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Analyzing the Effectiveness of Creative Writing in ELT in Chinese Higher Education

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Abstract

This study aimed to analyze the effects of creative writing activities in promoting students' writing ability in EFL classrooms in China and find out students' attitudes to their creative writing experience. One hundred and nine college students from two English programs participated in the study. The data were collected through the pre- and post-course writing scripts and survey questionnaires. The findings indicate that the application of creative writing activities is effective in increasing the students' writing achievement by comparing the students' writing scores before and after the experiment; and its efficacy can be evidenced by students' positive attitudes towards the experiment as well. This study not only contributes to the mainstream literature of creative writing on improving learners' writing achievement, but also provides practical applications of teaching writing through creative activities.

Keywords: creative writing, English language teaching, Chinese higher education, students' attitudes to creative English writing

Introduction

Writing is a powerful instrument of thinking because it provides students with a way of gaining control over thoughts. Writing shapes their perceptions of themselves and the world. It does not only serve as a medium for communication, but also enhances a student's cognitive and intellectual development (Goma, 2001). As Dong argued (2003), writing can not only reinforce what has been read and heard and help produce the accuracy of language use, but can also lay solid foundations for speaking proficiency.

However, "writing is a complex and highly intense, mental, physical and emotional activity" (Raimes, 1991, as cited in Liu, 1998, 91), which probably makes it the most difficult skill to acquire and teach for students and teachers respectively. Therefore, compared to the other language skills in the College English course, writing always takes a back seat. As a result, students' English writing proficiency is far from satisfactory. Since the introduction of College English Test (CET) Band4/6 in 1987 in China, non-English majors have made great progress in reading and listening. However, the students have improved little in their writing proficiency. In view of all over the years of CETs, statistics have showed that the average score of writing is the lowest compared with scores in the other sections in CET Band 4. For instance, through the analysis of CET band 4 and 6 scores of 14,265 students from Shanxi Normal University, it was found that overall English level of students, sophomores in particular, is satisfying; but only students' writing score accounts for 19.2%, slightly lower than the standard rate of 20% (Ji & Kang, 2016) compared with other language skills.

The poor writing scores may be due to Chinese students' learning habits. They are very poor at knowledge of content and ideas (Zhang, et al., 1995; Liu, 1998); they try to avoid free expression of personal views, but prefer quotations and paraphrase of others' words or the use of set phrases (Cortazzi & Jin, 1996). Moreover, the popular application of the essay-style writing tasks in China seems to de-emphasize the invention and personal discovery and then demotivate students to write. As a result, students show a lack of individuality, imagination and creativity in their writing (Cortazzi & Jin 1996, 70; Liu, 1998, 94).

The literature has found a large number of evidences that students can gain more confidence, motivation, and interests in writing by being allowed to explore writing process in a more creative way (Morrissey, 2003; Stegner, 2002; Goma, 2001). However, there has been relatively little research on teaching how to write creatively in English in China (Dai, 2012; Kroll & Dai, 2011). With profound understanding of creative writing, the researchers designed a mini-creative-writing course to support the classroom teaching in ELT in China. This study aimed to address the following research questions:

1) What are the effects of creative writing activities in promoting students' writing ability in EFL classrooms in China?
2) What are the students' perceptions towards the creative writing activities?

Literature Review

Creative writing is not new. Cummins (2014) argued that apart from learning grammar, structuring sentences and paragraphs, and selecting words, etc., using creative writing could be added as another dimension to teach writing. Teaching creative writing is to encourage students to write by drawing upon their imagination and other creative processes – may support writing development in all its components (Barbot, Tan, Randi, Donato & Grigorenko, 2012). A further role for creative writing in English, as argued by Everett (2005), should go beyond assisting and enabling learning, rather, provide alternative ways of expressing and demonstrating learning.

Creative writing has been defined from various angles. As regards to its nature, creative writing is a personal writing that involves imagination (Gorman, 1979). It is “a journey of self-discovery, and self-discovery” that promotes students’ effective learning (Gaffield-Vile 1998,31, cited in Harmer 2001, 259).The styles of creative writing suggest imaginative tasks such as writing poetry, stories and plays (Harmer 2001; Stegner, 2002). The topics usually deal with details of individual experience. It is a reflection of the life of an individual. “When given the opportunity to talk about their feelings and attitudes, students tend to want to communicate because they can convey things which are important to them and which are of immediate relevance to their present lives.” (Cunningsworth, 1984, 60, cited in Goma, 2001, 150). It is also worth pointing out that all of the writings of students are important and creative because each writing is based upon the materials of language, experience, knowledge, textual sources, personal ideas and imaginations of the writer, which brings out something did not exist before (McVey, 2008).

Research also shows that there is a positive correlation between creative writing and students’ effective learning. Creative writing is a chance to free your imagination in which people get satisfaction. Through creative writing, students can use their linguistic capabilities and go deeper and further that they cannot do in oral expression. They express more personal thoughts and mental images. Therefore, creative writing tasks are motivating both for L1 and L2 students (Harmer, 2004).

When students are allowed to select their means of expression, the knowledge they have acquired will last longer. Through creative writing, students gain a voice and have a forum to legitimize their ideas, and their writing becomes more personal and insightful. They, therefore, become the active disseminators of information rather than the passive recipients (Goma, 2001). Siegfried et al. (1991, 199) argue that these creative skills help students learn how to "frame questions," determine "what tools and principles apply to particular problems," and "understand or explain surprising or unexpected results." In essence, as Goma (2001) states, the use of creative writing helps to improve the flexibility of students' problem-solving skills, and their fluency in stating their ideas. Maley (cited in Babaee, 2015) also points out that creative writing is important because it can give students a real boost to learners’ self-esteem (Xu, 1999) by giving students a sense of achievement (Harmer, 2001), and eliminating the fear of using language via playing with it.

Research Methodology

Subjects

The study was conducted with 109 college students at the age of 17-20 years old attending two different English programs at two colleges in China. Chinese was their L1, and English was their foreign language. Before taking the creative writing course, they had never received any systemic writing training except the essay writing style. The subjects were taught by two teachers. It was worth noting that these two teachers had significantly different teaching background. The teacher in Class 2 was a newly graduated student, and had little knowledge on creative writing; the teacher in Class 1, however, had rich teaching experience over 10 years, and was one of the researchers who designed the creative writing course. The two teachers were required to implement the same teaching approach in their English writing classes. The details are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Detailed Information on Subjects

<table>
<tr><th></th><th>Teacher</th><th>Students</th><th>Teaching Approach</th></tr>
<tr><td>Class 1</td><td>Rich-experienced teacher, good understanding on creative writing</td><td>72 Freshmen, English Major college students, no systematic training in English writing</td><td rowspan="2">1. Implementing the Mini-Creative-Writing Course as pre-class activities
2. Following the normal teaching plans after the pre-class activities</td></tr>
<tr><td>Class 2</td><td>Non-experienced teacher, no knowledge on creative writing</td><td>37 three-year vocational college students, no systematic training in English writing</td></tr>
</table>

Mini-Creative-Writing Course Design

The Mini-Creative-Writing Course (MCWC) refers to a series of creative writing activities assigned to students before starting the normal English language teaching and learning. Each writing activity lasts 15-20 minutes and the entire course consists of 12 weeks.

Week 1: Conducted pre-course test, and introduced the essential purpose, contents, and requirements about the creative writing tasks.

Weeks 2-4: Assigned writing activities regarding the simple English poems with a focus on wording practice: such as two-line poem, stem poem, acrostics, shaped poem, etc. Such activities were designed to motivate students to write and create a sense of achievement.

Weeks 5-7: Assigned writing activities regarding pictures: such activities were designed to train students' observation, imagination and self-expression skills.

Weeks 8-9: Assigned writing activities storytelling: students made up their own stories or made up stories based upon pictures, etc.

Weeks 10-11: Assigned multi-tasks training: guide students to create their own writing posters by adopting various types of writing forms to create a sense of achievement through creative writing.

Week 12: Conducted post-course test, survey questionnaire, and collected the best students' work.

Remark: During the 2-11 weeks, whenever finishing one phase of creative writing activities, teachers collected students' feedbacks and used them for future improvement.

Research Instruments and Procedure

In this study, the data were collected through 1) the pre-course and a post-course creative writing tasks and 2) survey questionnaire after the experiment.

Pre-Course and Post-Course Writing Tasks and Grouping

Both pre- and post-course writing tasks were picture-based. The students were asked to look at the picture and write down anything about what was going on in the picture within 15 minutes. The evaluation criteria and scoring grid had been adapted from the examples of rubrics used by Hughes (1989, 94) and Myhill and Amer (2004, 10). There were six criteria altogether: ideas/content, organization, vocabulary, language use, mechanics and fluency based upon a 5-point scale. The students' writing scripts were graded by three evaluators – one of the researchers, one homeroom teacher, and an American English teacher.

Out of 72 students in the Class 1 and 37 in Class 2, nine and six subjects were selected respectively to form three sample subgroups based on the pre-course task scores as well as their previous writing performance. This method of grouping was to make sure that the sample groups were representatives of the whole class as well as to ensure the validity of the data collection.

The details are shown as follows:

Group A: Three in class 1 and two in class 2, known as the best writing performers;

Group B: Three in class 1 and two in class 2, known as the average writing performers; and

Group C: Three in class 1 and two in class 2, known as the weakest writing performers.

Survey Questionnaire

At the end of the experiment, a survey questionnaire was distributed to the student right after they finished the post-course writing task. The questionnaire was designed to find out students' perceptions of various aspects:

1) their creative writing experience (open-ended short comments)
2) the helpfulness of creative writing; (close-ended, 10 items)

3) their preferences of various creative writing tasks (close-ended, 4 categories, 21 items)
4) their self-reflections on the improvement in writing (open-ended short comments)

Findings

Objective 1: Effects of Creative Writing Activities by Comparing Pre- and Post-Course Task Scripts

The sample scripts selected from each group in two classes (A11, A21; B11, B21; and C11, C21) were analyzed as follows:

A11 (pre-script)

*(S1)*Jimmy didn't feel very well this morning. *(S2)* "I must be sick." He thought and quickly looked for the thermometer. *(S3)*Now he lay down with great care on the bed and cared himself overall. *(S4)* "How wonderful it would be if I really get sick. Damned you books! Hell is school!"

*(S5)*Jimmy was so contented with this thought and he fell asleep eventually. *(S6)* He had a dream, in which all his world was made up of his beloved toy dog and toy panda and his best friend Kate and all kind of delicious candies and sweets…

(S7)"Jimmy! Jimmy! Get out of bed! You're going to be late"

(S8)"A dream is, after all, a dream!" Said Jimmy, looking disappointedly at the thermometer.
(114 words)

A11 (post-script)

*(S1)*Joyce and Jimmy used to be two baby cats. *(S2)*But one night, as Joyce was sleeping, God came into her dreamland and promised to help her realize one dream.

*(S3)*Joyce was so fond of the boy called Jack in her master's neighborhood that without even thinking for a second, she asked for this promise. *(S4)* God kept his words and Joyce turned into a girl instantly.

*(S5)*The first thing after evolvement for Joyce was to talk to Jack. *(S6)*This was more important than any other. *(S7)*However, to her disappointment, Jack just turned away from her as he regarded her as a stranger. *(S8)*And his mom once told him not to talk to strangers.

*(S9)*Joyce was so sad and she returned to her baby brother, Jimmy, who was sound asleep at the moment. *(S10)*" Man is not so approachable as we cats", Joyce said to herself as she lay down by Jimmy and went sleep. *(S11)*In a minute, God turned up again in her dream. *(S12)*She had got something to say that demanded prompt attention. **(162 words)**

Table 2. Results of Student A11's Pre- and Post-scores

Items of criteria	Pre-task			Average	Post-task			Average
	T1	T2	T3		T1	T2	T3	
Ideas/content	4	4	4	**4**	5	5	5	**4.7**
Organization	4	4	4	**4**	4	4	5	**4.3**
Vocabulary	4	4	4	**4**	5	5	5	**5**
Language use	4	4	4	**4**	5	5	5	**5**
Mechanics	5	5	5	**5**	5	5	5	**5**
Fluency	4	4	4	**4**	4	4	5	**4.3**
Total Average	4.1	4.1	4.1	**4.1**	4.7	4.7	5	**4.8**

As indicated in Table 2, student A11's total average score in the post-course task had improved to 4.8 from 4.1 in pre-course task. The evidences were derived from the post-task writing. Firstly, in the post-task, more characters were created to make the script more meaningful and more informational than in the pre-task writing. The use of a number of phrases in the post-task such as 'used to' (S1), 'come into'(S2), 'be fond of'(S3) and 'turn into'(S4),1 etc. enriched the content of A11's piece of writing. The post-task (172 words) was longer than the pre-task (114 words). In addition, the ideas in the post-task were more interesting and creative than those in the pre-task. The idea in the pre-task was very familiar to the reader because it reflects a student's daily life, but the content seemed to be more superficial, and lifted directly from the picture itself. By contrast, in the post-task, the student had created a more imaginative main character, whose identity attracted the reader's interest and curiosity. Furthermore, the beginning and the ending of the post-task impressed the reader as having more imagination and curiosity value. The ending left the reader freedom to make further interpretations. Above all, student A11 had developed the story beyond the picture with a series of interesting and logical sequences of events. In a word, student A11's progress resided more in his/her creative ideas. Except for the inappropriate use of the word 'evolvement', there was no problem in grammar and mechanics. This indicates that student A11 had a good mastery of English language.

