective method of teaching L2 grammar.

Nagata (1998) studied the relative effectiveness of computer-assisted comprehension practice and production practice in the acquisition of a second language. Two computer programs were developed: (a) an input-focused program providing students with explicit grammatical instruction and comprehension exercises and (b) an output-focused program providing the same grammatical instruction together with production exercises. The results of the study showed that the output-focused group performed significantly better than the input-focused group for the production of Japanese honorifics and equally well for the comprehension of these structures. The study supports Swain's claim (1985) that 'second language acquisition results from specific interaction, meaning-negotiated conversational turns' (p.247). Comprehensible output drives sources of acquisition that is 'a necessary mechanism of acquisition independent of the role of comprehensible input' (p.252).

As far as the literature review is concerned, the most recent study was that of Torlakovic and Deugo (2004) who investigated whether or not CALL systems could be used

for grammar teaching. The researchers hypothesized that L2 learners will show improvement with positioning adverbs in an English sentence. The experiment lasted over two weeks. Two groups of ESL learners were exposed to six hours of grammar instruction. The treatment group used the computer-based grammar instruction method and the teacher-driven grammar instruction method was used with the control group. Both groups studied the same material in terms of format, content and feedback. To find the effect of the methods of instruction, the groups were given three tests: pre-test, immediate post-test and delayed post-test. The findings of the study revealed that the treatment group outperformed the control group in learning adverbs on the post-tests.

## **Methodology**

### ***Research Method***

To satisfy research objectives, this study sought to examine the inter relationship between two key components; different teaching methods (CALL assisted & non- CALL assisted) and the advancement of students' performance in grammar was observed through writing tasks in their English as a Second Language (ESL) classes.

### ***Sample of the Study***

The sample for this study was collected from 200 students of advanced technological Institute, Jaffna who are reading for their Higher National Diplomas in English, Accountancy, Management, Information Technology, and Engineering. The sample represents all the districts of Northern Province of Sri Lanka, and they are in mixed gender with age varies from 20- 25 and all of them are having Tamil as their first language.

### ***Data Collection Procedure***

The sample was grouped into two groups namely the CALL assisted-centered group (group A- experimental group) and non- CALL assisted group (group B- controlled group). Both groups received one week course work in simple present test, together with a grammar pre- and post-test. All the tests consisted of multiple-choice, cloze, fill-in- the blanks and written tasks. The test was conducted for one hour. This experimental study also comprised classroom observations and teacher interviews. The learning environment is almost identical with variations in teaching techniques and delivery.

The students' previous knowledge was assessed by the pre-test administered to both groups (control and experimental) before the study started. The objective of the pre-test was to assess the students' background knowledge of the simple present tense. The same pre-test was used at the end of the study as a post-test after four weeks to assess the students' achievement on the topic, the simple present tense. The objective of the post-test was to assess the effect of both instructional methods (traditional and computerized) on students' achievement.

### ***Research Instrument***

Pre-test and Post-test were carried out as a research instrument and through which data was collected for the study. The test content was validated by a team of English language teachers. The team was asked to validate the content of the test with regard to test instructions, the relevance of questions to content, its suitability to the research goals and objectives, the number and arrangement of questions, and the suitability of the time allocated to the test. The remarks of the validating team, their notes and suggestions were taken into consideration, and the researchers made the necessary modifications before applying the test. The test reliability

was obtained through a test-retest method, which was applied on a pilot group of (25) students who were randomly chosen from the population of the study and excluded from the sample.

The test was repeated on the same group to check its reliability two weeks later. The reliability correlation: Coefficient of the test-retest was calculated using Pearson correlation formula. It was found to be (0.81), which is considered to be suitable from a statistical point of view for the purpose of this study.

### Results & Findings

Teaching Method	Pre- Test Marks (Average)	Post Test Marks (Average)	Deviation
CALL assisted group	46,21	72.74	26.53
Non- CALL assisted group	46.18	59.36	13.18

**Table 1:** The average deviations of pre and post test marks of the experimental and control groups

The research question asks about the existence of statistically significant differences ( $\alpha < 0.05$ ) between the students' achievement mean scores in grammar attributed to the instructional method of teaching (traditional & computerized). A statistical Analysis of data was performed to test the significance of the differences between the experimental groups who were taught the simple present tense via CALL programs and the control groups who studied the same grammatical item using the traditional method. Table (1) presents the average deviations of pre and post test marks of the experimental and control groups for students' achievement in grammar competence in simple present tense.



## Discussion

The results showed that there are statistically significant differences in the achievement mean scores of the subjects of the experimental group who studied the simple present tense via computer and the control group who studied the same grammatical item using the traditional method. This difference was in favor of the experimental group. A quick look at the students' scores on the pretest, shows that there were no statistically significant differences between the mean scores of the experimental group and the control group. This result indicates that the subjects had the same background concerning their knowledge of the simple present tense before implementing the experiment. This also indicates that both groups scored similarly in this regard. The figures also postulate that any gain in the academic achievement in the field of the simple present tense could be attributed to the method employed. The average scores of the experimental groups in the post-test were (72.74), while it was (59.36) for the control groups, this means that the achievement in the post-test for both the experimental and control groups is attributed to the treatment. It can be easily noticed that the extra gain in the experimental group's scores is higher than the extra gain in the control group's scores. This improvement is attributed to the method employed this means that the use of the CALL program has noticeably enhanced the abilities of the students of the experimental group regarding the simple present tense.

One possible explanation for the effect of using computers for teaching English grammar is that computers enable each individual to work according to his own pace. The user may move freely from one component to another as he / she wishes and according to his needs. This characteristic makes CALL programs cater for individual differences and thus perform better in the post test.

Another possible explanation is the novelty of the experience which may have contributed to students' eagerness to learn and consequently to perform better. In addition, the

self –paced nature of the computerized activities and the superior visual representation of the material in the software motivated the students in the experimental group to perform significantly better in the post test. In addition, the computerized method, unlike the traditional method, enables the learner to get feedback easily, which develops self-reliance skills. Using the computer gives the student the chance to use many senses during the learning process. The use of the computer screen which is accompanied by animation, video pictures, colors, music and sounds attracts students' attention and empowers faculties of retention to them. The researcher believes that students can learn more efficiently and effectively on their own with additional resources which technology makes available.

### ***Recommendations***

Based on the findings discussed above, the researchers suggest the following recommendations:

- Researchers should conduct other studies on the effect of computerized programs on the students' achievement in English language grammar, focusing on other grammatical items in other regions in Sri Lanka in order to generate a more comprehensive idea about the effect of CALL method on teaching English grammar to Sri Lankan ESL / EFL learners.
- The use of software programs in language teaching should be investigated further. Researchers should conduct further studies on the effectiveness of CALL method on teaching language skills and other components of the language.
- Teachers can use CALL component in all the areas related to language teaching in order to enhance the students' interest in learning.
- Teachers are advised to vary their methods, techniques and ways of teaching, according to their students' needs and interests. They are also advised to use the computerized method more intensively and more frequently.

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## **The Influence of Facebook Usage on Young Thai Tourists' Decisions: An Exploratory Study**

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### **Abstract**

It has been widely accepted that the limitation of tourism products compared to other consumer products is the intangibility. Tourists cannot touch, feel or experience the tourism products or services before they purchase. In Thailand, social media such as Facebook has been widely used since it can lessen such limitations. To date, there is still limited understanding on the influence of Facebook on tourist decision making process. The aim of this exploratory study is to examine whether and how Facebook influences young Thai tourists' travel decisions since it is very popular among Thai youth. This study employs individual in-depth interviews. Preliminary results show that Facebook creates travel desires through likes, shares, comments. Uploaded photos such as place, hotel, scenery and food can influence their destination choice. The results further show that the respondents trust the information on Facebook more than that of the companies' website. The study provides preliminary implications for both academics and practitioners in the field of tourism and communications.

*Keywords:* Social Media, Facebook, Tourist Decision, Youth Tourists

## **Introduction**

Travel and tourism has always relied on the power of word-of-mouth to market to travellers, due to the intangible and experiential nature of the product. Through the use of social media, friends and family provided the main tools for inspiration, planning and organising travel alongside tourism guides and magazines and travel agencies. Social media and tourism accommodate one another. Travel requires information, and travellers have a strong desire to share information about their experience. (Mintel, 2013).

Facebook is the biggest social network in Thailand, with 26% of the population using it. In 2013, Facebook users in Thailand reached 24 millions with over 7.1 millions Likes shared each month and 5.5 billions message sent. Bangkok is one of the top cities in the world in terms of number of Facebook users (Kritsch, 2014). User democracy culture and the ability to share information on social media make substantial changes in the communication strategies and the bargaining power of tourists (Leung et al., 2013).

This paper aims to provide some exploratory findings on the influence of Facebook usage on tourist decision making process. This study focuses on the pre-purchase stage of tourist decision making process. The main research question is to examine whether and how Facebook usage can influence the tourist decision-making process at the pre-purchase stage. This paper would help providing exploratory qualitative data for eTourism research. The results would increase our understanding on the relationship of social media and tourism which benefits both tourism scholars and Destination Marketing Organizations.

### ***Tourist Decision Making Process***

Destination choice has been regarded as the most important factor in tourist decision-making process. Much research effort has been directed towards how individuals form a set of destinations from which they make a final choice. The notion of consideration sets has been

widely accepted in studies on destination choice as a useful structural framework for conceptualising how tourists sift through a large number of vacation destinations available to them (Crompton, 1992). Consumers are likely to consider rather a limited number of travel destinations in planning their holiday. The concept postulates that there is a funnelling process involving a relatively large initial set of destinations being reduced to a smaller late set from which a final destination is selected (Ankomah et al., 1996). An evoked set is defined as 'the subset of brands that a consumer considers buying out of the sets of brands that he or she is aware of in a given product class' (Howard, 1963: 84). The evoked set is part of the awareness set and it is a set before potential tourists reach the final destination choice. Awareness set refers to all the destinations of which an individual may be aware at any given time (Crompton, 1992). The final destination choice is a subset of the evoked set.

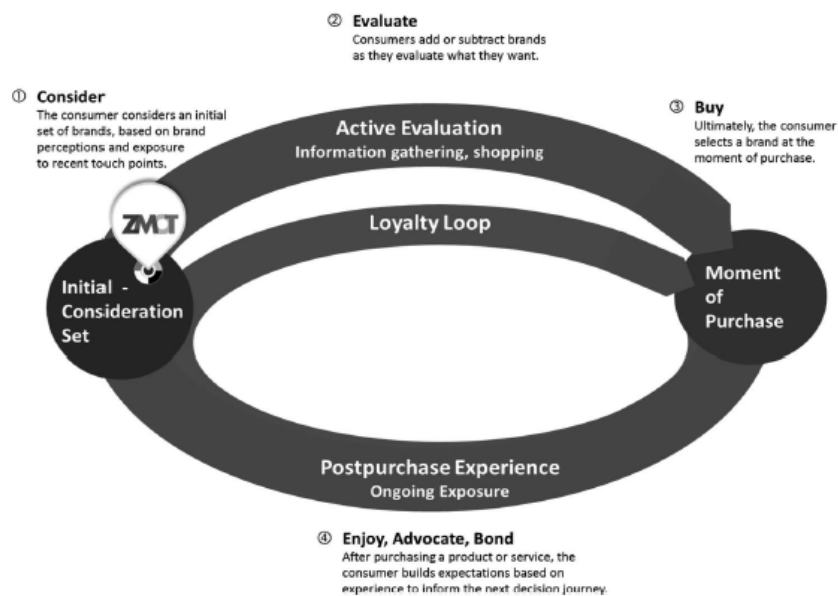
Um and Crompton (1990) proposed a 'Model of the Pleasure Travel Destination Choice Process'. The model shows the progression from awareness set to evoked set and a final destination choice. It identifies and integrates five processes as follows: (a) the formation of subjective beliefs about destination attributes in the awareness set (b) the decision to undertake a pleasure trip (c) evolution of an evoked set from an awareness set (d) the formation of subjective beliefs about the destination attributes of each alternative in the evoked set of destinations and (e) selection of a specific travel destination. The model suggests that the external input to which one may be exposed can affect the evolution from the awareness set to the evoked set.

It has been generally recognized in tourism literature that destination image greatly influence tourist destination choice. Images of destinations play a significant role in influencing tourist decision-making process as the basis for tourists to make choice about where to visit (Gartner 1989; Echtner & Ritchie 1991). The more favourable the image of the

destination, the greater the likelihood of being selected as a destination choice (Chon 1990; Um 1993).

Hudson and Thal (2013) suggests how tourism marketers can use social media to engage with the present consumers' decision. Figure 1.1 illustrates the consumer decision journey today.

**Figure 1:** The consumer decision journey today



Source: Hudson and Thal (2013)

In Figure 1, there are four main stages involved in the decision journey. In the 'consider' stage, the tourism marketers use the social media such as the followers of Facebook to drive traffic to the tourism websites. The next stage, the 'evaluate stage', consumers outreach to marketers and other sources of information to shape their choice. The 'buy stage' is likely to occur online which involves e-commerce activity. At the last stage,

‘the bond stage’ begins when the customer interact with the product or service and the online touch points.

Social media has indeed challenged the past assumptions of tourist decision-making models. In the past, consumers begin with the consideration set of a number of potential brands and narrow their choices until they decide on the final choice of brand (Hudson & Thal, 2013). The social media has given new perspectives of how consumers can engage with a brand or a destination without going through the steps of evaluating the alternatives.

### ***Social Media***

Social media is the popular concept that radically changes the communication models from business to consumers and consumers to consumers (Kietzmann et al., 2011). Social media is an important platform which allow the consumers to exchange the information and become ‘the media’ themselves (Li&Wang, 2011). Social media is one of the mega trends that have huge impacts on the tourism industry. Social media has been used by travelers to search, organize, share and annotate their travel stories and experiences through blogs and microblogs, online communities and media sharing sites, social knowledge sharing sites and many other tools (Leung et al.,2013).

Word of mouth (WOM) is recognised as one of the external information sources for travel planning due to the perceived creditability and trustworthiness of friends and fellow tourists (Murphy et al., 2007). Tourists tend to be more influenced by WOM than other commercial sources (Litvin et al., 2008). Electronic word of mouth (eWOM) is a new form of WOM that serves informational needs by offering non-commercial, detailed and experiential information (Litvin et al., 2008). Social media can provide information beyond the boundaries of one’s social circle (Yoo & Gretzel, 2011) and can be shared with many forms such as text, image, audio and video. Moreover, social media can provide comprehensive



knowledge and interactive communication for tourism and hospitality product or destinations than other information sources (Schmallegger & Carson, 2008).

Facebook is a social network that connects people around the world. Facebook has grown to become the dominant social network in the world with over 1 billion users as the number one social media website in 127 countries (Patterson, n.d.). Among all the social networking sites, Facebook is currently the largest cyberspace that worldwide users especially young Thais spend most of their time on. Facebook is the most powerful social media channel for travel marketers because of the platform's ability to drive awareness and push consumers right into the online purchase decision process (Patterson, n.d.). Facebook greatly compliments tourism industry since Facebook users love to share their travel experiences through pictures, videos and stories.

In recent years, a number of tourism scholars have shifted their attention to the roles of social media in two research streams. The first stream focuses on the consumers' use and the impact of information of social media on pre-trip stage, during-trip stage and post-trip stage. The second stream aims at the organizations' benefits of social media applications for promotion, product distribution, communication, management and research & development (Leung et al., 2013). Previous study (Tussyadiah & Fesenmaier, 2009) suggests that social media can influence destination awareness and tourist decision-making. Several studies confirm that impact of social media on the tourist decision-making. McCarthy et al. (2010) found that the social media can influence the consumers' preferences of the hotel. Sparks and Browning (2011) found that online reviews and comments can influence the likelihood of booking. Tussyadiah (2011) indicated that social media can generate travel motivation and the likeliness of choosing the destination.

From the past studies, it is observed that most tourism research concentrates more on the organizations' benefits than the consumers' benefits. The understanding of the role of

social media on the tourist decision is still rather limited. Furthermore, research in the field of eTourism is still lacking. The understanding of social media such as the influence of Facebook usage on tourist decision-making is even more limited. Empirical findings would be useful for both tourism practitioners and researchers to understand the implications of the influence of Facebook usage.

### **Methodology**

The study employs a qualitative method using individual in-depth interviews with semi-structured question format. The study was conducted in April 2014. The sample covers 40 respondents who are Thai university students in Bangkok. The sample comprises of 25 women and 15 men. The age ranges from 20 to 23 years old. Snowballing technique was used in the study in which several individuals were selected at the beginning of the study to avoid homogeneity of the sample characteristics.

The semi-structured questions mainly examine three main themes. First, it explores the usage and the purposes of Facebook usage among young Thai tourists. Second, it examines whether and how the Facebook usage has any influences on their travel desires. Third, it investigates whether and how Facebook usage can influence their travel decision and destination choice. In analysis, themes were observed from the data and the focus would be on the usage of Facebook as well as the influence of Facebook on three dimensions; travel desires, tourist decision-making process and the destination choice.

### **Some Preliminary Results**

The preliminary findings of the study is divided into four sections as follows: the usage of Facebook, the influence of Facebook on travel desires, the influence of Facebook on tourist decision-making process and the influence of Facebook on destination choice.

### ***The Usage of Facebook***

Preliminary results show that Facebook is popularly used due to the easiness of accessibility and the need of social networking. It also regarded as a useful source of information for travel planning. Respondents enjoy the interactive communications through Facebook. Several quotations below illustrate this issue:

‘Facebook has information for everything and is easy to use.’

‘Facebook is the world popular social networking site and is part of our everyday life.’

‘It can be accessed by everyone and anywhere.’

The results further reveal that respondents use Facebook for various purposes such as to read stories, to share information and feelings, to comment and to ask for more travel information. Facebook can be used as a travel photo album to share with friends. The following quotations underscore the above statement:

‘I communicate and share information and feelings on Facebook.’

‘I create my photo album and share them with friends.’

‘Most of users love to keep updating their news feed, sharing lifestyle and their trips.’

‘We can comment and ask for more information.’

### ***The Influence of Facebook on Travel Desires***

Facebook inspires them to travel through likes, shares and comments. Uploaded photos such as place, hotel, scenery and food can create the travel desires. The photos of unknown places can inspire them to actively search for more information of the places. The following quotations are the evidence of how Facebook can create travel desires:

‘Beautiful pictures posted on Facebook inspire me to travel to the real destinations.’

‘Facebook can influence people to explore unseen places.’

‘I want to take the pictures by myself and write interesting chapters of my life.’

‘It is a main reason for people to start their trip.’

### ***The Influence of Facebook on Tourist Decision-making Process***

Respondents believe travel information on their friends’ Facebook. They like to read the stories of the real tourists. Moreover, they feel that their friends do make fair judgments of the destinations by discussing both good points and bad points of the place. Such information can hardly be seen on any companies’ websites. The following quotations show how Facebook can influence the tourist decision-making process:

‘I would listen to the actual tourists.’

‘Facebook makes WOM even greater.’

‘I would ask my friends about the pictures. Where is it? How is it? Is it fun? I trust my friends’ words.’

‘It inspires me to search for more information.’

‘Young tourists would not trust the destination without any social media.’

‘I like to see my friends’ photos and trust my friends’ feelings about their trips. They make both good and bad reviews.’

### ***The Influence of Facebook on Destination Choice***

Facebook can help creating destination awareness especially the new destinations. It helps the respondents to form the destination choice set and to decide on the destination to visit. The following quotations illustrates the influence of Facebook on the destination choice process:

‘Facebook helps us to decide whether we should visit the places.’

‘I always find the new places I have never been before.’

‘I plan my trips from the check-in locations. I like to go where the celebrities go.’

‘Beautiful places sometimes have negative reviews. These information are very helpful for us to decide.’

### **Conclusion**

The study provides some preliminary results that Facebook is considered as a useful source of travel information among young tourists. Information shared on Facebook can create awareness and positive attitudes towards the destination. Furthermore, it can influence the tourist decision-making process and a choice of destination. The results provide some meaningful results that the social media can influence the preferences and the likeliness of choosing the destination.

This study is exploratory by its nature. However, the findings would help us expand our understanding on the influence of social media on tourist decision-making which is still rather limited. The study will also lead us to design further quantitative studies to understand the influence of social media on young Thai tourists’ decisions. They can also benefit tourism practitioners to understand how consumers perceive, utilize and process the information appeared on Facebook. Further studies should extend the work to further validate the influence of Facebook usage on the travel decision among Thai young tourists.

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## **Improving Chinese Media Literacy Standards in the Context of Media Development**

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### **Abstract**

The Chinese journalism is encountering tremendous challenges posed by the swift development of new media forms. Large quantities of inaccurate news, title attractors and unexecuted news are emerging to make the domestic journalism environment worrisome. Globalized and multinational communication and the economic growth of China have constantly boosted the international status of China and are transforming the country into a new power center. How should China respond to the challenge of the new media with the development of a nation? Journalists play an important role in this section. This paper herein attempts to discuss the procedures and techniques of improving the media literary standards, and it outlines the status of media literacy education for journalists in China, analyses the primary reasons and proposes relevant suggestions.