A21 (pre-script)

*(S1)*There is a little girl. *(S2)*She lies in bed. *(S3)*She is ill now. *(S4)*The thermometer is in her mouth. *(S5)*Her mother just went out to buy some medicine for her. *(S6)*Mommy told her not to move and keep the thermometer before she came back. *(S7)*So at this moment, the girl feels lonely and sad. *(S8)*Because she cannot go to the kindergarten to play with her friends. *(S9)*Her friend Jimmy invited her to attend his birthday party yesterday. *(S10)*But now she is unable to go to any place. *(S11)*She cries and the tear bursts out from her eyes. *(S12)*Suddenly, two toys turn up. *(S13)*They are panda and dog toys. *(S14)*The girl finds it strange. *(S15)*Because the toys can move today. *(S16)* Then she heard the toys say, "Hello, our angle. Are you OK? We'll take you to the park when you're well." *(S17)*The girl looked around, then she sees her father and mother behind the toys. **(139 words)**

A21 (post-script)

*(Stanza 1)*Baby cat, baby cat.
Little cat sits with me.
I share my dream with her,
She shares her dream with me.
*(Stanza 2)*We enter into a strange world.
Flowers, trees and candies…
I want it, I want it.
She picks a candy from the tree
Jump, run and twist
We enjoy ourselves there.
*(Stanza 3)*I miss my mother
I want to go home
No, No, No.
You cannot leave here.
I must go, I must go.
*(Stanza 4)*Suddenly, a scared ghost appears.
"Miao!" "Wow!"
Run, Run, Run.
(Stanza 5)"Oh!" I open my eyes
My baby cat is staring at me.
Smile, smile, smile
It's our secret. **(97 words)**

Table 3. Results of Student A21's Pre- and Post-Scores

Items of criteria	Pre-task			Average	Post-task			Average
	T1	T2	T3		T1	T2	T3	
Ideas/content	4	4	4	**4**	5	5	5	**5**
Organization	3	3	3	**3**	4	4	5	**4.3**
Vocabulary	4	3	4	**3.7**	4	4	4	**4**
Language use	4	4	4	**4**	5	5	5	**5**
Mechanics	4	4	4	**4**	5	5	5	**5**
Fluency	4	4	4	**4**	5	5	5	**5**
Total average	3.8	3.6	3.8	**3.7**	4.7	4.7	4.8	**4.7**

As shown in Table 3, student A21's average score in post-task (4.7) was obviously higher than the pre-task's average score (3.7). And the average score for each writing factor increased. For example, A21 made great progress in organization between the pre- and post-task. The greatest difference was between the average score for organization (4.3) in the post-task and the pre-task (3). In the pre-task, only one paragraph was used for the whole article, without showing the development of each event by paragraph divisions. This may, to some degree, create a difficulty for the reader to understand the passage clearly. However, in the post-task, A21 used several stanzas to convey ideas more clearly and more understandably to the reader.

More interesting ideas were observed in the post-task, too. In the pre-task, A21 attempted to follow a routine description from the picture (from S1 to S11), but only attempted to create one interesting idea from S12 which eventually adds fun to the article. By contrast, in the post-task, the student had used imagination to observe beyond the picture and had employed an original text-type to add more interest to the passage. Stanzas 2-5 set a delightful tone for the reader with the use of repetition. And Stanza 3 seemed to contain a dialogue between two people, which made the idea more vivid to the reader.

B11 (pre-script)

(S1)The child in the picture has a fever so she can't go to school. (S2) But she doesn't worry about it, her parents will tell the teacher what has happened. (S3)She has so many friends around her, her dolls are so cute and quiet, they won't bother her. (S4)She can has a sweet dream and become healthy tomorrow. (S5)Everyday has a dream. (S6)Today, she will have a different dream. **(64 words)**

B11 (post-script)

*(S1)*The girl is sleeping with her sister, which is a cat. *(S2)*How can this strange thing happen? *(S3)* Let me tell you. *(S4)*The girl was a cat in fact. *(S5)*When she was very young, she was sent to a family as a pet. *(S6)*Her little owner, Lisa, the daughter of the family, felt very lonely all the time. *(S7)*She always talked to the cat, and she wanted the cat to be a real person as her. *(S8)*Year after year, her feeling became stronger and stronger. *(S9)*Because of her strong will, the girl in the picture, who was a cat in fact, became a real girl. *(S10)* She can speak, she can talk to Lisa, but she didn't feel happy because she was a cat. *(S11)*She would like to be a cat forever, but failed.*(S12)* Then one day, her owner Lisa, moved house. *(S13)*The girl left Lisa and found her sister, the cat in the picture.*(S14)* She then found that the happiest thing in the world was to remain what she was before. *(S15)*She fell asleep with her sister happily. **(164 words)**

Table 4. Results of Student B11's Pre- and Post-scores

Items of criteria	**Pre-task**			**Average**	**Post-task**			**Average**
	T1	T2	T3		T1	T2	T3	
Ideas/content	2	2	3	**2.3**	4	5	5	**4.6**
Organization	3	3	3	**3**	4	4	4	**4**
Vocabulary	2	3	3	**2.6**	4	4	4	**4**
Language use	4	4	4	**4**	4	5	5	**4.6**
Mechanics	4	3	4	**3.6**	4	4	4	**4**
Fluency	3	4	4	**3.6**	4	4	5	**5**
Total average	3	3.1	3.5	**3.2**	4	4.3	4.5	**4.3**

Table 4 shows a marked improvement in the student's the post-task writing score (4.3) by comparison with that of the pre-task (3.2). The areas of the writing showing most improvement were in the fluent use of the sentence structures (5.0), the language use (4.6), as well as developing contents and ideas (4.6).

In the pre-task, the picture seemed to restrict the student's writing ideas. The ideas were completely limited to the picture. However, in the post-task, the student was able to dig more to make the ideas more insightful, and s/he is able to create more characters to add fun descriptions to the story. The student has written a longer piece for in her post-task (164 words), which was more than double the length of the pre-task (64 words). The expanded length suggested greater fluency in the production of ideas in the writing.

B21 (pre-script)

*(S1)*There is a girl lying on bed. *(S2)*Maybe she is ill, because the thermometer is on her mouth. *(S3)*She is alone, but not lonely. *(S4)* Her friends-a panda and a dog are always with her although they are only toys. *(S5)*They share happiness with her, let her know that she was not alone, her friends will stay with her. *(S6)*Although the room is dark, the girl doesn't feel fear. *(S7)*Because her friends give her power, she becomes stronger and stronger. *(S8)* The power from friends is large. **(79 words)**

B21 (post-script)

Dear Ruru, *(S1)*Ru Ru, my dear daughter. *(S2)*Mum is going to leave you to another city. *(S3)*There is an important job waiting for me. *(S4)*You are a well-behaved child. *(S5)* You always take good care of yourself, and help the grandmother do some housework. *(S6)*I believe that you will do well during my leaving. *(S7)*Please help Mum to look after your grandmother. *(S8)*Of course, do not forget our new family member, Noopy, our little cat. *(S9)* I suppose you have been good friends. *(S10)*Right? *(S11)* Do not be angry with me. *(S12)*I love you so much that I don't want to leave you, either. *(S13)*But in that city many people need my help. *(S14)*When you grow up, you will know it is a doctor's duty. *(S15)*I will write to you, I promise. *(S16)* Miss you! Yours, Mom **(121 words)**

Table 5. Results of Student B21's Pre- and Post-scores

Items of criteria	**Pre-task**			**Average**	**Post-task**			**Average**
	T1	T2	T3		T1	T2	T3	
Ideas/content	2	3	3	**2.7**	4	4	4	**4**
Organization	3	3	3	**3**	4	5	5	**4.6**
Vocabulary	3	3	3	**3**	4	4	4	**4**
Language use	3	3	3	**3**	4	4	4	**4**
Mechanics	3	3	3	**3**	4	5	5	**4.6**
Fluency	3	3	4	**3.3**	4	5	5	**4.6**
Total Average	2.8	3	3.1	**3**	4	4.5	4.5	**4.3**

As indicated in Table 5, the average score of the post-task (4.3) was much greater than that in the pre-task (3). The result could be supported by the evidences from the post-task. Firstly, the employment of the letter genre in the post-task added the originality of the text. The ideas presented in the letter showed the reader how the mother tried to convince her daughter about her leaving in easy stages. In addition, the letter addressed to a specific reader by managing to set the right tone of a mother talking to a daughter. These factors contributed to the interest and originality of the post-task. However, the ideas in the pre-task were more constrained by the picture. As a result, the ideas were plain and little more than a description of the picture. The length of the post-task script was 121 words, compared with 79 in the pre-task: a significant difference.

C11 (pre-script)

(S1)Today I was ill. (S2)My mother do not let me get out and play with my friend. (S3)I fell bad. (S4)Fortunately, there are two panders in my bed. (S5)The pander mother is looking after the pander baby. (S6)I fell I was so lucky because I have mother.

(S7)Yesterday, my classmate Xiao Hong's mother was dead because of illness.(S8) I fell sad. (S9)Now I have a idea. (S10)I will send the two panders to Xiao Hong.(S11) Maybe she'll fell well. **(68 words)**

C11 (post-script)

*(S1)*Dear friends, do you look the picture? *(S2)* a cat and a boy is sleeping. *(S3)*Yes, the boy is me and the cat is my favorite animal. *(S4)*This is a special picture for me. Now let me tell you why.

*(S5)*When my mother gave birth to me, my cat was also gave birth too. (S6)We grew up together. *(S7)*I liked it very much, *(S8)*I feed it every time. *(S9)*We bath together, play together and sleep together. *(S10)*But one thing was happened when I was seven years old. *(S11)*My cat disappear. *(S12)*No matter where I found it, it was not appeared in my house. (S13)"It must be lost on the way to go home." My mother said. *(S14)*But one month passed, my favorite cat did not appear. *(S15)* I cried. *(S16)*Who can imagine when a man lost his good friend, the feeling was so bad. *(S17)*I'm sad all the time.

(S18)"Miao, Miao" one day, I heard a cat's voice. *(S19)* It was a familiar voice. *(S20)*Oh, my cat came back home. *(S21)*"Where are you going? Why don't you come back home?" I asked it. *(S22)*Of course, it couldn't answer my question, but it looked more ugly than before. *(S23)*I washed its body. *(S24)*From then on, I sleeped with it every day. *(S25)* I touch it all the time because I was afraid it left me again. *(S26)*One day my mother photoed us when we sleeped together. **(209 words)**

Table 6. Results of Student C11's Pre- and Post-scores

Items of criteria	Pre-task			Average	Post-task			Average
	T1	T2	T3		T1	T2	T3	
Ideas/content	2	2	2	**2**	3	4	4	**3.7**
Organization	2	3	3	**2.7**	3	4	4	**3.7**
Vocabulary	2	2	2	**2**	3	3	3	**3**
Language use	2	2	2	**2**	3	3	3	**3**
Mechanics	2	3	3	**2.7**	3	3	3	**3**
Fluency	2	3	3	**2.7**	3	4	4	**3.7**
Total average	2	2.5	2.5	**2.4**	3	3.5	3.5	**3.3**

Table 6 shows that the average score (3.3) in the post-task had improved compared with that in pre-task(2.4). In the post-task, the student could elaborate the ideas and keep them flowing in Paragraphs 2 and 3. With the help of the transitional words such as 'when', 'one day', 'from then on' etc., the text tends to go more smoothly. In addition, it was noteworthy that the length of the post-task (209) was almost three times of that of the pre-task (68). It was clear that, on the one hand, the student's writing speed had improved. On the other hand, the student's ideas could be generated more quickly than before. However, there was no obvious improvement on the student's grammar and mechanics.