*Keywords:* Media Literacy, Journalist, Inaccurate News, Title Attractors, Unexecuted News

### **Introduction**

The address made by Lu Xinning, director of the commentary department of People's Daily, at the commencement ceremony of the Department of Chinese Language and Literature of Peking University in 2012 was truly impressive. She remarked, "Literature theories cannot

identify the ingredients of poisonous milk powder and classic literature cannot stop the spread of gutter oil. Many people regard faith, ideals and morality as the bargaining chips when interests become the only value, and we are much worried if ‘suspicion’ would become the ‘pulverizer’ of our times that deny and disintegrate everything, and whether we will just follow the flow with a broken spirit” (Xu Ben, 2013, p.1). Her words reflected the social realities in today’s world where the economy is soaring in a shifting China, but people’s spiritual lives suffer from unprecedented loss and confusion. As the guards of media and propaganda, journalists assume an undeniable responsibility and duty to observe and understand this society and world from an objective and truthful angle for the general public marching ahead and everything is closely associated with the media literacy and education of the journalists.

### ***Definition of Media Literacy***

Research in the education of media literacy goes back long in history. The British scholar ER. Leavis and his student Denys Thompson published *The Cultural Critic-Culture and Environment: The Training of Critical Awareness* in the 1930s. It is the first book which offered a specific explanation for schools to introduce the education of media literacy and systematic teaching propositions. It is hence regarded as the first work on the education of media literacy (David Birmingham, 2000, p.79). Therewith, media literacy education in the foreign countries developed rapidly and matured.

The book: *Blur: How to Know What's True in the Age of Information Overload* co-authored by American scholar Bill Kovach and Tom Rosenstiel defined media literacy as: Enabling the general public to understand that mass media as an information system of the society is an organizational product with pursuit of self-interests, and the world constructed by the media is different from the real world; and that one should have a sober understanding

of the media and hold a questioning attitude (Bill.K&Tom.R,2014,p.2). Those engaged in media literacy however are committed to explaining the political, commercial promotion means and skills of public relations. Based on these former theories, this paper will focus on the improvement of the education on media literacy for the journalists through literary research in combination with practices and thoughts used by the author in news reports and discussions with industry peers.

### ***Status Quo of Chinese Journalists' Media Literacy Education***

The spread of international communication theories has experienced three historic stages: Internationalization, Globalization and Multi-nationalization. Globalization does not change the relations between the center and the margins. There may be several center-margin relations in the future, which means the possible existence of several centers and margins (Lu Jia&Shi Anbin, 2013, p.36). China is becoming a new center of power. The rise of China has posed challenge to media development. In China, media organizations are divided into three levels--the state, provincial and local (city and prefecture level), along with a large number of media firms or internet news organizations. News media is the tongue of the party and government, which is true for the central, provincial and local/municipal levels. These news organizations cannot avoid being strongly controlled by the ideology. Besides supporting the routine propaganda, other major portal websites or news organizations also have their own plan for prompt reports for the right occasions. The literacy of news staff in all these organizations vary due to the impacts of their audience positioning, journalist ages, education level, work experience and social knowledge, not to mention the disparities in terms of media literacy. Relevant data suggests that Chinese news practitioners present a rather optimistic picture in terms of their degrees and ages. But degrees and ages do not mean their media literacy matches up with the occupational requirements. Besides, many of these people are the

so-called “news migrants” popularly known in the industry (Shen Weimei&Shen Juan, 2014, pp.32-33).

After decades of merchandized, market-oriented and capitalized climaxes in the Chinese media, we have found that the media organizations have indeed become more and more “independent” on the surface, and created a power arena of converging ideas and powerful strengths in the field of social and political opinions in China. The media can produce the topics, sensationalize the events, swing the opinions, set the agenda and shape the directions of public discussions in major social and public issues. In present China, the social influences of media are growing stronger while the journalists are becoming more like parts of a gigantic machine. Hard for them to show dynamic, diverse opinions, they can only perform their jobs according to the needs of the media market and the internal management flow of the media organizations, and hence depend more and more on the system (Wang Weijia, 2014, p.16). The development of information transmission technology has enabled us to gain more information, but at the same time become more easily confused. While it is easier for us to see the truth, it is also harder to attain the truth. One of the most important sources of the truth is the journalists.

Currently, many governments and international organizations have been devoted to media literacy for many years, and the targets of media literacy education are no longer just young people, but also all people that have problems handling media contents. Many countries including China have taken actions to have the audience gain better understanding of the media functions. If we can push media literacy to a certain level, then most of the audience will be able to avoid being cheated or manipulated, because when people see exciting news, their intuition would be: Is it true, a rumor, mistake or fraud? (Yu Weihua&Zhang Guoliang., 2014, p.33) However, the education system in China is changing very slowly, the objective status is that the education on media literacy cannot follow the

speed of technological upgrading. It is better to teach a man how to fish than to give him fish. Journalists are the witness of all news reports and their levels of media literacy directly ties with qualities and effects of news reports. It is the starting point and also a necessity to improve the education on media literacy of Chinese people by starting with the journalists.

### ***Reflections of Chinese Journalists' Lack of Media Literacy***

#### ***1. Constantly Emerging Inaccurate News Has Undermined the Media Credibility.***

Inaccurate news refers to the forms of reports that violate the principle of authenticity and cheat the audience with false messages for a certain purpose. It cannot truly reflect the true face of the objective occurrences, carry false elements and may inflict negative impacts on the society or public opinions. With the development of new media platforms, the official Weibo (micro blogging), news apps and public WeChat accounts of media organizations have logically been included in the discussion range of false news. 2013 saw a number of phony newstories being widely posted by official WeChat accounts, resulting in massive dilemmas (Bai Hongyi, Jiang Hailun & Chen Bin. etc, 2014, p.18). With the diversification of the media production platforms and the introduction of more complex contents management, the time for journalists to finish their jobs is significantly compressed, as news production in an internet environment brings the pressure of time efficiency and “high-speed” news is acquiring an ever more dominant position (Bai Hongyi, Jiang Hailun & Chen Bin. etc, 2014, p.19). Meanwhile, the fueling of PR firms, planning firms and online pushers has coupled with the incompetence of the journalists to keep the inaccurate news flooding out.

A report rated as the most sensationalist news of 2013 for instance: news published on the New Culture News on April 7<sup>th</sup>, 2013 said that 178 passers-by ignored, only 1 came to rescue a senior person passed out in a food market in Changchun city, 178:1. The news triggered a large number of online citizens' discussions, with some people concluding that the

“morality is down and humanity is lost”. Media organizations like Workers’ Daily and Xinhua.net investigated the report and found the video showing the surveillance images of the site in question was edited and treated before it was put on the internet, so it cannot reflect the truth. According to follow-up reports by other media organizations, one of the shop owners in the food market, Mr. Yang who immediately called 120 people after the senior passed out told the journalist that: “Someone wanted to help the senior up, but I told him not to because brain hemorrhage may happen. Some people were trying to call 120 and I told them I already called.” ((Bai Hongyi, Jiang Hailun & Chen Bin. etc, 2014, p.7). Ms. Fan, a witness at the time, said that there was an important pathway at the place where the senior passed out and where many people had to walk by. The pathway was barely 2 meters wide, so some people had to step over her legs instead of her body, which was a big difference. By April 9<sup>th</sup>, the New Culture News had to correct the report by changing the title to See How Positive Energy Relayed after a Senior Fell.

In addition, similar cases are not rare. On August 3<sup>rd</sup>, a magnitude 6.3 earthquake struck Ludian County, Zhaotong City of Yunnan Province. A journalist with the Voice of China, Wang Yuan reported on August 4<sup>th</sup> the next day that the Longquan Middle School at the epicenter Longtoushan Town was running out of food and could only eat noodles supplied from outside, and the rescuers had to cook with the water that became muddy due to the earthquake. Huanqiu.com denied the fact by drawing on past experience on August 5<sup>th</sup> with a report reading “The rescue troops affirmed: The cooking noodles with muddy water was untrue, please don’t hurt the morale of front-line soldiers.” It was later proved that the news was true however. After confirmed by the video that filmed it when things happened, that was the case. So on August 6<sup>th</sup>, Huanqiu.com announced that the news was true and apologized. Other news like Foreign Lad Helping Middle-aged Lady Gets Blackmailed, Shenzhen Girl Feeding Beggar on Street and Holiday Schedule 2014 were all misleading. The latest official

web accounts, news apps and public WeChat accounts have all become important platforms to promote and publish news. Once false news appears, it cannot be separate with the media itself, and will inflict harm on the authority of the media.

## ***2. Title Attractors Gains Attention but Mislead the Public***

“Title attractors” refer to the usage of exaggerated or distorted means to make facts or are opposite from the facts in order to attract audience’s attentions. Their purpose is to gain public attentions and more financial interests. By distorting the facts in market-oriented and commercial ways, they jeopardize news credibility (Zhong Jing&Lei Qili, 2013, p.60). To generate enough hits, attain a good ranking or gain more commercial interests, some news publishers risk re-packaging news titles and rack their brains to create flubdub headlines that don’t meet the context. As scholars concluded, these titles mostly use sex, privacy, conflicts and sensations as the baits and are mostly overrunning in the entertainment, sports and social news. But applied in other fields or industries, they will create greater misleading opinions.

The China Central Television program Jiaodian Fangtan (Topics in Focus) aired report named News Made by the Title Attractors on April 26<sup>th</sup>, 2014 for instance, which said the news Who Can Help Re-mount the Skull Removed for Over a Year compiled by the reporter of Henan Dahe Newspaper, Liu Guangchao. The report was renamed by the title attractors to Patient Denied Skull Re-mount due to 50,000 Yuan Surgery Fee Overdue, and posted on the internet, which aroused a sensation later. In November 2012, Ling Juan was offered full treatment after hospitalization due to serious ailment in the Central Hospital of Loupe City. She was hospitalized for over a month after the surgery and the hospital continued to offer her normal treatment even when she failed to pay the due treatment fees. Ling Juan and her family paid up the overdue fees, up to over 50,000 RMB, when leaving the hospital, but she was unable to do the skull recovery surgery after over one year because failed to get enough

money for the second surgery. The report was originally intended to encourage donations but had its whole nature changed after its title was renamed. The hospital suffered from tremendous misunderstandings and vituperation even, and its relations with other patients became strained. The patient in question Ling Juan also suffered from immense pressure from this incident. The hospital was fully devoted during the process. But the activity that title attractors changed the title to gain attention is easy to reduce the positivity of hospital rescue behavior, and make journalist feel disheartened for his report was misused. Such misleading report during a period of highly strained relations between the hospitals and patients particularly will make the situation worse.

Similar cases also include the American Teenage Girl Slept for 64 Days due to “Sleeping Beauty Disease” which distorted the fact that the girl slept for about 20 days per day and continued for 64 days maximum; as well as other reports such as 19-years-oil Hairdresser Blame Customer Dye for Lymphoma. The “fake images of coding rule elements and technical media maneuver” by the title attractors have created an entertainment-oriented, violent and bloody “fake environment” filled with low interests and immense conflicts. The majority of audience or customers do not have the sober or self-aware conception of the media environment. Such a distorted media environment will influence, immerse and mislead people’s senses in a subtle way, which as a result will numb the public’s rational thinking and critical awareness, fuel the immorality of the society and even unconsciously change people’s common judgment and pursuit of values. One of the main functions of media is to inherit the culture and bring spiritual influences onto the audience. The spread of “title attractors” will produce a negative impact on the social and cultural evolutions, cause moral and civil degeneration, and result in the value imbalance of the entire society (Zhong Jing&Lei Qili, 2013, p.60).



### ***3. Unexecuted News Reducing Media Reputation***

“Unexecuted news” refers to news that has no start or end, and focuses on the hot issues. Some news can be hugely hot at the beginning and garnered incredible attentions from the audience, but would eventually, due to some reason, sink without any result or truth to be found and probably turn into an eternal myth. Apart from the official cover-up or avoidance, another reason such news went unexecuted is the fickleness of the media. Some journalists’ attentions on the news are fragmented, and will switch to other hot spots once they had the attentions from the audience. Some news and problems will therefore go unexecuted due to such fragmented commitments (Cao Lin, 2013, p.39) .

There are many issues in unexecuted news, such as racial discrimination issues, gay issues, social welfare and social security system issues, or emergencies and disputes between residents, and so on. Most of such reports are associated with social or charitable events. The author herein has been encountering many citizens seeking aid or needing help on the job, such as families with kids suffering from major illness, because of which their life will go to trouble with no ability to pay for the treatment. Some families with patient of major diseases can go broke due to enormous economic pressure, which are not few and can be encountered from time to time by the author.

Marginalized groups, such as welfare leprosy old man suffered discrimination, and so on. Some interviews will inspire compassions and help from charitable individuals and organizations due to the touching story, while others tend to go unheard after the report, hence the unexecuted news. After the citizens sought for help and were reported, the credibility and reputation of the media will fall down if new results were produced or the problems were not solved.

### ***Reasons for Chinese Journalists' Incomplete Media Literacy***

The media literacy of news and communications in present China is mainly influenced by three factors--the literacy of the transmitters, the policies and literacy of the audience. In the industry, all the lacks or incompleteness are associated with these three elements.

#### ***1. Literacy of the Transmitters Impacts the Media Literacy of News Spreaders***

Transmitter literacy refers to their business and ethical literacy. Currently, due to their ages, education levels and work experiences, the journalists in China have varying business and ethical literacy levels. It is not hard to see with careful observation that most of those at the front line of the reports are young journalists aged a little more than 20 years. For all the vitality, vigor and passion, they lack the work experience. As their ages grow, they will become more experienced, think more meticulously and judge more accurately, so by the age of 30 or more, they will be promoted to middle management positions. The journalists with momentum and passion are easy to find, but few young ones can perform their job in an excellent way. Most of the journalists that just walked out of campuses are somewhat naive and need the guidance and assistance of senior journalists to help them grow.

In some foreign countries however, such as the US, all major media organizations prefer to treasure senior journalists by paying them high salaries, and fresh graduates or new journalists are usually employed by the local newspapers or stations where errors can easily occur when they are young. That is not the case in China however. The boom of journalism has on one hand created huge demands for cheap labor at the media organizations, and on the other, large quantity of fresh graduates fill up these vacancies as “underpaid journalists”, combined with the situation of brain drain is more serious. Few journalists in China continue their job to an old age unless the employers arranged so, as many of them will resign, change to another profession or position after a certain age.

## ***2. Journalism Policies Determine Journalists' Content Selection to a Certain Extent***

The healthy development of journalism has to be ensured by journalism policies, laws and regulations. In official forms, the contents of newspapers, radio and TV programs are decided by competent regulations and laws, and some news media organizations are owned by the state or controlled by the government, while some others are probably manipulated by a series of restrictive measures. In no nation can media avoid being controlled by the government, although the difference lies at the level of autonomy allowed within a certain scope (J.Herber, 1988, p.257). The news organizations in China serve as the tongues of the party and government, and traditional habits have made the laws regulating news and communication activities incomplete. Legislations on journalism and publishing are not made, and instead political policies and ordinances have been playing the role (Shi Yajuan, 2007, p.48). By now, a series of policies, laws and regulations have been established with specific restrictions on newspapers, radio, television and internet management and operations with the development of Chinese journalism policies.

With the gradual formation of the socialist market economy in China, the radio and TV industry are seeing increasing separation of production and airing functions, but as the tongues of the party and government, journalism cannot possibly be fully marketed and will eventually be controlled by the government. On the other hand however, to gain their respective growth, media organizations also face hard market competitions. Some would sacrifice quality over interests and lacks of self-disciplines are therefore not rare. An unavoidable issue is therefore to coordinate the conflicts between the policies and contents of journalism.

## ***3. Audience Literacy Determines the Effects of Journalism Contents***

Uses and gratifications theory regards the audience as individuals with specific needs and they

use the media in order to meet their respective needs. Schramm once made a vivid comparison of the audience with diners at a cafeteria where each diner will select the kinds and quantities of food in accordance with their tastes and appetite of the day, and the dishes are like the messages provided by the media. Expert of communications McGuire found after researching TV audience that they mainly wish to meet four kinds of needs: emotional shifts, interpersonal relations, self-confirmation and environment monitoring (Shi Yajuan, 2007, 43). In other words, only when the media can meet these needs, will the audience be willing to use the media and produce trusts in the media. The contents of journalism can achieve better effects when the audience's needs are met.

In another respect, the literacy of the audience also determines the effects which journalism wishes to achieve. Multiple factors like ages, social experience and education level determine the audience's literacy. For journalists to achieve the results they wish to attain, they must learn the needs and literacy of the audience and employ different ways and contents of the communications. Their media literacy however sees significant differences. The long-term dullness and forcing color of journalism in China have created a stigmatized model that has made the audience lose the basic alertness towards the information transmitted by the media. The audience in China is good accepters, but not great analyzers or judges (Zhang Zhi'an&Shen Guolin, 2004, pp.12-13). In present society, all audience is individuals with personality and self-respect, and wishes to make accurate judgment based on their understanding. The higher education and literacy they have, the less are they willing to be dominated by others.

## ***Techniques of Improving Chinese Journalists' Media Literacy***

### ***1. Boost the Verification of Information Sources, Improve Professional Abilities and Resist Inaccurate News***

While spread of false news has become China's illness of journalism and is difficult to eradicate, the media, journalists and internet users have recognized the dangers of fake news, and have employed a variety of ways to highlight social issues (Bai Hongyi, Jiang Hailun & Chen Bin. etc, 2014, p.3). Irresponsible video sites and internet portals are filled with unprocessed, fragmented messages, whilst experts on radio and TV are expressing or speculating on personal opinions according to unsure messages. Xiang Nong who proposed the information theory defined information as "elimination of uncertainty", but in this particular situation, it is exactly the information that has increased uncertainty.

No matter what type of reports, selection of points of view should be on the basis of the respects for facts, and the truth should be based on a key piece of evidence on the basis of support. The core of suspense should be first set, and search for information sources, as well as key evidence, restore the truth, which is the basis of all reports (Zeng Fanxu & Lin Shanshan, 2014, p.43). According to the information sources and relations of the core information constitutions, they can be divided into three categories. The first level of information sources should be the witnesses and the parties involved; the second-level information sources are generally the information of authoritative agencies or research departments and the third information sources are usually industry experts, academics and media practitioners who understand the industry. Each type of information sources provides different information. The core information sources provide the core facts; the second-level information sources are often able to provide background information and relevant opinions, and in in-depth reports, the second and third-information sources become extremely important (Zeng Fanxu & Lin Shanshan, 2014, p.42).

In the process of searching for sources of information, know how to use tools to obtain information is a necessary skill for journalists. Microblogging, WeChat and new media have made interpersonal search more efficient and the core information sources more convenient, thereby broadening the depth of the investigation report and even changing its forms. Through social networking platform, the reporters can relay to each other directly, without having to go through all the reviews and interference, which greatly reduces to the barrier to information sources. On the other hand, possibility of massive information contained in the cyberspace is something that media organizations focused on the efficiency and quality can't ignore. Sometimes, the journalists may directly microblog to the fans for help, and would often gain something. While real relationships are discrete, interpersonal distance after treatment of social media is instantly shortened and very often can reach the target after two or three times of relays.

In addition, control of the editors is also required. The news-related authorities also play an important role to verify, criticize and expose false news in a timely manner, thus showing the spread of force and credibility of the authorities. As competition intensifies in the media, media organizations may plunge into competition for the same subject, and the exposure of fake news becomes a competitive method. Exposure of fake news can also help purify the industry ecology and boost their occupational competence.

## ***2. Strengthening the Management of Industry Self-Discipline & Self-Control, Regularly Exposing the Customary Tactics of "Title Attractors"***

To pursue communication effectiveness and attract audience attention is not the original sin of the news media, as everything is subject to the effectiveness of the dissemination of news. The advent of title attractors has its cultural suddenness and obvious interest. As the headlines feature a growing diversified means of production, their adverse effects are growing worse as

well. The management these people requires the media practitioners to strengthen the self-discipline and self-control.

First, journalists need master the reporting tactics of “title attractors”. From limiting the number of title words, digging news spots to changing the perspectives of reports, the news media have tried a variety of methods to attract audiences, in which respect the title attractors have obviously been rather successful. At the same time however, improper use of the title also implies deceptive practices such as fraud, exaggeration and misleads. Some of the common tricks and approaches used by the title attractors include exaggerating and distorting certain elements to alter the overall nature of the facts, kidnapping the language and distorting words and intent of the interviewees; reporting unverified and even denied or falsified “rumors” as facts, fabricate the causes and effects to change the internal logic of facts, and employing modularized catchwords and obscene and violent languages spread on the internet (Wang Chenyao& Jin Liang. , 2014, p.68-69).

Second, it is an effective way for the media to periodically expose the various methods and means of disclosure commonly used by the title attractors, and report their representative hideous reports. The Netease once made a specific report on the Dead Ends of the title attractors, which sorted out their nature, dangers and tricks. By regularizing the exposure of the title attractors, more audience will be aware of their tricks and they will eventually lose their grounds (Zhong Jing&Lei Qili, 2013, p.64).