C21 (pre-script)

*(S1)*Lucy is ill today. *(S2)*She is lying in the bed. *(S3)*She making the thermometer on her mouth. *(S4)*The temperature is nearly 39c. *(S5)*She feel badly. *(S6)*The toys lying beside her. *(S7)*They also look bad. *(S8)*They feel unhappy because Lucy is ill. *(S9)*And they cannot play games today. (**38 words)**

C21 (post-script)

*(S1)*The girl and the cat are aslept. *(S2)*they meet in a dream and communicate with each other. [G→ the girl, C-→ the cat] G: *(S3)*My dear cat! *(S4)*I have not been aslept well for several nights. *(S5)*Can you tell me why? C: *(S6)*I'm sorry, my dear host. *(S7)*I always slept these nights because I'm too tired that I was playing all the time in the daylights. G: *(S8)*I always heard some noisy around me, and you? C: *(S9)*Maybe the noisy was from my enemy mouse, but I didn't hear that. *(S10)* I'm sorry. G: *(S11)*Can you tell me when did the mouse appear usually in the night? *(S12)*I want to catch them. C: *(S13)*after you have been aslept. G: *(S14)*You mean the whole night? *(S15)*Oh, my goodness. *(S16)*How can I deal with them? C: *(S17)*Don't worry. *(S18)*I swear I will never sleep in the night and grasp them, then you can sleep well. G: *(S19)*Thank you very much! *(S20)*You are very kind-hearted. C: *(S21)*It's my responsibility. Please rest assured. **(137 words)**

Table 7. Results of Student C21's Pre- and Post-scores

Items of criteria	**Pre-task**			**Average**	**Post-task**			**Average**
	T1	T2	T3		T1	T2	T3	
Ideas/content	2	2	2	**2**	4	4	4	**4**
Organization	2	2	2	**2**	4	4	4	**4**
Vocabulary	2	2	2	**2**	3	4	4	**3.7**
Language use	2	2	2	**2**	3	4	3	**3.3**
Mechanics	3	2	3	**2.7**	4	3	3	**3.3**
Fluency	3	2	3	**2.7**	4	4	4	**4**
Total average	2.3	2	2.3	**2.2**	3.7	3.8	3.7	**3.7**

As indicated in Table 7, the student had made a significant improvement in the post-task with the average score of 3.7. The evidence of the marked improvement could be observed from his/her post-task. Firstly, the ideas in the post-task were more creative and original as the student created a dialogue between a human being and an animal. By contrast, the ideas in the pre-task were plain and seemed more like a mere description of the picture. Secondly, the employment of the text-type, such as 'dialogue' in the post-task, added interest and originality to the text. Again, there was a great increase in length between the two scripts: from 38 words in the pre-task to 137 in the post-task. This suggested a considerable gain in confidence and fluency. However, both of the tasks were found to be very weak in terms of the appropriate use of grammar and mechanics. The improvement in these aspects was negligible.

Table 8. Summary of the Scores in Class 1 and Class 2

	A1 1	A12	A1 3	B1 1	B1 2	B1 3	C1 1	C1 2	C1 3	A2 1	A2 2	B2 1	B2 2	C2 1	C2 2
Pre-	4.1	4.1	4.0	3.2	3.7	3.8	2.4	2.8	2.7	3.7	3.7	3.0	3.0	2.4	2.2
Post	4.8	4.7	4.3	4.3	4.5	4.5	3.3	3.5	3.5	4.7	4.7	4.3	4.3	3.3	3.7

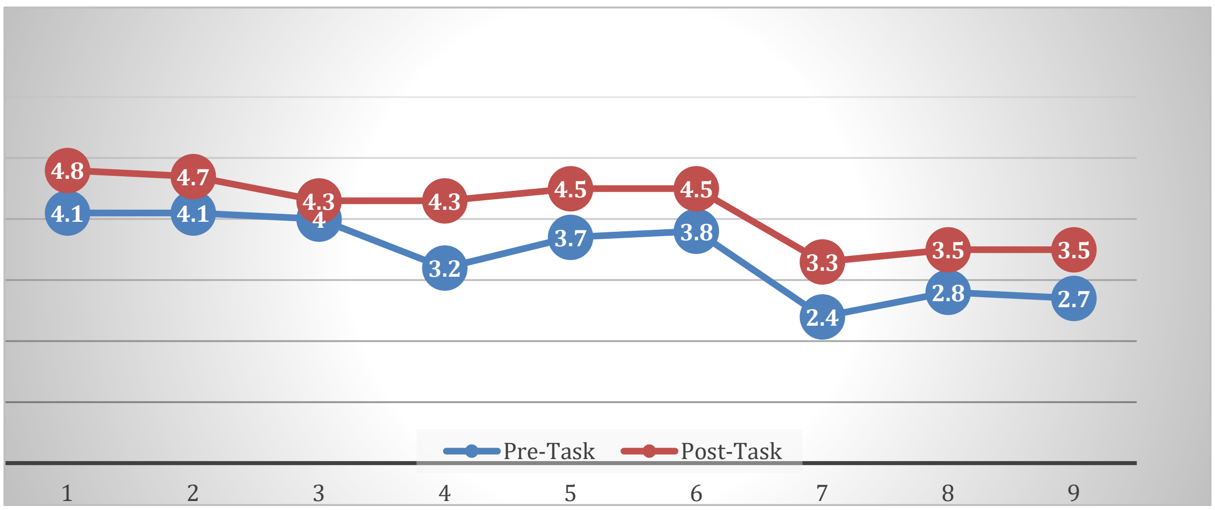

Figure 1. Summary of Pre-Task and Post-Task Scores in Class 1

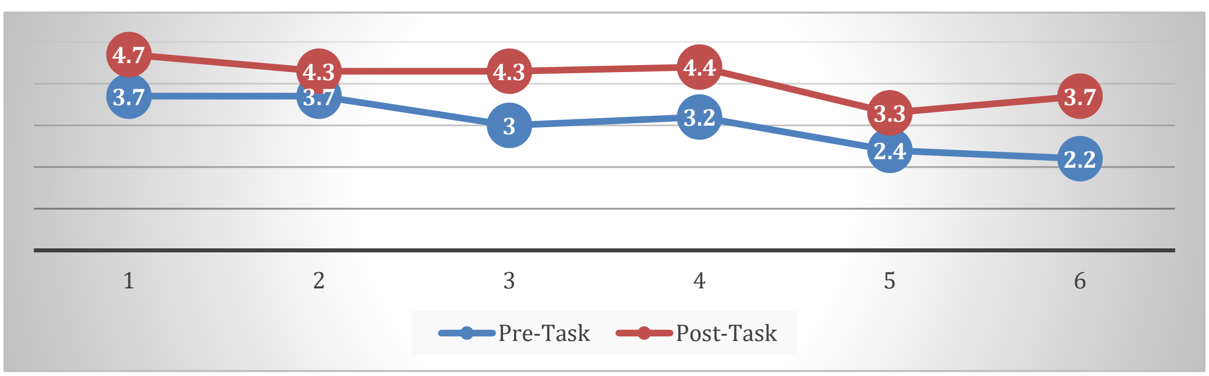

Figure 2. Summary of Pre-Task and Post-Task Scores in Class 2

Table 8 summarizes all the targeted students' pre-task and post-task scores in both class 1 and class 2. Figures 1 and 2 indicate that all students' post-task scores had increased in all the groups (A, B, and C) in both classes. More importantly, the degrees of improvement in Groups B and C in both classes were more obvious and greater those that in Group As.

Objective 2: Students' Perceptions towards Creative Writing

Table 9. Students' Perceptions of Creative Writing Experience

Which word(s) best describe creative writing in the College English course? *(Please tick the appropriate box (es). You can tick more than one box).*	Total % (N)
Interesting	75.7% (83)
Boring	0% (0)
Helpful	83.8% (91)
Unhelpful	0% (0)
Difficult	27% (29)
Easy	8.1% (9)
Challenging	35.1% (38)

Table 9 indicates that students had a highly positive attitude towards their creative writing experience. The majority of students thought the activities were helpful (75.7%) as well as interesting (75.7%). More specifically, the students rated that their creative thinking skills had been improved significantly (3.3), closely followed by increased motivation in writing (3.2).

Table 10. Students' Perceptions of Helpfulness of Creative Writing

To what extent is creative writing helpful to you in the following aspects? (*Please tick the appropriate one from the least helpful (1) to the most helpful (4)*)	***Average***
vocabulary	**2.4**
grammar	**2.3**

creative thinking	**3.3**
finding a topic	**2.7**
getting started to write	**2.8**
generating ideas	**3**
organizing ideas	**2.9**
raising interest in writing	**3.2**
raising interest in reading	**2.8**
raising awareness of learning from each other	**2.9**

Table 10 shows students' perceptions towards the helpfulness of creative writing. Through the specific training on creative writing, the most significant contribution of creative writing was to developing students' creative thinking (3.3), followed by raising interest in writing (3.2), and generating more ideas (3.0).

Table 11. Students' Preferences of Various Creative Writing

How do you like creative writing tasks in different aspects? (Please tick the appropriate one from like least (1) to like most(4)).		
Categories	***Specifications***	***Average***
Text types	description	**2.4**
	poems	**2.6**
	song lyrics	**2.8**
	short stories	**3.2**
	dialogues	**3**
	letters	**2.6**
Use of realia	pictures	**2.4**
	photos	**2.4**
	objects	**2.7**
	situations	**2.7**

	sample text type(such as poem)	**2.6**
Mode of the tasks	individual	**2.9**
	pair writing	**2.5**
	group writing	**2.3**
Final writing product	corrected by the teacher	**2.9**
	revised by yourself	**2.6**
	peer response	**2.7**
	presented in class	**2.8**
	shared out of class	**2.8**
	published	**2.9**
	shared in the college website	**2.8**

As indicated in Table 11, the short story (3.2) was the most popular creative writing type for students. And students like to write dialogue (3) and song lyrics (2.8), followed by poem and letter with the same average score of 2.6. In contrast, few students preferred descriptive writing, which achieved the lowest score of 2.4.

Regarding the use of realia in creative writing instruction, writing from objects and situations were what students "like most" with the highest average score of 2.7, followed by sample text writing (2.6), such as poetry writing. Surprisingly, the use of picture and photo with the lowest score of 2.4 was regarded as what they "like least" to write about, compared to the others.

With reference to the modes of the tasks, in the experiment three different kinds of work were employed in carrying out the activities. These were individual work, pair work and group work. The students preferred individual (2.9) to group work (2.3).

In the light of final writing product, the students showed a strong desire of sharing their products with others, including the public, teachers, friends, etc., as shown in Table 11.

Table 12. Students' Self-Reflections on Improvement in Writing

Statements	**Average**
I am gaining confidence in English writing.	**4.5**
My use of English vocabulary has expanded in my writing over the writing practice of the semester.	**3.5**
My articles now contain fewer errors in spelling and punctuation than they did previously.	**3.8**
My writing speed has become faster.	**4.2**
I have more freedom to express myself.	**4.3**
I am getting better at producing interesting and original ideas.	**3.8**
I have developed creative thinking and skills.	**4.2**
The writing samples have helped me to see new ways of organizing text, creating different text types and using language.	**4.1**
I have been motivated to write more outside the class	**4.3**

Table 12 indicates the students had not only gained confidence in English writing after the creative writing practice (4.5) but also achieved more motivation (4.3), and capabilities to express their own ideas (4.3). They increased their writing speed (4.2) with more creative thinking skills at the same time (4.2). However, the improvement in language proficiency was not as significant as other aspects as the score only stood at 3.5.

Discussion and Conclusions

The research findings have clearly shown that the application of creative writing activities is effective in increasing the college students' writing skills in English. This study's results aligns well with the mainstream research results on creative writing. This study supports the Raimes's findings (1983): creative writing not only reinforces the grammatical structures, idioms and vocabulary that we teach, but also allows students to have a chance to be adventurous with the new language based on different experiences. Moreover, Duran (2010, as cited in Tok and Akandemir, 2014) found out the development of writing skills of students was affected positively by the applications of creative writing activities in primary education. Tok and Akandemir (2014) have achieved the similar positive results when using creative writing activities on 7th grade students. Dai (2010)'s study, aiming to explore the teaching of creative writing in English to sophomores in a university China, suggested that the creative writing course allowed students the freedom to explore different aspects of their lives, and their language proficiency, therefore, improved. All these studies claim that writing skills of students are affected positively by creative writing activities in different research contexts with various research subjects.

Besides, the efficacy of the creative writing activities can be evidenced by students' positive attitudes towards the experiment as as Baş (2012) asserted that attitudes are very valuable while we are talking about education especially about language education. In this study, the majority of students believe that the creative writing activities serve more than a stimulus in the whole course; they also motive them to write more inside and outside the classroom. Students' increased learning motivation and interests in writing can also be supported by students' strong desire of sharing their products with others, including the public, teachers, friends. However, they prefer to work alone when producing creative work. Moreover, the students think they have improved their creative thinking skills, writing speed, and idea generating. Such findings also support Dai's study results, in which, the researcher argues that creative writing courses in English can provide a meaningful and positive context for "learning to write" and for "writing to learn" (Byrnes, 2011, as cited in Dai, 2015).