### ***3. Reducing the Executed Reports and Increasing the Effectiveness of the Press by Continuously Tracking Reports and Digging the News***

In 1849, Marx stated in court to defend the New Rhein - Zeitung: newspapers in accordance with its mandate are the defenders of the public and the ubiquitous eyes. In this sense, the mission of journalists is to show social conflicts, analyze the causes of the conflicts and find

the solutions through news reports, therefore providing the advice for the government and shoot the troubles for the people (Cui Qinghuo, 2014, p. 45). Owner of the blog The Dotted Earth at the Social Edition of New York Times and senior fellow at the Pace University in New York, Andrew Rivkin said: the Cronkite judgment-the Yes mantra- "that's the Way " was outdated, news reports' authority comes to a greater degree from continuous mining by the public, rather than relying on large media brands. Effects and impacts may still be related to emergency releases, but more benefits will come from partner websites where a variety of insights can wantonly flow (Yang Xiaobo, 2014, p.21).

With the development of new media and the emergence of varieties of mobile terminals, citizen journalism and the raise news get popular. Daily life news make journalists who dig in-depth and continue to follow up news more competitive. Charity reports is the most persuasive case, which focus more on the underlying causes of the helplessness of free citizens facing disease and ponder how basic health care, commercial medical insurance and social charities can offer benefits to a broader range of social groups, and urge the government, such as Department of Civil Affairs, to take positive measures so that the underprivileged groups can feel the concerns of the government and warmth of the society. Some social news reports, then in addition to reporting, shall also dig into the cause of the root of the problem and offer in-depth exploration of phenomena, impact and advice, while continue to follow up the reports. For incidents not addressed properly, the media is required to give reasons so that people's right of knowledge can be met, and as a result the credibility and reputation of the media shall be enhanced.



## Conclusion

***First, mastering many skills and varieties of transmission ways of multi-media vehicles in the era of media convergence:*** With the advent of an era of media fusion, the Chinese news media are experiencing various levels of changes with regard to the properties, laws of propagation, transmission mode, and even the audience. To sum up, the impacts of media integration on the news media industry are represented primarily in three strands: firstly the change of information sources and dissemination entities, secondly the changes in the modes of transmission (from one-way communication to bi-directional communication, and from organized communication by media organization for mass communication to one-on-one, one-on-several and Several-on-several communications), and thirdly changes of the organizational structure and management approaches due to the changes of entities and ways of communications (Zhang Kai, 2012, pp.49-50). It therefore required urgently the media to diversify their demands of journalists who shall now be familiar with the ways micro-blog, WeChat, QQ, newspapers, and online media are used and published, and become a versatile talent with multiple skills such as writing, news techniques, media usage and management.

***Second, establishing the lifelong learning concept of keeping up with time to improve media literacy:*** Media literacy focuses on people's ability to survive in the information age, the media's role of shaping people, and how modern people can use the media to better promote personal development and social progress. Since the development of science and technology in modern society allows relevant areas of professional knowledge to be updated once every 3-5 years, continuous learning ability of journalists has therefore become particularly important. But how to perform lifelong study and keep updated? Self-education is important for journalists on the one hand. It is essential also that news organizations shall promote adult education and elite education. A good practice for instance is for the news organizations to nurture the journalists on the job who are positive,

perseverant, loyal, decent and agile at thinking, and develop them to greater depth and higher end, so that they can produce more quality reports and thus help the organizations build their brand (Shen Weimei& Shen Juan, 2008, p.33).

The time limitation and the deepening of specialization for people becomes increasing commonplace with the development of the modern society. The pursuit of cultural diversities and individual personalities for people grows more and more intensive, and at the same time public communication between person and person gets complicated. The development of education on media literacy requires a process of time also. As journalists, improving the media literacy standards is the best way to adapt to the context of media rapid development.

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## **Thai Identities and Translation Strategies for Thai Religious Texts into English: A Case Study of Vajiramedhi's Work**

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### **Abstract**

Previous studies on the translation of Thai religious texts into English have focused on translation strategies at different levels: word level (Seesai, 2004; Siaruneiam, 2011), sentence level (Buranapong, 2001) and discourse level (Thana-olarn, 2002) However, the notion of the transferability of Thai identities from the source into target texts is inadequately analysed. Consequently, the purposes of this study are (1) to analyse and categorize Thai identities reflected in cultural terms and (2) to analyse the translation strategies of these terms from Thai into English.

Translation strategies (Baker, 2005; Newmark, 1988; Larson, 1984) were employed in this study. Cultural term categorization (Newmark, 1988) was employed to categorize Thai identities and cultural terms which include (1) ecology, (2) material culture, (3) social culture, (4) organizations, customs, activities, procedures and concepts, and (5) gestures and habits.

Two versions of four Buddhist books including Anger Management: How to Deal with Your Anger and Sleep Soundly, Mind Management, Love Management, and Looking Death in the Eye were selected in this study.

The results reveal various types of Thai identities: (1) Thai ways of life reflected from many types of cultural terms including material culture, social status, religious activities, and

gestures and habits (2) beliefs reflected from religious concepts. As well, the translation strategies employed included literal translation, paraphrase, use of loan words, and addition.

These results have implications for translation teachers and professional translators in terms of guidance for teaching or translating Thai cultural issues into English. Additionally, this study is essential for foreign readers who wish to have a better understanding of Thai identities.

## **Introduction**

According to the Cambridge advanced learners' Dictionary (2005), and the Collins Cobuild advanced learners' English Dictionary (2003), identity is generally defined as the qualities of a person or group which make them different from others. It refers to who we are. In addition, Benwell, & Stokoe (2006, pp. 17-27), and Spreckels, & Kotthoff (2009, p. 415) explain that identity relates to self and culture, and one's self-relation to the social group. People recognize or identify themselves and integrate into social community in order to be members of the group. For example, people in the same group use the same style of language or have the same way of life and beliefs.

Cultural terms can be defined as words and phrases related to culture. Previous studies on cultural translation, particularly from Thai into English, have focused on translation strategies of cultural terms based on data selected from novels (Manketwit, 2010), historical books (Ratchatha, 2007), magazine articles (Decha, 2006), and religious texts (Seesai, 2004; Siaruneiam, 2011; Suwannatrai, 2006).

In terms of the translation of religious texts from Thai into English, many studies have focused on translation strategies at different levels: word level including Buddhist terms, cultural terms, and *synonymous compounds* (Buranapong, 2001; Seesai, 2004; Siaruneiam, 2011; Suwannatrai, 2006; Thana-olarn, 2002; Wongwairuk, 2012), sentence level such as

passivization (Buranapong, 2001) and discourse level including adjustments in translated texts such as rearrangement of ideas, and deletions (Buranapong, 2001; Thana-olarn, 2002).

However, the notion of the transferability of Thai identities from the source into target texts are inadequately analysed and little attention has been paid to the translation of Buddhist stories written by Vajiramedhi.

Unlike the previous work, this study aims to analyse and categorize the Thai identities reflected in cultural terms and to analyse the translation strategies of these terms from Thai into English. Buddhist stories written by Vajiramedhi were selected for this study. These results have implications for translation teachers and translators by providing guidance for teaching or translating Thai cultural issues into English. Besides, this study is essential for foreign readers who seek to have a better understanding of Thai identities.

### **The Concept of Translation Strategies**

In the context of translation, in particular when an equivalence of a word is presented in another language, differences of the connotative or emotive meanings of words between the source language and the target language can cause problems in the translation process (Baker 2005, Larson 1984). A clear example is the pair “Home” and “บ้าน”. In general, “home” means the place where you live. In addition, the connotative meanings of “home” refer to warmth, and family. However, “บ้าน” means only the place where you live. Thus, it is difficult for the translators to find a Thai equivalent which includes connotative meanings like “home” in English.

According to Baker (2005), and Catford (1965, pp. 95-103), translators encounter some translating complication when they find overlap in the meanings of the cultural terms between the source and target languages, such as “ตา” and “grandfather”. The meaning of “ตา”

in Thai is more specific than “grandfather” in English because “ตา” means the father of your mother but “grandfather” means the father of either or both your mother and father. Therefore, it is difficult to explain its meaning to an audience from other cultures.

In addition, Baker (2005), Catford (1965, pp. 95-103), and Nida (1964, pp. 90-100), cite that translators are forced to deal with problems when cultural terms, such as plants, animals, technological devices, social values, points of view, etc., in a source language do not exist in a target language. It is difficult not only for the audiences in other cultures to understand the meanings of these cultural terms but also the translators to find the appropriate words in the target language.

Baker (2005), Newmark (1988), and Larson (1984) propose (or outline) six main translation strategies which are discussed as follows:

### ***1. Translation by a More General Word (Superordinate)***

As Baker (2005) describes, this is the process in which translators find the wider meaning of the word in the target language. This strategy is used when the translators find an overlap in the meaning of the cultural terms between the source language and the target language. For example, “ลุง” which means the elder brother of your parents was translated as “uncle” which means the younger brother of your parents, or the elder brother of your parents.

### ***2. Translation by a Specific Word***

This strategy is employed when cultural terms in the source language do not exist in the target language. For instance, “ปิ่นโต” which means food carrier or food container was translated as “lunch container”.



### ***3. Translation by Cultural Substitution***

According to Baker (2005) and Newmark (1988), “this strategy involves replacing a culture-specific item or expression with a target-language item which does not have the same meaning but is likely to have a similar impact on the target reader. The main advantage of using this strategy is that it gives the reader a concept with which she/he can identify something familiar and appealing.” Kachru (1987) and Watkhaolarm (2005, p. 147) call cultural substitution a shift. This strategy is used when cultural terms in a source language do not exist in a target language. To illustrate, “วา” (wah) which is a Thai measurement was translated as “yard”. One wah equals two meters.

### ***4. Translation Using a Loan Word***

Baker (2005), Larson (1984), and Newmark (1988) define loan words as “a word which has been borrowed from another language and adopted into the new language.” In addition, Baker (2005) explains that this strategy is particularly common in dealing with culture-specific items, and modern concepts. Besides, Decha (2006) cites that this strategy is used when the translators want to maintain the names of the original terms in Thai, and when there are no English terms that have close meanings to the original cultural terms. For example, “ส้มตำ” which means spicy green papaya salad was translated as “Somtam”.

### ***5. Translation by Paraphrase or Explanation***

Paraphrase is a strategy which translators use to explain the meanings of particular words. This strategy is employed when cultural terms in a source language do not exist in a target language. Example, “ขันหมาก” defined as a tray of gifts (from the groom to the bride’s family) was translated as “bridal gifts”.

## **6. Translation by Omission**

Decha (2006, p. 160) explains that translators may omit cultural terms from the target language because they are too specific. In addition, they may be useless for the readers or may not attract their interest or in some cases they may be simply untranslatable.

## **Methodology**

The purposes of this study include (1) to analyse and categorize the Thai identities reflected in cultural terms and (2) to analyse the translation strategies of these terms from Thai into English. In terms of data collection, two versions of four Buddhist books, written in Thai by W. Vajiramedhi and translated into English by Nopamat Veohong, were selected in this study. The Thai Buddhist books included *Dhamma Lap sabai* published in 2004, *Sopta Kap Khwamtai* published in 2005, *Dhamma Thor Rak*, and *Dhamma Sabaijai* published in 2013. In terms of the translated English versions, the four Buddhist books selected for this study include *Anger Management: How to Deal with Your Anger and Sleep Soundly* published in 2005, *Love Management* published in 2007, *Looking Death in the Eye*, and *Mind Management*, published in 2008 .

As mentioned earlier, identities relate to ways of life and belief. Cultural terms involving Thai ways of life and belief were selected for this study. The concept of cultural term categorization (Newmark, 1988) was employed to select and categorize the cultural terms to be studied, including (1) ecology such as seasons, rain, and hills of various sizes, (2) material culture or artefacts such as food and clothes, (3) social culture such as sports and games, (4) organizations, customs, activities, procedures and concepts such as the title of a head of state, the name of a parliament, historical institutional terms, international institutional terms, and religious activities, and (5) gestures and habits.

These selected cultural terms were sub-categorized to include organizations, customs, activities, procedures, and concepts containing social status, religious activities, and religious concepts.

After the selection and sub-categorization of the cultural terms, they were then analyzed and categorized into translation strategies (Baker, 2005; Newmark, 1988; Larson, 1984). In addition, these cultural terms were used to analyze the Thai identities by interpreting the beliefs reflected the Thai ways of life and Thai beliefs which will be described in greater detail in the following section.

## Results

The cultural terms that have been identified can be assigned into four main translation strategies, including literal translation, paraphrase, use of loan words, and addition, discussed as follows:

### ***1. Literal Translation***

Literal translation was found in various types of cultural terms referring to material culture, religious activities and religious concepts, as follows:

#### **1.1 Material Culture**

Example 1:

*Source language:* ตอนที่ครูบวชเป็นเณรน้อยมีโอกาสไปเรียนวิปัสสนากรรมฐานกับอาจารย์ที่วัดป่าแห่งหนึ่ง อาจารย์ของครูเคยให้

อุบายแก้ความโกรธ...

*Target language:* When I was ordained as a novice and had the opportunity to study meditation under my mentor at a remote temple in the wild, he taught me some means of dealing with my anger...

In this example, religious artefact, “วัดป่า” was literally translated as “temple in the wild”. The monks and the novices always practice meditation at the temples in the wild because of its calm and peace. In addition, the Buddhists always engage in many religious activities there such as offering food for the monks and listening to the monks’ sermons.

## 1.2 Religious Activities

Example 2:

*Source language:* ครูขอแนะนำการฝึกสมาธิง่าย ๆ (ง่ายมากในทัศนะของคนที่มีความสนใจ แต่สำหรับคนทั่วไปที่ยังไม่เคยแว่วเสียงธรรมแล้ว การฝึกสมาธิ เป็นไม่เบื่อไม่เผลอไม่เผลอสำหรับเขาทีเดียว

*Target language:* I recommend this as an easy method for meditation. It is very easy for those who are interested but for people who have experienced no calling from the voice of *dhamma*, practising meditation can be a tedious chore they shun.

This example reveals that “การฝึกสมาธิ” was literally translated as “practicing meditation”. In Pali scripture, Buddhists are always taught to practice meditation because of its many benefits. It helps them to decrease their anger and to think more carefully before doing anything.

### 1.3 Religious Concepts

Example 3:

*Source language:* คนเราเวียนว่ายตายเกิดมาแล้วหลายภพหลายชาติ

*Target language:* Men are immersed in the cycle of birth and death many times over.

Example 4:

*Source language:* แน่่อนว่าในชาตินี้เขาทำความดีมากมาย แต่บางชาติเราไม่สามารถรู้ได้ว่าเขาทำกรรมอะไรไว้บ้าง

*Target language:* Certainly they had done many good deeds in this lifetime but we have no way of knowing what *karma* they had achieved in some of their previous lives.

As shown in example three, “เวียนว่ายตายเกิด” was literally translated as “cycle of birth and death”.

In example four, “ชาตินี้” was literally translated as “this lifetime” and “ชาติที่แล้ว” was literally translated as “previous lives”. Thai Buddhists believe in the cycle of birth and death and lifetime. The lifetime relates to good and bad deeds. If someone does bad deeds in previous lives, he will get bad results in this life.

## 2. Translation by Paraphrase

This translation strategy was employed for references to material culture, social status, religious activities, gestures and habits, and religious concepts, as discussed as follows:

### 2.1 Material Culture

Example 5:

*Source language:* ในคัมภีร์พระไตรปิฎก พระพุทธเจ้าทรงแสดงกุศลโอบายคล้ายโครงเอาไว้มากมายหลายวิธี ครูขอแปลและรวบรวมคัด

ความมาให้เธออ่านเฉพาะที่ครูเห็นว่าน่าจะนำมาประยุกต์ใช้ได้ง่าย ๆ กับคนทั่วไปเท่านั้นนะ

*Target language:* In the Pali scripture, the Buddha delineates a number of means to quell, anger. I'd like to translate and summarise some parts which I have found practical for laymen.

As illustrated in this example, the religious material culture term “คัมภีร์พระไตรปิฎก,” defined as Buddhist scripture, was translated as “Pali scripture”. The translator tried to explain the characteristics of this scripture to foreign readers by explaining the language used in this scripture. This scripture is important because it contains many of the Buddha’s teachings, the history of Buddha, and religious rules.

## 2.2 Social Status

Example 6:

*Source language:* คุณกับพระสงฆ์องค์เจ้าเพื่อให้อารมณ์สงบลง หรือระบายกับเพื่อนที่รักและไว้วางใจได้

*Target language:* You can also talk with a holy man to calm down or confide in a close and trusted friend.

The results of this study reveal that “พระสงฆ์,” which means monk, was explained as “holy man”. In Pali scripture, holy men are respected because (1) they practice goodness. (2) They are completely honest. (3) They practice the right path. (4) They do what is appropriate. (5) They behave correctly towards the things which people bring to them in reverence. (6) They respond properly to being welcomed. (7) They behave properly towards things brought for merit-making. (8) They have correct practice towards showing honor and respect. (9) They lead pure lives (Leekrongsakul, 2013). Thai Buddhists always show gratitude to the holy men by offering them food and taking care of them. From the author’s point of view, this is the way to practice Buddhism. According to the religious rules, the holy men are not allow to

earn money because they are responsible for teaching religious doctrine to the Buddhist followers. Thus, the Buddhist follower should be responsible for offering them food.

### 2.3 Religious Activities

Example 7:

*Source language:* เดินจงกรม (คือ เดินกลับไปกลับมาตั้งแต่ค่อย ๆ เดิน แล้วก็เพิ่มความเร็วมากขึ้นก็ได้)

*Target language:* **Pace meditatively** (Pacing to and fro, starting from a slow pace and increasing the speed).

This example shows that “เดินจงกรม,” defined as walking back and forth, was translated as “pace meditatively”. The translator tried to explain this activity by using “meditatively” in the translated English version. Pace meditatively is one of the ways to practice meditation in Buddhism.

### 2.4 Gestures and Hhabits

Example 8:

*Source language:* เธอควรจะนั่งขัดสมาธิในที่ที่สงบพอสมควร แล้วจึงเอาเท้าขวาวางทับเท้าซ้าย มือขวาทับมือซ้าย ตั้งกายให้ตรง ดำรงสติให้มั่น ต่อจากนั้นเอาจิตมาจดจ่อกับลมหายใจเข้าและลมหายใจออกของตัวเอง

*Target language:* Find a place where you can sit in relative peace. **Sit in a lotus position**, legs folded on flat ground, with your right foot over your left, your right hand over your left. Sit up straight. Try to stay focused and unwavering. Then, set your mind to the rhythm of your breathing. In and out.

In this example, “นั่งขัดสมาธิ,” which means sitting cross-legged, was translated as “sit in a lotus position”. The translator tried to explain the characteristic of this position by comparing it to the lotus flower in order that the foreign reader might form a clearer image. This position is essential because Thai Buddhists sit this way before entering formal meditation.

## 2.5 Religious Concepts

Example 9:

*Source language:* เมื่อพระพุทธองค์ทรงแสดงพระธรรมเทศนาครั้งแรกที่ชื่อ “ธัมมจักกัปปวัตตนสูตร” นั้น ทรงแสดงหลักทางสายกลางที่เรียกว่า “อริยมรรค”

*Target language:* In His very first sermon, called the “Dhammacakkappavattana Sutra,” the Buddha advocated the middle path, called “the Eightfold Noble Paths”.

As shown in this example, “อริยมรรค,” defined as excellent paths, was explained as “eightfold noble paths”. The concept of eightfold noble paths is one of the most important concepts in the Buddhist teachings. It includes Right view, Right thinking, Right speech, Right action, Right career, Right perseverance, Right awareness, and Right concentration (Vajiramedhi, 2013b). These paths help the Buddhist to be free of suffering and the cycle of birth and death.

## 3. Using Loan Words

This strategy was employed in order to retain Buddhist terms which were found in material culture, social status and religious concepts as illustrated in the following examples.



### 3.1 Material Culture

Example 10:

*Source language:* เคยอ่านพบพระสูตรพระสูตรหนึ่งในพระไตรปิฎกแล้วประทับใจมาก

*Target language:* I once read a sutra in the Buddhist scriptures by which I was deeply impressed.

In this example, “พระสูตร” which is a section of the Pali scripture was translated as “sutra”. This religious term “sutra” was borrowed for the translated English version. Sutra is central for Buddhists because it contains many of the Buddha’s teachings.

### 3.2 Social Status

Example 11:

*Source language:* เราทุกคนที่เป็นชาวพุทธล้วนเป็นลูกศิษย์ของพระพุทธรเจ้าเราจึงเป็นศิษย์มีครู และพระพุทธรเจ้าผู้ทรงเป็นครูผู้ยิ่งใหญ่ของเรานั้น ทรงเป็นผู้ที่ตรัสสอนเรื่องการทำลายความโกรธและพระองค์ก็ทรงเป็นผู้ที่อยู่เหนือความโกรธได้อย่างถาวรแล้ว

*Target language:* we Buddhists are all disciples of our Great Teacher and the Buddha preaches anger elimination, Himself being permanently above all anger.