The study results have also shown that students have strong preferences towards the variety of the activities. Teachers should consider how to "vary as many aspects of the learning process as possible" (Dörnyei 2001, p.74) to make learning stimulating and enjoyable, such as varying language tasks and the content of the tasks. With regard to the creative writing activities, it is advisable to use more different kinds of text-types, such as short plays, advertisements, posters, mini sagas and different forms of poems, such as acrostics and Haiku. In addition, sometimes, the writing activity can be followed by a speaking activity or by listening to a piece of music, watching a segment of the video tape or observing an object, reading a passage for the sake of variety.

However, according to Dörnyei (2001, p.75), "varying the tasks is important but not even the richest variety will motivate if the content of the tasks in not attractive to the students". Therefore, being a creative writing task, the topic should be interesting and original. "If something about the activity is new or different or unfamiliar or totally unexpected, this will certainly help to eliminate boredom" (2001, p.76). And the material of the task needs to be ambiguous, problematic, paradoxical, controversial, contradictory, in order to stimulate curiosity and imagination. The results in this study regarding students' low interests in descriptive contents also support these previous findings.

Last but not least, according to the research results, students in two classes have achieved the similar improvement results even though they are taught by two different teachers, which suggests that the background of teachers might not be significant in helping students with their English writing skills, rather, the design and selection of creative writing activities are. Moreover, the creative writing activities have greater contributions to students whose writing skills are less advanced or even below the average than to students who have already had a good mastery of English writing (see figures 1 and 2), as indicated in this study.

Theoretical and Practical Implications

The findings in this study have important theoretical implications by contributing to the mainstream literature of creative writing on improving learners' writing achievement. Furthermore, even though creative writing is not new in teaching writing, not every educational practitioner, especially in China, is used to this type of teaching. It is hoped that this study could provide a practical framework for those teachers who are not used to using creative activities to teach writing in ESL or EFL classrooms.

Limitations of the Study

Though the study has shown some substantive effects, it was subject to several limitations in the study. First, to request students to write creatively within limited time (15ish minutes) is very challenging and unrealistic. The drawbacks of time constrictions are two-fold: it is difficult for students to produce high-quality work under the time pressure; and the teachers do not have enough time to give sufficient feedback to students' work.

Second, the types of creative writing are limited to common categories like poetry, story, etc. The teachers have to provide similar writing tasks during the experiment. It is challenging to come up with something completely new in every single lesson that is suitable for all students' language skills.

Recommendations for Further Research Studies

In the light of the findings and limitations of the study, the following recommendations for further research are proposed:

Firstly, this study focused only on the students’ perceptions towards the use of creative writing activities in class. It would be interesting to investigate how the teachers view and respond to this kind of writing approach. Perceptions between teachers and students could then be compared. Another possible study in relation to this research is one involving experimentation with a control group and an experimental group. The control group would follow the usual way of writing as a take-home assignment with focused essay writing. The experimental group would be taught using the same approach as in the study—using creative writing as a pre-class activity in a limited time. The study could then compare the students’ writing from the two groups, both from the point of view of creative writing skills and of conventions of essay writing skills.

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Appendix A
Assessment Criteria of Students' Scripts

poor<-- ------------------------------ -->excellent

Criteria/Scales	1	2	3	4	5
Ideas/Content	Presence of only a few relevant ideas on the topic	Evidence of a limited number of relevant and plain ideas on the topic	Evidence of satisfactorily relevant and original ideas on the topic	Evidence of sound relevant and original ideas on the topic	Evidence of excellent relevant and uniquely original ideas on the topic
Organization	little evidence of organization.	a little evidence of organization.	Some evidence of organization	Good evidence of organization	Excellent evidence of organization
Vocabulary	Very limited and simple vocabulary used hinder effectiveness to convey meaning	Simple vocabulary used, adequate to convey meaning at a basic level	Some effectiveness to convey meaning achieved through the words used	Sophisticated and appropriate register of vocabulary may be used; effectiveness achieved through the words used	Excellent in the use of the sophisticated and appropriate use of the words, effectiveness can be achieved completely
Language use	Evidence of poor mastery of sentence construction rules, poor in agreement, tense etc.	Basic mastery of sentence construction rules and a little evidence of the appropriate use in agreement, tenses etc.	Evidence of satisfactorily mastery of sentence construction rules and the appropriate use in agreement, tenses etc.	Evidence of sound mastery of sentence construction rules and the appropriate use in agreement, tenses etc.	Evidence of excellence in mastery of sentence construction rules and the use in agreement, tenses etc.
Mechanics	Errors in conventions, spellings and punctuations hinder the comprehensio n	Some mistakes in conventions, spellings and punctuations make difficult in comprehensio n	A few mistakes in conventions, spellings and punctuations do not impede understanding	Few mistakes in conventions, spellings and punctuations contribute to clarity	Evidence of excellence in conventions, spellings and punctuations.
Fluency	No evidence of flow	Very little evidence of flow	Some evidence of flow	Good evidence of flow	Excellent evidence of flow

Appendix B Writing Tasks

Writing Task

(Pre-test)

Direction: Please look at the following picture and keep writing for 15 minutes.

Please write on the 'Writing worksheet'.

(From *Monthly Composition Contest Activity*, I-Zone, British Council, Bangkok)

Worksheet

Name: Class: Date:

Writing Task

（Post-test）

Direction: Please look at the following picture and keep writing for 15 minutes.

Please write on the 'Writing worksheet'.

(From *College English Book 1,* Foreign Languages Teaching and Research Press)

Worksheet

Name: Class: Date:

Developing Nonverbal Communication Skills through Organization Development Process

Papitchaya Wisankosol

Abstract

Previous international researchers revealed that nonverbal communication could affect whether you get the best from successful negotiations, business meetings, public speaking, sales volume, or even job interviews. The main purpose of this research is to develop nonverbal communication skills in the workplace in order to increase organizational performance in any aspects, especially in sales and leadership. The research is systematized through OD (Organization Development) process by implementing appropriate OD interventions according to the expected consequences. The action research is guided into three phases (pre-ODI / ODI / and post-ODI) in order to analyze its current situation, to create interventions in accordance with the analysis, and to determine the differences between the pre and the post ODI phase. The survey was performed in a multinational workplace with 68 respondents in Bangkok, Thailand. The data was analyzed with SPSS statistical program. The results in the pre-ODI phase showed that respondents had ineffective nonverbal communication skills (primacy area for development was showing by frequency scores less than 3). In order to test the hypothesis on a significant difference between PRE and POST ODI activities on nonverbal communication skills, Organization Development Interventions (ODIs) were designed to improve the concerned skill. The same surveys were conducted again in the post-ODI phase to prove the differences. In this stage, average EQ score was improved from 93% to 107% and the average frequency score was moved above 4 to the potency area. The final results revealed that all designed workshops and interventions were effective as there was a significant difference between pre and post ODI activities on nonverbal communication skills with 95% significance level.

Keywords: nonverbal communication, body language, micro expression, business communication, organization development

Introduction

Communication is a process that allows entities to exchange information between each other. There are several methods of communication; accordingly, it requires all parties to understand a common language or symbol when communicating (Pease & Pease, 2006). Communication is not only limited to human beings but also to all living creatures in the world. Since prehistoric ages, human's way of exchanging information was not much different from other creatures. Our communication was revolutionized from the origin of speech (the usage of the tongue, lips, and vocal organs as instruments of communication), to symbols, until the creation of languages. Unsurprisingly, toddlers have the similar development. Their first communication method to express the feeling is showing through their noise, facial expression, and body signal (Ekman, 2003). Watching from adults and absorbing through times, they have learned how to communicate in more communal way whether in their speaking, facial expression, gestures, or even body signals. As we grow older and wiser, we learn to socialize our communication especially in speaking. We invent a beautiful word to satisfy listeners even though it is not what we actually think. Ninety percent of children start grasping the concept of lying since the age of four and start improving from there. According to a research conducted by University of Massachusetts psychologist Robert S. Feldman published in the Journal of Basic and Applied Social Psychology in 2002, sixty percent of people lied at least once during the average ten-minute conversation. Even more shockingly, during this study those people who lied actually told an average of three lies every ten minutes. Humans may have a talent to disguise their real feelings in their speaking but their body language never ever lies.

Body language is truly a language of its own. Researchers had found that ninety-three percent of our interpersonal communication is nonverbal (breaking down to fifty-five percent visual and thirty-eight percent vocal), leaving only seven percent for verbal communication that concerning actual words. The messages from body language are more reliable and honest than the messages from spoken words. Most of the time, they even convince people and send a silent message through their signs without them noticing it (Ekman, 2003; Mehrabian, 1981; Siegman, 1985).

According to the book "Captivate: The Science of Succeeding with People (Edwards, 2017)," five significant benefits of body language are listed as follows:

1) connecting with people better;
2) doubling the business;
3) preventing conflicts;
4) improving the presence; and
5) opening up the world.

Practicing nonverbal communication skills helps connect with people better with an expansion of communication ability. People can understand others more by observing their tiny gestures or micro expressions, which would lead to healthier relationship (Ekman, 2003). Body language is thus such an essential key to the business communication. Effective communication in the workplace leads to perfect teamwork, good understanding between leaders and employees, higher sales, greater organizational performance, and helps with diversity as well. Improving nonverbal skills helps workforce to be able to improve their communication not only within the firm, with customers, vendors, and international business partners but also within their family and in personal life.

Research Objectives

The main purpose of this research study is to improve nonverbal communication skills in the workplace through organization development intervention (ODI) process in order to increase sales skills, leadership skills, as well as overall organizational performance in the workplace. According to the main purpose, the objectives of this research are as follows:

1) to describe and analyze the current situation regarding nonverbal communication skills of the focal organization;

2) to design, develop and implement appropriate interventions regarding nonverbal communication skills;

3) to test the hypothesis on a significant difference between pre and post ODI phases; and

4) to prove the advantages of nonverbal communication skills.

Literature Review

Nonverbal Communication

Many people might perceive that speech or verbal communication is the most powerful form of communication. Conversely, as recently shown in many researches regarding communication, nonverbal communication was fully considered as the most powerful form of communication (Feldman, 2011). The studies revealed that humans were born with the ability of body language but it was covered, unlearned, and replaced with the learning process of words. Body language or nonverbal communication is connected more on subconscious level while the spoken communication is on conscious level. Therefore, people who were educated and treated by their societies would normally control their spoken communication especially in their words because they were taught to think before speak. On the other hand, nonverbal communication was the powerful article that had been ignored for long time. Since it tends to be subconscious, people were hardly to control their body language, facial expression, position of their hands and feet, and other nonverbal signs; this would be an advantage for those who could understand and translate those truthful signs (Navarro, 2008).

Micro Expression

Ones who are smiling and talking to you might really want to leave away from the conversation; as we observe from their feet which are subconsciously pointed away from you. People control their faces more than their feet, the further from the face the less control over that body parts. These "leakages" show different intentions between each body part and if they are not relevant to each other that means there is something to be discovered. One leakage that is very interesting is from micro expression. Micro Expressions are the quick facial expressions that last only less than 1/25 of a second (Ekman, 2003). They expose the real emotions of people. These expressions are universal which means all humans in this world show the same expression for similar emotion. No one can hide them as they are subconsciously controlled. When someone is lying or telling something untruthfully, their body parts will not align with their verbal contents (Ekman, 1999). It helps alert listeners to figure out the truth behind those deceptions. Recently, micro expression has been introduced to many business units; it was utilized to make successful sales, effective leaders, and professional teamwork.

Sales Skills

Numerous studies had investigated a skill set that every sales representative must master. Researchers showed variety of them like Strategic Prospecting Skills, Rapport Building Skills, Time Management Skills, Demo Skills, and Closing Skills for example (Zoltners et al., 2001; Petersen, 2008; Cheverton, 2008). Nonetheless, the most common one that every researcher mentioned about was on Communication Skills. In sales communication too, HOW we say to a prospect does matter more than WHAT we say which only accounts for 7% in the conversation. Researchers (Boone & Kurtz, 2014; Cant & Heerden, 2008) suggested that a sales representative should try to subtly mirror and match a prospect's style of talking. If a prospect seems to be more formal and mannerly, speak and act similarly; but if the prospect seems to be more informal, follow them that way. These help prospects to feel familiar with sales representatives and make it easier for them to create rapport with the prospects. A sales representative also needs to speak clearly, not too fast, not too slow, and not in a boring monotone as well as becoming an active listener. Great listening skills would help sales representatives to learn more about their prospects' needs and unquestionably most customers expected a good listening sales representative. Consequently, many of sales trainers contained the matter such tone of voice, pace and volume, talking style, mirroring and matching, and active listening to their sales training program.

Leadership Skills

Leadership has been studied for decades and it is studied more and more according to the significance of itself towards overall performance of the business. Leadership is a process of social influencing which is about leading the team to the right and successful destination (Saxena, 2009). All great leaders then require numbers of skills to support them to positively interact with their team members. One of the most significant skills for leaders that has been mentioned for all times is the communication skill (Wang & Li, 2007; Chan & Drasgow, 2001). Leaders need to be able to communicate very clearly to the teams. They must master all practices of communication including verbal communication skills like speaking with confidence, being clear, and thinking before speaking as well as nonverbal communication skills and active listening skills. Relationships between leaders and team members can also be upgraded by practicing the listening skill, as it is a vital part of creating interests in any communication. Therefore, leaders were recommended to master and acquire this soft skill together with others in communication (Singh & Rani, 2017).

Theoretical Framework

Nonverbal communication is a communication without words. People communicate through wordless clues including the use of visual such as kinesics (body language), proxemics, posture, gestures, facial expression, eye gaze, and appearance; the use of voice such as paralanguage; and the use of touch such as haptics (Feldman, 2011; Ekman, 2003). Most of the researchers on nonverbal communication have focused on the interaction between individuals. They had found that only little percentage of individual's brain processed verbal communication, the major part of it focused and interpreted on nonverbal one (Mehrabian, 1981). As children grew up and became verbal communicators by learning and experiencing, they put nonverbal skills behind. Fortunately, our subconscious mind can still interpret any facial expressions, vocal tones, and any other nonverbal clues sending from others. Nonverbal communication represents two- thirds of every communication. All five senses are used in the interaction: 83% for sight, 11% for hearing, 3% for smell, 2% for touch, and 1% for taste (Siegman, 1985). Subsequently, observing nonverbal communication is definitely precise and more reliable than listening from the verbal clues. In this research, organization development intervention is the independent variable contributing effect on the focal dependent variable, nonverbal communication skills, which lead to effective leadership skills and sales skills as a consequence (Correa-Chavez & Roberts, 2012). Since nonverbal communication accounts more than ninety percent in the communication, developing nonverbal communication skills helps increase communication skills itself, intelligence quotient (IQ), leadership skills, and sales skills in the meantime. As Thompson (2000) once stated that the major difference between successful and unsuccessful leaders is the ability to listen and understand the perspective of others. The summary of theoretical framework for this research is presented in Figure 1.

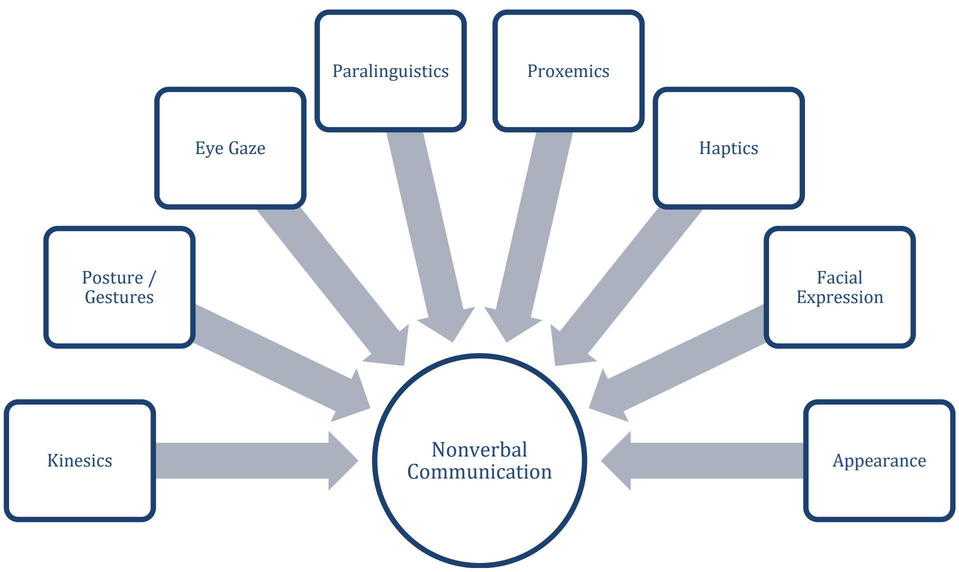


Figure 1. Theoretical Framework (Ekman, 2003; Mehrabian, 1981; Siegman, 1985)

Research Methodology

The author implemented an individual action research methodology into this research study in order to analyze the situation regarding nonverbal communication skills in two significant components of any successful organizations (leader group and sales group) and to design advantageous interventions for the development of nonverbal communication skills in those two groups. A total number of respondents in this research is 'sixty-eight' which nineteen are 'leader' respondents and forty-nine are 'sales' respondents.

Research Instruments

Qualitative Instrument

Instrument 1: Interview Guideline

An interview guideline was designed for all participants to assess their interests and understandings on nonverbal communication aspect. The open-ended questions were designed to gather their feedbacks and opinions in the pre-ODI process and again in the post-ODI process to see the difference and transformation after completing the ODI process. There were mainly two (2) questions involved based upon the concern on nonverbal communication aspects and the concern on satisfaction and happiness in the workplace. The author applied NLP techniques in the interviews such as SCORE model to let all participants feel opened to the questions and feel comfortable to express the real opinions and accurate feelings (Wake, 2008).

Instrument 2: Participant Logbook

Participant logbooks were handed out to all participants in order to note down and keep records of all feedbacks getting from processes from the interview to every intervention activity to the self-evaluation after the whole procedure.

Instrument 3: Observation Guideline

An observation guideline was prepared for author's use to observe the respondents' reflection, intention, and most importantly transformation during each ODI activity. There were checklists regarding nonverbal communication skills so that the author could bring to the analysis and make conclusion of the whole research.

Quantitative Instrument

Instrument 4: Emotional Intelligence Assessment

Instrument 5: Nonverbal Communication Skills Self-Assessment

The author designed Nonverbal Communication Skills Assessment based on nonverbal communication theories and knowledge for all participants to assess themselves a set of skills on nonverbal communication and to identify a need for improvement. All participants (68) were required to assess themselves twice before and after the ODI process based on five-point Likert Scale measuring 'Frequency Scores' listing from Never (score = 1), Rarely (score = 2), Sometimes (score = 3), Often (score = 4), to Always (score = 5). In total, there were twenty-two (22) items in the assessment. It was comprised of four (4) items in the first section (General Information) and eighteen (18) items in the second section (Nonverbal Communication Skills). The author was intended to improve clients' nonverbal communication skills from one point to more effective point by involving ODI activities regarding nonverbal communication. There were three areas of development; results from the survey would be categorized into each area.

- Primacy Area for Development (frequency scores less than 3): To earn and step on better nonverbal communication skills, practices were needed as early as possible.
- Area for Development (frequency scores above or equal to 3 but less than 4): Practices for nonverbal communication skills were needed.
- Potency Area (frequency scores above or equal to 4): This was the ultimate outcome researcher expected to meet particularly after the ODI activities. 'Primacy Area for Development' and 'Area for Development' were projected to shift here from ODI stage afterwards.

Frequency, Percentage, Means, and Standard Deviation (SD) of descriptive statistics as well as Paired Samples T-Test were applied to compare the differences between the pre-ODI and the post-ODI phases.

Data Collection

Phase I: Diagnosis (Pre-ODI Phase)

The author assessed focal workplace through qualitative and quantitative methods using questionnaires, assessment, and interviews with observation. The initial observation helped the author identify organizational problems. The author then conducted interviews and survey questionnaires to assess the level of problem concerned. The outcomes obtaining from the whole assessment process uncovered that all members in the focal workplace needed more effective communication skills. Communication skills were strongly concerned as all members needed to cooperate with other functions; especially leaders and salespersons who needed to communicate to others at all times. Ineffectual communication skills will definitely lead to unproductive performance of the organization.

Phase II: Development Change (OD Intervention Phase)

Subsequently, the author analyzed results and outcomes getting from the diagnosis phase. The main purpose in this transformation development phase was to improve nonverbal communication skills of the focal organization's workforces. Based upon nonverbal communication literatures and theories, the author designed four interventions to improve overall communication skills of the workforce (emphasizing on nonverbal communication skills. The designed OD intervention activities took thoroughly five months to be accomplished. The principal purposes of these selected OD intervention activities are as follows:

1) to improve leadership skills and competencies (especially in communication and motivation);
2) to improve sales skills (especially in communication and relationship);
3) to improve relationship amongst team members; and
4) to diminish gaps between leaders and team members.

Table 1. Designed Interventions

Interventions	Objectives / Benefits	Participants	Duration
THE LEADER (Effective Communication Training)	- Improve both verbal and nonverbal communication - Become an active listener - Communicate more effectively - Build group collaboration - Enhance English proficiency - Able to write effective short notes - Improve communication confidence	Leader Team	2 Days
THE WIZARD (Micro Expression and Body Language Training)	- Improve emotional intelligence - Improve intelligence quotient - Enhance relationships - Spot concealed emotions - Develop capacity for empathy - Understand others	Leader and Sales	2 Days

THE SIRIUS (Self and Esteem Development Training)	- Improve all areas of life - Become outstanding - Improve self-esteem - Enhance happiness in life - Improve confidence and passion - Become motivated	Leader and Sales	1 Day
(Effective Communication Training for Sales)	- Improve both verbal and nonverbal communication - Become an active listener - Communicate more effectively - Build group collaboration - Enhance good relationship with customers - Able to write effective short notes - Improve communication confidence	Sales Team	2 Days

To explain the table above, here are designed interventions in details**:**

Effective Communication Training: To improve both verbal and non**-** verbal communication. They would become active listener and communicate more effectively. NLP techniques would help audiences learn it with passion and enjoyment.

Self and Esteem Development Training: To improve all areas of life. Both leaders and sales would become outstanding and shining in their personal and professional lives. They would have more confidence and passion. Besides, they would be able to motivate and communicate effectively with their colleagues.

Micro Expression and Body Language Training: To introduce micro expressions and point out the importance of it. Participants would practice micro expressions and body language and would be able to practically implement in their daily lives.

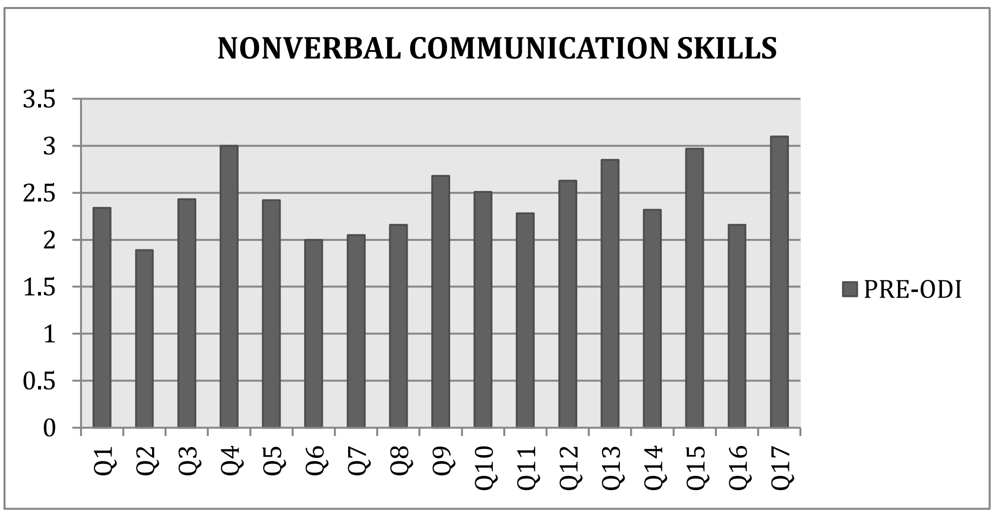
Phase III: Evaluation (Post-ODI Phase)

In this evaluation phase after all ODI processes, the author re-assessed focal workplace through qualitative and quantitative methods again using same tools in the pre-ODI phase: questionnaires, assessment, and interview with observation. The outcomes obtaining from the whole assessment process in this phase had thoroughly changed and improved. All provided workshops and trainings were proved as a set of effective interventions that could positively benefit and increase nonverbal communication skills of each workforce.

Research Findings

Pre-ODI Phase

Nonverbal Communication Skills



The result receiving from ‘nonverbal communication skills’ self-assessment in pre-ODI phase showed that the average level of nonverbal communication skills of all participants was around 2.5 which was considered as low as in the primacy area for development. Then the author designed an intervention to improve nonverbal communication skills and implemented in ODI phase.