This example shows that “พระพุทธรเจ้า” was translated as “Buddha”. The word “Buddha” was borrowed in the target language. In Pali scripture, the Buddha is respected because of wisdom, purity, and compassion (Leekrongsakul, 2013).

### 3.3 Religious Concepts

Example 12:

*Source language:* ดังนั้นพระพุทธเจ้าจึงตรัสว่า เรื่องกรรมเป็น “อจินไตย” คือไม่ควรคิด เนื่องจากกฎแห่งกรรมมีความซับซ้อนเกินกว่าจะเข้าใจและเข้าถึงได้ด้วยตรรกวิทยาและวิธีวิทยาแบบโลกย์ ๆ อย่างที่นิยมใช้กันอยู่

*Target language:* Hence, the Buddha teaches us to think of **karma** as “*ajintai*,” unthinkable or unknowable, as the law of *karma* is far too complicated, beyond understanding and accessibility to common rationalism and worldly methodology.

As illustrated in this example, “กรรม” is defined as action and is translated as “karma”. This religious concept “karma” was borrowed for the translated English version. Thai Buddhists believe in “karma” or “action”. They believe that action breeds reaction.

## 4. Addition

Addition was employed in order to give more information to the readers. This translation strategy was found in material culture and religious days as mentioned in the following examples.

### 4.1 Material Culture

Example 13:

*Source language:* สาระสำคัญในปฐมมรรณสสติสูตร ซึ่งเป็นที่มาของการบรรยายในวันนี้มีอยู่ว่าพระพุทธเจ้าได้ตรัสถามภิกษุแปดรูปว่าแต่ละรูปมีวิธีเจริญมรรณสสติกันอย่างไร

*Target language:* The quintessence of Patāhama Maranāssati Sutra (*the Genesis of the Awareness of Death*), which is the source of today’s lecture, involves the Buddha’s question to 8 monks as to how each one of them attained an awareness of Death.

This example reveals that “Patāhama Maranāssati Sutra” was borrowed for the target language. This term is likely to be unfamiliar to foreign readers; as a result, “the Genesis of the Awareness of Death” was added in the translated English version in order to explain the meaning of this religious term, for the foreign reader to have a better understanding. This sutra is essential because it helps the Buddhist to do everything more carefully.

## 4.2 Religious Days

Example 14:

*Source language:* จำได้ว่าคืนนั้นตรงกับวันวิสาขบูชา จึงพาเพื่อนไปปักกลด

*Target language:* That night, as I remember, was the full moon night of Visakha Puja (the day of the full moon in the sixth lunar month to commemorate the birth, enlightenment and passing-away of Buddha) which put me in high spirits to take my fellow monks to camp out.

As illustrated in this example “Visakha Puja” was borrowed in the translated English version. This cultural term is probably unfamiliar to the foreign reader, so “the full moon night” and “the day of the full moon in the sixth lunar month to commemorate the birth, enlightenment and passing-away of Buddha” were added in order to explain the meaning of this Buddhist day and for the better understanding of the foreign reader. This day is of great importance for Thai Buddhists. They always carry out many religious activities such as offering food to the monks, praying, listening to sermons from the monks, and walking with lighted candles in hand around a temple.

## Conclusion and Discussion

This study has aimed to analyse and categorize Thai identities reflected in cultural terms and to analyse the translation strategies of these terms from Thai into English. Two versions of four Buddhist books written in Thai by W. Vajiramedhi and translated into English by Nopamat Veohong were selected for this study

In short, the study revealed various types of Thai identities, including Thai ways of life reflected through many types of cultural terms including material culture, social status, religious activities, gestures and habits, and beliefs reflected from religious concepts. Besides this, the translation strategies contained (1) literal translation found in material culture, religious activities, and religious concepts, (2) paraphrase employed in material culture, social status, religious activities, gestures and habits, and religious concepts, (3) use of loan words found in material culture, social status, and religious concepts, and (4) addition found in material culture and religious days.

The results of this study reveal similar translation strategies to those described in Baker (2005), including translation by paraphrase, and use of loan words.

In some cases, different strategies were employed to translate a source term resulting in a variation of target terms that are translated from the same word in the source language. For example, “กรรม” in Thai was literally translated as “action”. In addition, “karma” was borrowed in translated English versions. In addition, some cultural terms contain various translations. To illustrate, “คัมภีร์พระไตรปิฎก” was translated as “Pali scripture”, “Pali canon”, and “Buddhist scripture”.

This study carries some implications for translation teachers and translators by providing guidance for the teaching or translation of these Thai cultural terms into English. In terms of intercultural communication, this study is essential for foreign readers who are

seeking a better understanding of Thai identities including Thai ways of life reflected in material culture, religious activities, social status, and gestures and habits, as well as beliefs reflected in religious concepts. Further studies could be conducted to explore similarities and differences in the translation strategies of cultural issues from Thai into English by a variety of translators. Finally, methodologically speaking, it is suggested that such professionals could adopt both quantitative and qualitative data analysis.

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## **Beyond Four Theories of the Press: Freedom-Responsibility Coordinate**

### **System for Analyzing Media Reports**

#### **on Homosexual Groups**

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#### ***Critique on Yin's Freedom-Responsibility Coordinate System***

In journalism studies, four theories of the press have long dominated in journalism education and research, but they have also faced criticism internationally. Jiafei Yin (2008) pointed out a model for understanding Chinese journalism studies, which challenged the “one-dimensional” pattern. Yin’s research discusses the applicability of these theories in Asian media contexts, pointing out a two-dimensional freedom-responsibility coordinate system as follows:

##### ***1) Free and Responsible.***

According to Yin (2008), the press in this group is mostly free, as well as avoiding sensationalism and thus playing a positive role in society on its own. These characteristics feature in the quality information that offers a public service to the audience, such as fighting crime, as well as educating and empowering the poor rural population.

##### ***2) Free and Not Responsible.***

Yin (2008) argues that this characteristic has resulted from the press system’s profit-oriented nature. Here, the press chases profits or power in the name of press freedom and usually

results in low professional standards, lack of accountability, and sacrifices reporting accuracy and ethical standards.

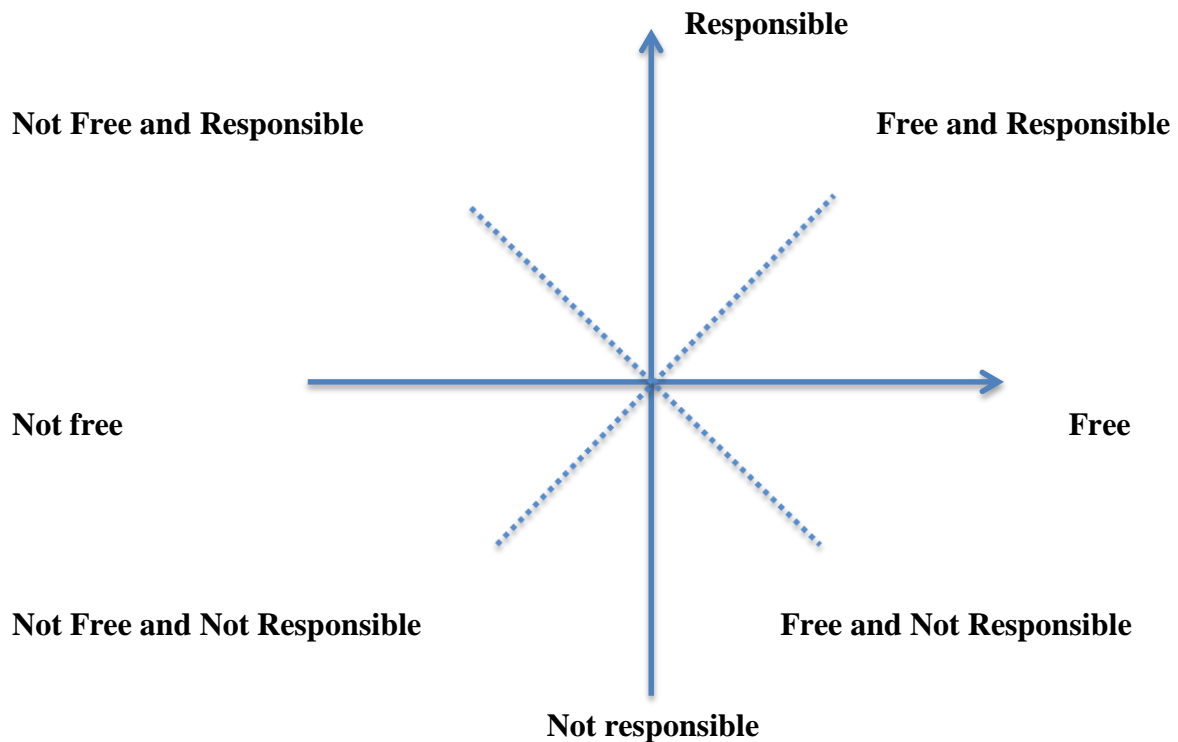
**3) *Responsible but Not Free.***

Although it seems an oxymoron, Yin (2008) argues such press systems tend to exist in more traditional societies where the emphasis is on the group rather than the individual and where cultural traditions or religions have a major impact on public life; the press in this group tends to stress the importance and interests of the country, society, community, and families rather than the freedom and rights of individuals.

**4) *Not Free and Not Responsible.***

According to Yin (2008), the press in this group is also prohibited from criticizing the government or exposing corruption, does not have the freedom to make its own editorial decisions, and public opinion is suppressed. The most typical examples, argued by Yin (2008), are perhaps the press in North Korea and Turkmenistan.

**YIN'S (2008) FREEDOM-RESPONSIBILITY COORDINATE SYSTEM**



Yin's model offers us an insightful understanding about the diverse patterns of media systems around Asian countries. However, her research mainly focused on the structural factors of the media's dilemma in being free and responsible, which work as the restraining factors that influence the press system in being free and responsible, i.e., the pursuit of commercial value, political factors, and the social and cultural tradition that affect the news press.

However, beyond the political, economic and cultural factors, does the news press exercise self-examination and self-criticism in its representation of a certain group, especially certain marginalized groups that are distorted and misrepresented by the media themselves? This study takes the representation of homosexual groups in the Chinese newspaper, the Southern Metropolis Daily, reports as an example and finds Yin's (2008) four patterns of journalism represented in the news press' reports.

### ***Four News Patterns in Media Attitudes of Homosexual Groups***

The researcher analyzed 520 samples from the Chinese newspaper, the Southern Metropolis Daily, after searching the keyword, “homosexuality,” (tong xing lian) in the database, WiseNews, and found the following four news patterns, which have coexisted in the same newspaper content over five years:

#### ***1) Hate Journalism***

The news pieces found tend to show a negative attitude towards the gay community. Vocabulary is used which seems to express aversion or cater to quotations showing homophobia or internalized homophobia, especially words that are generally used in a clinical context; a situation which has already been significantly criticized by Chinese journalists and media critics. For example, “abnormal”(bian tai, yi chang), “gender dysphoria” (xing bie cuo luan), “illness” (you bing). These news pieces tend to legitimize a negative attitude towards the gay community especially through catering to quotations from authorities, certain individuals’ comments.