Happiness in the Workplace

The result from 'happiness in the workplace' interview in pre-ODI phase also supported that an intervention should be implemented. As it showed that the communication in this place was in chaos. Participants with leading position were hoping their followers to catch every point they said while all followers were expecting their bosses to understand what they were trying to tell. The happiness level was in danger, this assumption was supported by the qualitative results getting from an observation and interview conducted by the author. Here are some excerpts from the 'sales' participants during the interview:

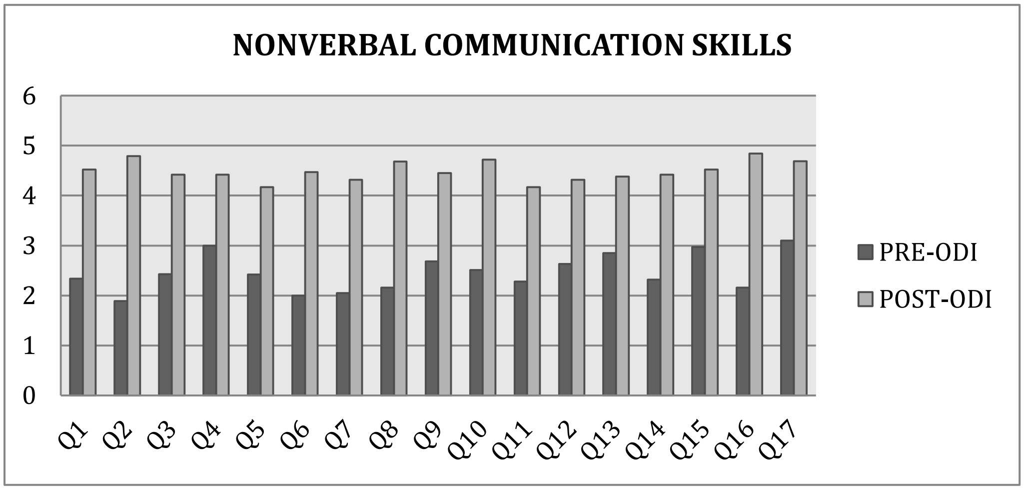
> *"I think there are so many 'miscommunications' in here."*
>
> *"I'm sure she's lying to me."*
>
> *"He speaks too fast and I can't catch any."*

Emotional Intelligence

The author also provided an EQ test for participants to assess themselves before developing nonverbal communication skills as previous research from Wezowski (2012) showed that nonverbal communication skills could increase Emotional Intelligence (EQ) with an average of 10% within 4-hour training. The average EQ of the participants evaluated in pre-ODI phase was 93%. According to the research (Wezowski, 2012), the author wanted to prove that an average EQ of the group would increase after OD interventions.

Post-ODI Phase

Nonverbal Communication Skills



The result receiving from 'nonverbal communication skills' self-assessment in post-ODI phase showed that the average level of nonverbal communication skills of all participants had increased from around 2.5 to around 4.5 after taking the intervention process.

Happiness in the Workplace

Also, it seemed that the communication in this place was totally changed. The happiness level had increased, this assumption was again shown by the qualitative results getting from observation and interview conducted after ODI phase. Here are some excerpts during an interview:

> *"It gives me more confidence when I have to negotiate."*
>
> *"I feel like I'm having a sixth sense."*
>
> *"Lie to me, and I'll catch them."*
>
> *"Thank you. I get more sales!"*

Emotional Intelligence

The author proved the previous research from Wezowski (2012) that Emotional Intelligence (EQ) could increase around 10% within 4-hour nonverbal communication training. The average EQ of the participants evaluated in pre-ODI phase was 93%; after the intervention, the average EQ of the participants increased to 107%. This showed that an average EQ of this group had increase around 14%. Wezowski's research result was supported, even though the overall training process took longer than 4 hours.

Summary of Post-ODI Phase

After the whole intervention process had completed, all results were positively changed. The scores on every assessment had improved. The data analysis revealed that designed activities had a positive impact on nonverbal communication skills.

Table 2. Quantitative Data Analysis for Nonverbal Communication Skills (pre / post comparison)

	(Pre-ODI)		(Post-ODI)	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Q1 How often do you think that you pay attention to nonverbal cues when communicating with someone?	2.34	0.64	4.52	0.57
Q2 How often do you observe others' hand gestures when communicating?	1.89	1.05	4.79	0.42
Q3 How often do you observe others' tone of voice when communicating?	2.43	0.81	4.42	0.57
Q4 How often do you observe others' eye contact when communicating?	3.00	1.11	4.42	0.84
Q5 How often do you observe others' facial expression?	2.42	0.95	4.17	0.62
Q6 How often do you rely on nonverbal cues to make a decision or conclusion on something?	2.00	0.94	4.47	0.61
Q7 How often do you interpret others based on their nonverbal cues?	2.05	0.92	4.32	0.57

Q8 How well are you able to tell if others are HAPPY by use of nonverbal cues?	2.16	0.83	4.68	0.48
Q9 How well are you able to tell if others are ANGRY by use of nonverbal cues?	2.68	0.80	4.45	0.59
Q10 How well are you able to tell if others are SAD by use of nonverbal cues?	2.51	0.83	4.72	0.45
Q11 How well are you able to tell if others are SURPRISED by use of nonverbal cues?	2.28	0.73	4.17	0.69
Q12 How well are you able to tell if others are FEARED by use of nonverbal cues?	2.63	0.76	4.32	0.58
Q13 How well are you able to tell if others are CONTEMPTING by use of nonverbal cues?	2.85	0.62	4.38	0.52
Q14 How well are you able to tell if others are DISGUSTED by use of nonverbal cues?	2.32	0.67	4.42	0.61
Q15 When you have seen others at the end of the day, how well are you able to tell how their day has been based on their nonverbal cues?	2.97	0.75	4.52	0.53
Q16 How well are you able to detect others' deception based on their nonverbal cues?	2.16	0.83	4.84	0.37
Q17 How often do you intentionally use body language to express your feelings?	3.10	0.63	4.69	0.46

Hypothesis Testing

Ho: There is no significant difference between PRE and POST ODI activities on nonverbal communication skills.

Ha: There is a significant difference between PRE and POST ODI activities on nonverbal communication skills.

Table 3. Paired Samples T-Test for Nonverbal Communication Skills

		Paired Differences					Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		
					Lower	Upper	
Pair 1	How often do you think that you pay attention to nonverbal cues when communicating with someone?	-.1769	.38308	.03360	-.2434	-.1104	.000
Pair 2	How often do you observe others' hand gestures when communicating?	-1.8947	1.10024	.25241	-2.4250	-1.3644	.000
Pair 3	How often do you observe others' tone of voice when communicating?	-.9923	.95232	.08352	-1.1576	-.8271	.000
Pair 4	How often do you observe others' eye contact when communicating?	-1.4211	1.34643	.30889	-2.0700	-.7721	.000
Pair 5	How often do you observe others' facial expression?	-.7538	.94878	.08321	-.9185	-.5892	.000
Pair 6	How often do you rely on nonverbal cues to make a decision or conclusion on something?	-1.4737	1.07333	.24624	-1.9910	-.9564	.000
Pair 7	How often do you interpret others based on their nonverbal cues?	-1.2615	.96089	.08428	-1.4283	-1.0948	.000
Pair 8	How well are you able to tell if others are	-1.5263	.77233	.17718	-1.8986	-1.1541	.000

	HAPPY by use of nonverbal cues?						
Pair 9	How well are you able to tell if others are ANGRY by use of nonverbal cues?	-.7692	.91954	.08065	-.9288	-.6097	.000
Pair 10	How well are you able to tell if others are SAD by use of nonverbal cues?	-1.2077	.92925	.08150	-1.3689	-1.0464	.000
Pair 11	How well are you able to tell if others are SURPRISED by use of nonverbal cues?	-.8923	.88262	.07741	-1.0455	-.7391	.000
Pair 12	How well are you able to tell if others are FEARED by use of nonverbal cues?	-.6842	.47757	.10956	-.9144	-.4540	.000
Pair 13	How well are you able to tell if others are CONTEMPTING by use of nonverbal cues?	-.5308	.74904	.06570	-.6607	-.4008	.000
Pair 14	How well are you able to tell if others are DISGUSTED by use of nonverbal cues?	-1.1053	.65784	.15092	-1.4223	-.7882	.000
Pair 15	When you have seen others at the end of the day, how well are you able to tell how their day has been based on their nonverbal cues?	-.5462	.78860	.06916	-.6830	-.4093	.000

Pair 16	How well are you able to detect others' deception based on their nonverbal cues?	-1.6842	.74927	.17189	-2.0453	-1.3231	.000
Pair 17	How often do you intentionally use body language to express your feelings?	-.5923	.72279	.06339	-.7177	-.4669	.000

As shown in Table 3, the p-value of all variables of cross-cultural leadership skills are less than 0.05 (< .05). Therefore, the Null Hypothesis (Ho) is rejected and Alternative Hypothesis (Ha) is accepted. There is a significant difference between PRE and POST ODI activities on nonverbal communication skills with 95% significance level.

As a consequence, all members were happier to work together, there were less misunderstandings amongst them, employee engagement level had increased, leaders were satisfied with the overall result, and could also support the author's previous research on communication that effective communications could create effective leaders and gave them credibility as well as increased commitment and loyalty from employees to leaders and the organization (Wisankosol, 2015).

Summary of the Findings and Conclusion

The research findings signified that OD interventions designed by the author had a significant influence on nonverbal communication skills of the focal organization's workforce and proved hypothesis that there is a significant difference between pre and post ODI activities on their nonverbal communication skills. Starting from the results found in the pre-ODI phase, the major problem of this focal company was about communicating. All workforces, especially leaders and sales team, was lacking of an effective communication skill. After an observation, the author pointed out a matter of nonverbal communication skills as the initial conclusion to the management team. They immediately agreed with the point. Thus, the OD interventions were designed to align with the initial observation and analysis. Four OD interventions regarding nonverbal communication skills were proposed to the management team. There were 'Effective Communication' training for leaders, 'Micro Expression and Body Language' training, 'Self and Esteem Development' workshop, and 'Effective Communication' training for sales.

The findings from the post- ODI phase indicated that ODI process contributed to a development of nonverbal communication skills of the workforce. There was statistically significant improvement from the pre-ODI phase to the post-ODI phase on this concerned variable. The mean scores had increased accordingly. Leaders realized that effective communication skills could produce them more effective. Additionally, sales people agreed with the leaders and found the positive results in their sales activities. Two- way communication was developed and replaced the previous one- way communication in regular conversations. This had brought a positive impact on organizational efficiency and working ambiance to the workplace.

Furthermore, the empirical results also revealed and confirmed many previous research studies (Barge, 1994; Barker & Watson, 2000; Barrett, 2010; Bechler & Johnson, 1995; Brownell, 1990; Craig, 1999; Flauto, 1999; Hesselbein, 2003; Hunt & Cusella, 1983; Lundsteen, 1979) that effective communication skills had positive impacts on intelligence quotient (IQ), emotional intelligence (EQ), workplace happiness, employee satisfaction, and organizational performance.

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Interactional Metadiscourse Markers in Applied Linguistics Research Articles: A cross-cultural analysis

Thapanee Musiget
Kanyarat Getkham

Abstract

This study sought to examine how interactional metadiscourse markers (IMMs) written by native (NE) and non-native English (NNE) writers were used and whether differences existed in English applied linguistics research articles (RAs). Selection of five international leading journals was based on the SCImago Journal Rank 2014, creating a corpus of 60 RAs. The model of analysis was suggested by Hyland's (2005) IMMs. Findings revealed that each IMM functioned differently. For instance, hedges functioned as a detachment tool, boosters implied a writer's certainty, attitude markers expressed a writer's affection, self-mentions performed as a writer's existence and engagement markers functioned as an engaging tool. Moreover, there were some significant differences in the use of hedges, attitude markers and engagement markers. There were also some significant differences in hedging devices (adverb and noun), boosting devices (adverb), attitudinal devices (adjective and verb) and engaging devices (imperative directive).