For example, a news sample reported that:

On March 20, to make her girl friend happy, a lesbian girl surnamed Tian lied to the police that her son was kidnapped. Later, Tian was caught by the police. Tian said her girlfriend Wang did not care about herself enough. To attract the attention of Wang, Tian directed and carried out this feigned case by herself.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Sample from March 28, 2009.

## 2) *Tabloid Journalism*

Certain studied news pieces do not indicate an obvious tendency towards homophobia or internalized homophobia, but rather use a sensational style that goes against news ethics; for instance, in taking “gay” as a way to seek novelty or create an entertainment effect, or infringing the privacy of the public figures or the mass public.

For example, a news sample reported that:

After Lynn Dai-Lin Hung and Aaron Kwok broke up, gossip continued. Before, it was said that Lynn usually went to lesbian clubs, attended lesbian parties, and probably changed her sexual orientation. The Hong Kong media also captured the moment that Lynn tried to swivel her hips, which demonstrates that she “changed her sexual orientation.” However, Lynn did not respond to this.<sup>2</sup>

## 3) *Swayed Journalism*

A studied news piece tended to show both positive and negative opinions about the gay community, but did not show the newspaper’s standpoint. The news piece tended to introduce the complexities of public opinion, but did not take it for granted that journalism should shape and sway public opinion.

For example, a news sample reported that:

A male journalist admitted that he used to avoid watching films with a gay theme. “These movies are a challenge to me. I suffered throughout my watching them. At first I rejected them. Later I tried to accept them gradually and tried to understand the plots. But now I feel quite complex reactions. I have to go back for further thoughts.” But another journalist

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<sup>2</sup> Sample from July 9, 2013.

from Shanghai said, “These films are featured with a smooth development of the plot. This is different from other movies. These ones use a quite realistic lens and story, narrating a story about the lives of a minority group, which reflects the lost feelings about the dilemma of life.”<sup>3</sup>

#### 4) *Inclusive Journalism*

Here, a studied news piece tends to enhance the general public’s understanding of the gay community, reduces social discrimination, and can shape public opinion in positive ways. It does not legitimize the attitudes of homophobia; cater to entertainment gossips, or privacy-infringement opinions.

For example, there was a report about the China Rainbow Awards, which included a piece of hard news about the Awards. It was the first award for positive reporting that reflected fair, accurate and inclusive attitudes towards LGBT community.<sup>4</sup>

In addition, the studied piece introduced Reuters’ journalistic standards in reporting sports news, which point out that whether the reported subject is gay or not is irrelevant to the news story:

Reuters’ sports news, firstly, should follow the journalistic values and standards. For example, ‘Reuters journalists should be aware of unintentional impressions in reporting, whether the reported subject is male or female, golden or black in hair, fat or thin, gay or single, etc. Such facts should not be highlighted in any reports of a major news fact.’<sup>5</sup>

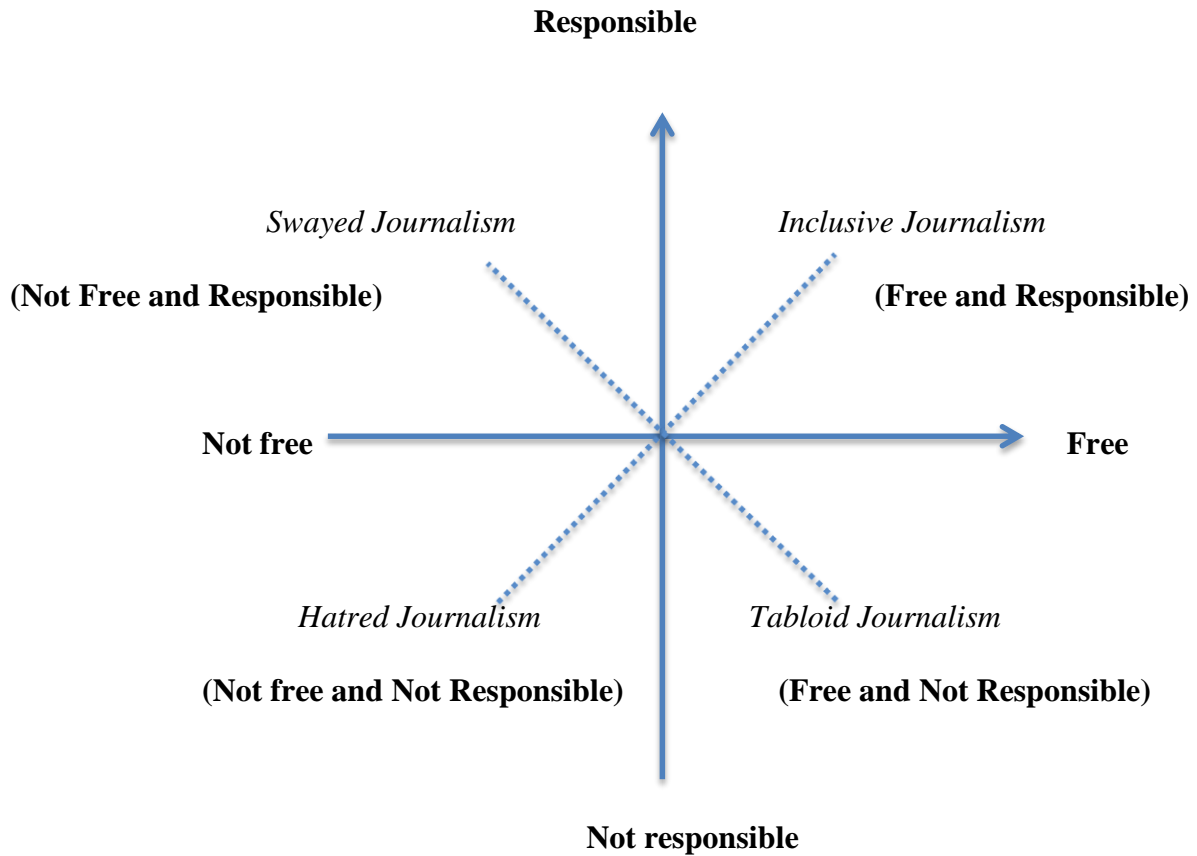
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<sup>3</sup> Sample from May 15, 2009.

<sup>4</sup> Sample from December 30, 2013.

<sup>5</sup> Sample from December 18, 2010.

**FREEDOM-RESPONSIBILITY COORDINATE SYSTEM FOR ANALYZING  
 MEDIA REPORTS ON HOMOSEXUAL GROUPS**



**Table 1:** News Reporting Pattern

News reporting pattern		Hatred journalism	Tabloid journalism	Swayed journalism	Inclusive journalism
Number of articles	2009	22	16	2	80
	2010	8	23	0	77
	2011	20	11	0	85
	2012	5	10	0	68
	2013	5	14	0	74
Total		60	74	2	384

	2009	18.33	13.33	1.67	66.67
	2010	7.41	21.30	0.00	71.30
Percentage	2011	17.24	9.48	0.00	73.28
(%)	2012	6.02	12.05	0.00	81.93
	2013	5.38	15.05	0.00	79.57
	Total	11.54	14.23	0.38	73.85

As shown in Table 1, over the five year period, the majority of the reports related to gay issues tended to have an inclusive attitude towards the gay community. Only two samples fell into the category of “swayed journalism” in this phase, which indicates that the Southern Metropolis Daily tended to show a clear attitude towards the gay community. However, hate journalism and tabloid journalism altogether still accounted for a significant percentage (around 25%) of the reports throughout the five years.

### ***Freedom-Responsibility Coordinate System for Analyzing Media Reports on Homosexual Groups***

To understand the relationship between being free and responsible, firstly, we have to understand that, modern journalistic standards ask us to respect every person as an individual, rather than use outdated stereotypical images. This standard liberates our way of understanding and critically reflects upon today’s journalism. Journalists should endeavor to craft intelligent works that reflect current reality, rather than out-of-date stereotypes and labels (Brooks and Wilson, 2010, p. 279). Journalists should adopt a non-bias rule and avoid unnecessary labels (e.g., Brooks and Wilson, 2010, pp.285-290; Creager, Tillman, & Bass, 2010).



**1) *Hate Journalism: Not Free, Not Responsible.***

These news pieces tended to display a negative attitude towards the gay community, which goes against news ethics and harms any benefit from the gay community, not taking account of its social responsibility. As the Commission on Freedom of the Press (1947) reminded us, only a responsible press can remain free. The news piece is not responsible, thus, it is also not free.

**2) *Tabloid Journalism: Free and Not Responsible***

The press is considered as being free, which may possibly mean only the commercial value of the press, which is a product of the free market of the entertainment business. However, is the press may also be irresponsible with its profit-oriented characteristics that regard the gay community as a consumption market. Hence, it does not take into account the real living situations of the gay community in China, which are still being marginalized in the legal system, in education, and in employment.

**3) *Swayed Journalism: Not Free and Responsible***

Here, “swayed journalism” means the a news piece which seems to fluctuate or veer between a positive attitude towards the gay community and negative opinions. The purpose of such news pieces seems to be to show society’s opposing attitudes towards the gay community. However, in this situation, the journalist does not pass judgment, and resists being swayed by public opinion, even in positive ways. The press is responsible for showing both positive and negative opinions about the gay community, emphasizing the cultural tradition of the heterosexual relationship.

But why is it not free? It does not legitimize an advancing social tolerance, which neglects the rights of individuals. It is “kidnapped” by the traditional Chinese culture as well

as legitimizing heteronormativity through media agenda setting. The journalist is restrained by traditional values which lack critical thinking, real understanding about sexual minority's lives and dilemmas, lack of rights protection in real life, all of which might put the marginalized gay community in a more disadvantaged position in real life.

**4) *Inclusive Journalism: Free and Responsible.***

Attitudes towards sexuality and homosexuality in China are changing every year, if not every day (Sun, 2010, p. 100). The boundaries are dissolving. Chinese media critics and journalists believe that the essence of talking about gay issues in newsrooms is non-politically-sensitive alternative information (eg., Hu, 2002, p. 199). The rule "no propaganda, no encouragement, no public advocacy," argued by Wang, is the Chinese media's current attitude towards the gay community. Such a standard provides the politically correct way to negotiate the relationship between the marginalized gay community and the whole of Chinese society. In this sense, only those speaking for gay rights in China can be considered as being free and responsible.

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