Keywords: metadiscourse, interactional metadiscourse markers, applied linguistics, academic writing, research articles, corpus analysis

Introduction

Research writing is one of the foundational cornerstones of scholastic production. Large numbers of studies have been established to investigate the influence of the writer-reader relationship in research writing (e.g. Crismore, 1983; Hyland & Tse, 2004; Hyland, 2005; Vande Kopple, 1985, 2002). In order to convey the intellectual meaning through the written form of research writing and its communication, metadiscourse markers are claimed as a requisite device (e.g. Hyland, 2000; Hyland & Tse, 2004; Hyland, 2005). Because the theory of metadiscourse is a filter to sort the writers' ideas before these ideas are passed on to the readers, the models of metadiscourse markers were proposed by Vande Kopple (1985) and Crismore et al. (1993), for example. Nevertheless, the metadiscourse model proposed by Hyland (2005) has gained much recognition, and several social science studies borrow Hyland's (2005) metadiscourse markers as a model to analyze language and rhetorical devices (e.g. Getkham, 2011; Mur-Duenas, 2007). Furthermore, according to Hyland (2005), interactional metadiscourse markers (IMMs) are more personal to the readers in terms of showing writer-reader relationship. Hence, the IMMs model proposed by Hyland (2005) will be applied to the current study of culture and language in English applied linguistics research articles (RAs) written by native (NE) and non-native English (NNE) writers in order to shed some light on cultural perspectives in English RAs. Therefore, the study aimed at two objectives which brought about two research questions in the following part.

Objectives of the Study

1) To explore the functions of IMMs used in the applied linguistics research articles of NE and NNE writers.

2) To explore whether or not differences exist in the use of IMMs between NE and NNE writers.

Research Questions

RQ1. What are the functions of each of the type of IMMs?

RQ2. Are there any significant differences in the use of IMMs in research articles by NE and NNE writers?

Literature Review

Interactional Metadiscourse Markers and Empirical Studies

Hyland (2005) explains that IMMs are concerned with attempts to manage the level of the writers' existence and deal with the establishment of intimacy with the readers as their function can establish a relationship for both ends. The five main elements which are widely studied are *hedges, boosters, attitude markers, self-mentions* and *engagement markers.*

Hedges are used to demonstrate each writer's collegial deference (Hyland, 1999) and help writers to avoid confrontation with the owners of the works when they are criticized (Getkham, 2011). At the same time, boosters are used to propose writers' certainty (Hyland 2005). Also, Hyland (1999) states that attitude markers are used to show a writer's affective thoughts towards the textual information. For self-mentions, it is used as a presentation of writers and to certify themselves as a knowledgeable and accountable member of the discipline (Hyland, 2001, 2002; Tang & John, 1999). Last**,** engagement markers are used to effectively convene the readers' expectations and to engage the audience (Hyland, 2005). There are studies which explored the use of these IMMs in cross-cultural perspectives.

Atai and Sadr (2006) also witnessed the vitality of hedging devices in applied linguistics RAs written by English and Persian speakers. One hundred and eight RAs were compared for hedges through chi-square analysis. The results reported that there were some significant differences between the two cultures in the use of each of the types of hedging devices. NE speakers have a variety of hedges in their textual presentations in order to interact with applied linguistics readers. The smaller number of hedges, used by NE Persian speakers, is evident showing a limited degree of interpersonal approach to the audience. The study stated that the reason for the opting of hedges in the academic writing of writers from diverse backgrounds "may be linked to the different culturally determined paradigms and frameworks that influence writers' rhetorical choices" (as cited in Atai & Sadr, 2006: 53).

Similarly, Abdollahzadeh (2011) investigated the use of boosters written by Anglo-American and Iranian writers. To this end, 60 applied linguistics RAs which had been written during 2000 - 2004 were selected. The results demonstrated that the NE had applied the use of boosters with greater frequency than the Iranian writers had. Adverbials were employed the most by both groups followed by modal auxiliaries. Adjectival or verbal boosters showed the least frequency in establishing the significance of the work by the Iranian writers. Also, NE writers showed the same frequencies of verbs and adjectivals in this study. The explanation was that the NE writers had used boosters to a larger extent than NNE ones because their boosters had served a variety of purposes. Meanwhile, the Iranian authors employed boosting devices to underline the general notion in order to support their results and to highlight findings which offered support to their primary hypotheses.

Millan (2012) claimed that writing scholars have tactically deployed attitude markers to magnetize editors and reviewers. Accordingly, this investigation consisted of a corpus of 72 RAs, published internationally in English from Applied Linguistics (AL), Business Management (BM), and Food Technology (FTech). Correspondingly, 36 Spanish RAs in the same three disciplines were used as the control group. The outcomes have demonstrated that the need for attitudinal evaluation depends upon the writers' intentions of whether to be published locally or internationally since RAs written for local readers in Spanish contained a lesser degree of the writers' integrity than did certain disciplinary conventions presented in international articles.

Both qualitatively and quantitatively, Mur-Duenas (2007) examined the use of self-mentions across cultures. The analysis aimed at contrastively analyzing the employment of self-mentions in English and Spanish Social Sciences RAs. All articles had been published in 2003 and 2004. The findings showed that as NE authors, who had addressed the international discourse community, had demonstrated more self-presentation than their Spanish colleagues had used when addressing the national academic community in Spain. The researcher explained that Anglo-Saxon speakers are generally believed to use possessive adjectives more regularly than their Spanish counterparts. In conclusion, the results revealed that national Spanish culture had been more prone to positive politeness strategies because the writers emphasized in-group and involvement in their texts (Hickey, 1991, 2005, as cited in Mur-Duenas, 2007). While the Anglo-Saxon culture had seemed to favor the use of self-mentions to a greater extent in order that the writers could obtain the legitimacy and authority of their works within the immense culture of academic writing.

The final element of the IMMs is engagement markers Lafuente-Millan, (2014) quantitatively and contrastively analyzed a corpus of 24 Business Management articles. Considering the diversity of the cultures and languages as a topic to be comprehended, English and Spanish articles were selected from the context of local and international publications. Chi-square statistical tests were performed. The results indicated that the language and context of the publication, and the national culture had revealed diverse effects on the use of engagement markers. Cultural values had played a more important role in defining the use of engaging strategies. One more aspect of L1 to L2 proficiency had some bearing on the use of engagement markers which meant that writers' command of English and their interlanguage were both lacking.

Methodology

Corpus

The total corpus size was approximately 495,301 words including 230,612 words from NE writers and 264,689 words from NNE writers. All articles were collected from top five leading journals based on the SCImago Journal Rank 2014 (the SCImago Journal Rank 2015 was not announced then). The journals are *Journal of Second Language Writing*, *Language Learning*, *English for Specific Purposes*, *Studies in Second Language Acquisition* and *Reading and Writing*. By using journals with high impact factors, the selection of the data could help to avoid the researcher's biases and subjectivity (Kanoksilapatham, 2003). The size of this corpus was designed for 30 NE and 30 NNE English applied linguistics RAs published from 2006 to 2015. RAs were accumulated by random sampling method to ensure that the files contributed a similar representation of authorial stance in those periods. By primarily using writers' names as main source of collection, the ten-year-period could make possible the distinction between NE and NNE writers than selecting from a shorter time frame.

The theoretical framework for this investigation is Hyland's (2005) IMMs. The AntConc Text Concordance Software program version 3.4.4 (Anthony, 2015) was used to count the frequency. Also, the obtained data was normalized for every 1,000 words (Biber, 1995). Then, the three verifiers made a consensus regarding functions based on Hyland's (2005) interactional metadiscourse model.

Data Analysis

For the first research question, functional interpretation was applied to analyze the functions of each IMMs. The analysis started at the sentence level. Text and context were considered as the main sources of information by providing the objectives of the usage of the markers. Then according to their functions, the markers were specified individually with the interpretation. Hyland's (2005) model was presented in the following descriptions:

1) **Hedges**: to withhold commitment and open dialogue
2) **Boosters:** to emphasize certainty and close dialogue
3) **Attitude markers**: to express the writer's attitude to proposition
4) **Self-mentions**: to explicitly reference the author(s)
5) **Engagement markers**: to explicitly build a relationship with the reader

For the second research question, the differences in the usage of IMMs between NE and NNE RAs were analyzed by an Independent Sample T-test. Then the occurrence of any dissimilarity was revealed at the confidential level set at 0.05. The dependent variables for this research question were the normalized frequencies of the IMMs, and the independent variables were a group of NE and NNE RAs. The results were further explored through cross-cultural perspectives by using Nasiri's (2012) features of academic writing of English culture as a platform for cross-cultural investigation to compare and contrast NE with any NNE culture. The features which were used as follows:

1) **Formality** refers to writers' recognition of academic values.
2) **Precision** refers to any facts which can be demonstrated in the text in order to evade the readers from misunderstanding.
3) **Objectivity** refers to words or patterns of writing which convey general objective rather than personal subject.
4) **Hedging** refers to a feature which demonstrates level of certainty. It also invites readers to judge the truth value of the assertions.

Results

Functions of Each Interactional Metadiscourse Marker

The study found that hedges were used to propose writers' opinions with various realizations. First, hedges are used to create objective stance of the writers. Even though credibility and validity are generally reported by the writers, hedges perform as a tool that allows future rejections by lessening forceful textual production (Getkham, 2011). Second, they are used to question any existing ideas in a considerate approach. Their precision can be drawn in the most possible way by depending on hedging devices in contributing arguments in the text. These two functions also ground writer-reader relationship specifically when readers are left to further their thoughts after reading the text.

Boosters have also been the second most mentioned apart from hedges. First, boosters perform as a claim strengthener when writers believe that their point is supported with adequate evidence. Writers do not boost to force in support of mutual judgment. Readers are welcomed to negotiate their views as the writers usually overt in order to construct a territory in their academic writing. Second, boosters function as an invitation to the readers as stance is made clear so that the readers are invited to bond themselves attached to the argument or against within their own consideration.

Apart from hedges and boosters, an evaluative nature of academic writers is portrayed through the use of attitude markers. This study found that the function of attitude markers is a presentation of writers to disclose either their affection or aversion. Writers use attitude markers to reveal their attitudinal opinion rather than fact by emphasizing an evaluation within the text. Rather than demonstrating plain information, writers personally elaborate by presenting partiality of self to the readers. In addition, the writers use these markers to respond to presented academic writing by introducing writer-based sentiment so that the position is made obvious.

Next, academic writers use self-mentions to present themselves along the text. The result shows that self-mentions function as a reference of knowledgeable agent. The use of self-mentions entails the sense of possession that the text in which readers engage is produced through the individuality of the writers. Also, the mention of self is a tactical method to claim that the exploration and analysis are legitimate as the writers can mark their contribution by the use of self-mentions and make apparent to the readers evidently.

Finally, engagement markers and their function will be described according to the current analysis. Their main role, based on this study, is to interact with the readers and perform as writers' invitation, for several occasions, to be more critically engage in textual discourse. Writers' determination is to perform as an interlocutor and use engagement markers to include readers as member of the context, for instance. It seems that the more writers use engagement markers to interact with their readers, the better interrelation with readers through their academic writing can occur.

Differences in the Use of Interactional Metadiscourse Markers and Devices

An independent sample T-test was conducted to compare differences in the use of IMMs and their devices between NE and NNE RAs.

Table 1. Significant Differences in the Use of Five Interactional Metadiscourse Markers between NE and NNE Research Articles

		t-test for Equality of Means		
		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
H	Equal variances assumed	2.213	238	*0.028
A	Equal variances assumed	3.015	238	**0.003
E	Equal variances assumed	2.67	238	**0.008

* = < .05
** = < .01

There is a significant difference in the use of hedges between NE (M = 15.93) and NNE (M = 11.62) RAs; df (238) t = 2.213, $p < .05$. Also, a significance difference occurs in the use of attitude markers between NE (M = 3.50) and NNE (M = 2.17) RAs; df (238) t = 3.015, $p < .01$. In addition, a significance difference occurs in the use of engagement markers between NE (M = 2.98) and NNE (M = 1.95) RAs; df (238) t = 2.670, $p < .01$.

Table 2. Significant differences in the Use of Interactional Metadiscourse Marker Devices between NE and NNE Research Articles

		t-test for Equality of Means		
		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
AdvH	Equal variances assumed	2.324	238	*.021
NH	Equal variances assumed	-2.468	238	*.014
AdvB	Equal variances assumed	2.011	238	*.045
AdjA	Equal variances assumed	2.594	238	**.010

VA	Equal variances assumed	3.059	238	**.002
IDE	Equal variances assumed	2.084	238	*.038

* = < .05
** = < .01

There is a significant difference in the use of adverb hedges between NE (M = 2.97) and NNE (M = 2.30) RAs; df (238) t = 2.342, $p < .05$. Also, a significance difference occurs in the use of noun hedges between NE (M = 0.22) and NNE (M = 0.60) RAs; df (238) t = -2.468, $p < .05$. Besides, there is a difference in the use of adverb boosters between NE (M = 1.14) and NNE (M = 0.65) RAs; df (238) t = 2.594, $p < .05$. Adjective attitude markers are also reported a significant difference between NE (M = 2.00) and NNE (M = 1.19) RAs; df (238) t = 2.011, p = .01. Verb attitude markers are also used differently between NE (M = 0.44) and NNE (M = 0.18) RAs; df (238) t = 3.059, $p < .01$. For engagement marker device, imperative directives are also used differently between NE (M = 2.03) and NNE (M = 1.45) RAs; df (238) t = 2.084, $p < .05$.

Discussion

Functions of Each Type of Interactional Metadiscourse Markers

Hedges

To start with the first function of hedges, researchers used hedges to lessen degree of exactness. Even though, within the academic context, writers should validate their claim to gain recognition, hedges are used to mitigate assertions in their writing to evade from forceful interface within the text as in the revision (Hyland, 1999). This can be seen in the following example.

> e.g.1: There was also a *tendency* for RAs to be more cautious and tentative. [D.NE18]

Hedges are also used to address existing notion or shared practice in yielding tone as any emphasis is not a compulsory to the readers. Instead, even though writers intend to deal with widely-accepted information, they can humble their work by lessen precision level. It can be seen in the following example.

> e.g.2: Despite the *relatively* young age of students in kindergarten, being able to write letters automatically and legibility has implications for children’s future writing proficiency. [D.NE27]

Apart from that, writers allow themselves to initiate their opinions and to settle their objectivity by using hedges. In the text, hedges imply to audiences that messages transmit plausible reason rather than provable fact as following example provided.

> e.g.3: ..., and *probably* also because of the somewhat ambiguous title of the article, this study has, time after time, been presented as strong evidence [I.NNE23]

Besides, according to Getkham (2011), hedges help writers to avoid conflict with other researchers when contradiction or criticism occurs, and this can be seen in the following example.

> e.g.4: Furthermore, the crucial *assumption* is that there will be an exact overlap between the trace-induced reactivation of the filler and the participant's response. [I.NE22]

Next, hedges invite readers to reflect on writers' proposal by creating discursive room in which readers are allowed to debate as can be seen in the following example. E.g.5: It *may* be argued that the mere fact that Finnish and Russian have case endings....[I.NNE21]

Boosters

The second interactional metadiscourse which are discussed is boosters. As reviewed, the first function of boosters is broadly recognized as a rhetorical tool to underline researchers' certainty when they assert their work (Hyland, 2008). This can be seen in the following example.

> e.g.6: ...which was *clearly evident* from their high pretest scores on the ungrammatical sentences... [D.NE20]

Second, boosters are used with an intention to shake readers' determination. Writers involve with their audiences by shooting overt statement as boosting devices are used to draw attention to data presented in the study. It can be seen in the following example.

> e.g.7: *Obviously*, one way that teachers can influence the vocabulary growth of these students is through vocabulary instruction. [I.NE26]

Frequently, apart from research results, truth is presented in research writing, so boosters are used to stress this sort of information. Hyland (1999) also states that boosting devices are used to cohesively contact readers by highlighting shared knowledge so that readers can create their membership along the text as following example provided.

> e.g.8: Language *always* changes in response to social, economic and political development... [I.NNE15]

Attitude Markers

Apart from demonstrating opinion, fact, detachment and commitment, writers can also create more intimacy with their readers by using attitude markers. According to previous review of Hyland (1999), attitude markers are used to signify the writers' preference by helping readers to aware of authorial position considerably, and this can be seen in the following example.

> e.g.9: ..., it is *necessary* to present changes in the degree to which the students attempted to reconstruct the original meaning in their own words. [R.NNE6]

Self-mentions

The forth IMM is self-mentions. To start with the first function, self-mentions are used to instigate authorial roles. According to Tang and John (1999) in the review, self-mention devices are used to facilitate the presence of researchers as can be seen in the following example.

> e.g.10: *I* therefore decided to carry out an action research study in which I would teach an 8-hour unit on writing using sources,... [I.NE6]

Then, self-mentions are also used to prove originality of claims made in the studies. Also, self-mentions assist the representation of researchers as knowledgeable and accountable member of the discipline (Hyland, 2001, 2002; Tang & John, 1999). This can be seen in the following example.

> e.g.11: Therefore, *we* can only continue to recommend that teachers use a combination of these writing tasks in their classrooms to fit the needs of their students. [D.NE30]

Engagement Markers

The first similarity comparing to Hyland's (2005) engagement markers is that they were used in this current investigation to interact readers as additional disciplinary solidarity. It can be seen in the following example.

e.g.12: *Consider* the cells contained in the interior rectangle of Table 2. [M.NE8]

Apart from making connection through the text, engagement markers were also exploited to interrelate with tentative oppositions or suspicions made by readers. Therefore, second function of engagement markers is to engage readers rhetorically as following example provided.

e.g.13: *Why* might our results show some independence between letter-sound knowledge and meta-linguistic phonological awareness? Patterns may reflect the different phonological task used in this and previous studies. [D.NE25]

Differences in the Use of Interactional Metadiscourse Markers between NE and

NNE RAs

There are some significant differences in the use of IMMs and devices. First, findings suggested that NE and NNE writers used hedges and hedging devices (adverb and noun) dissimilarly. NE writers hedged to evade themselves from pure fact. Seemingly, NE researchers decided to initiate space with their audiences by presenting opinions rather than fact which can be considered as a forceful influence to readers (Atai & Sadr, 2006). Meanwhile, NNE writers hedged when they were not fully certain in their claim, and to mitigate from their precision. Finding that NE writers elaborated the use of hedges in various functions than NNE writers did, the differences in the use of hedges demonstrated more writer-reader interaction and objectivity prose among NE researchers than their counterparts (Nasiri, 2012). NE writers seemed to have more recognition of objectivity and hedging feature than NNE writers when hedges helped them to evade from any strong precision but act upon a confirmation on their data. However, the use of hedging devices among NNE researchers can be considered that they rely on hedge to make an implication to past events (Hyland, 1999).

Next, adverb boosters were reported some significant differences. It is suggested that NNE writers used adverb boosters to highlight general information when they were certain with their points rather than. In contrast, NE writers boosted with adverb to relate their contribution of the study with their current knowledge, and they boosted to elicit positive results with readers in order to come up with mutual agreement (Abdollahzadeh, 2011).

Besides, given that differences occurred in the use of attitude markers and attitudinal devices (adjective and verb) in this study, these differences might be that researchers depended on their experiences in a competitiveness of international publication (Millan, 2012). Researchers who use only English to pursue for international publication might be found with great use of these markers; on the other hand, for those who also had experienced in national publication which based on their native culture can be found with lower degree of affective expression and formality of academic values (Nasiri, 2012).

Finally, there are also some differences in the use of engagement markers and engaging device (imperative directive) in this study. It is suggested that most NE writers utilize this rhetorical structure in order to lead readers to authors' viewpoint (Hyland, 2002). NE culture possibly allows them to bring forth interaction and elicit their future readers for more involvement (Lafuente-Millan, 2014). Meanwhile, NNE writers seemed to employ these markers when their native language plays a part. Also, imperative directive was reported a significant difference as it is used to lead readers to respond or agree in a way writers expect (Hyland, 2002). Based on NE culture, the scholars in this study seem to use much of physical and cognitive acts, and used this engaging device to clarify reasons because they attempt to predict any understanding readers might experience. Meanwhile, NNE culture allows much of textual acts to its writers as they opted to engage with the readers by instigating them to newer information (Hyland, 2005).

Conclusion

This study seeks to examine the IMMs in English applied linguistics written by NE and NNE writers. Results of the study showed that both group of writers use interactional markers in their RAs. Results of independent sample t-tests showed that there are some significant differences between the two groups in the use of IMMs and their devices. Regarding IMMs, there were some significant differences in hedges, attitude markers and engagement markers. Regarding IMM devices, there were some significant differences in hedges (adverb and noun), boosters (adverb), attitude markers (adjective and verb) and engagement markers (imperative directive). For functional analysis, each IMM functioned dissimilarly. First, hedges performed as an objective presentation of the writers. At the same time, they were used to lessen the degree of confrontation when disagreement occurred within the text. Second, boosters' roles were to make a conviction when writers were assisted with plausible evidence. Also, they were used when readers are expected to distribute either harmony or contradiction, so writers boosted to encourage for more participation. Third, attitude markers functioned as writers' evaluation both in positive and negative conduct so that readers could position authorial presence unmistakably. Forth, self-mentions were performed in academic text as their function was to emphasize the ownership of the provided information. Finally, engagement markers functioned as an engaging tool to draw in the readers rather than giving plain intellectual information.

These results are in line with Hyland's (2005) and Hyland and Tse's (2004) finding in the sense that there is a cultural diversity in using these features in research writing. Therefore, NE and NNE writers in applied linguistics discipline draw differently on features that organize scholars' position as authors connecting themselves with the readers.

In sum, findings revealed that each IMM was used differently according to their functions as well as writers' cultural background. However, the researcher only conducted the study within only one discipline, so future research can construct a larger corpus for more culturally diversity in research writing. Also, in this study, the researcher did not study the differences among various languages within the applied linguistics discipline. Therefore, future research can examine the differences in some other languages comparing to English in order to explore more of cultural perspectives. The researcher only examined English applied linguistics RAs written by NE and NNE researchers. Hence, generalization of the results of this study to other contexts should be considered. Finally, research results portray more understanding of IMMs' functions and cultural compositions so that writers of English RAs are expected to put more concern about beneficial relationship with their readers when they employ these rhetorical tools in their writing.

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Seepage in Digital Writing: Implications for teaching English as an international language (TEIL)

Marilyn Fernandez Deocampo

Abstract

This article looks at seepage of English as an international language (EIL) in students' digital writing in Thailand and its consequences for teaching English as an international language (TEIL). The focus is on morphosyntactic structures in the Expanding Circle that differ from Standard English in terms of UK or USA norms. The study explores the concept of English as an international language and the evidence of similar morphosyntactic features in South-east Asia and South Africa countries as well as in European contexts. However, most of these studies have been based on spoken language which seems to be inadequate to represent communication in all its complexity, such as computer mediated communication (CMC). The use of English in multilingual situations illustrated that the 'seepage' was found in students' digital writing, such as, in the informal context of emailing. Therefore, to identify the features as simply errors ignores the reality of language in use today. The implication of this study to our present education systems and English language teacher training programs should be, to understand and be aware of the extent of varieties of English and its features to be acted upon.

Keywords: teaching English as an international language (TEIL), English as a lingua franca, (ELF), computer mediated communication (CMC), seepage in digital writing, morphosyntactic structures

Introduction

In many English-speaking contexts, students bring to the classroom varieties of English with their L1 that serve in the community in establishing a sense of community and rapport. In some cases, teachers may be able to also add to the students' English repertoire other varieties of English, ones that often have a greater range of acceptability (McKay, 2018). In the early 2000s, ELF researchers influenced by World Englishes seemed to direct their attention to describing and possibly codifying various varieties of English outside the 'inner circle' (Kirkpatrick, 2007; Coleman, 2006). However, later development, particularly in ELF research with the emphasis on the spoken form, has moved more towards the accommodation aspect of communication, and variability playing a more central role (Seidlhofer, 2009).

As for the role of the institution (administrators teachers and students), this would involve co-construction and negotiation of what forms of English would be acceptable, regardless of any resulting differences from 'native' speaker norms. Such action would not only involve spoken English but seepage into the way the students write, especially in their digital writing. In English language teacher training programs, the issue is to what extent and how explicitly the varieties of English and the features of these varieties are discussed and acted upon (Ngoc, 2011). Should we be moving away from seeing 'errors' in the students informal as well as formal writing or should we consider that these 'errors' are more widespread and diverse than we think. Addressing such issues will vary from one instructional context to another but an awareness of English as a International Language (EIL) should be built on the premise that the English speaking world in which our students will use English is both diverse and complicated.

This present study discusses the seepage of English as a 'lingua franca' (Kachru, 1985; House, 1999; Kirkpatrick, 2017; Jenkins, 2007, 2015) in digital writing of students at an international university in Thailand and its acceptability in 'Teaching English as an International Language' (Alsagoff, McKay, Hu and Renandya, 2012; Wallace, 2012, Matsuda, 2012). Digital, in the sense, involves computer mediated communication (CMC) such as, emails in the students' interaction with their supervisors. CMC has engendered its own style and forms of English, in a way that has resulted in the moving away from accepted standards and giving approval to errors. The fact is that these forms may have a more prominent role in the use of 'English as an International Language' (EIL) (McKay and Brown, 2016; McKay, 2018; Wallace, 2012) based on regional standards of pronunciation, syntax and usage rather than Standard American or British English (Warschauer et al., 2010).

Literature review

English as an International Language (EIL)

The preference for the use of the term EIL is that the focus in many classrooms is more on morphosyntactic structures in the Expanding Circle that differ from Standard English (UK/USA norms) but have seeped into the written form. The argument that these are simply errors and identified, as such, by teachers would need re-thinking.

According to McKay (2018), the use of English as international communication should be based on certain principles. Three of these principles are:

1) Given the varieties of English and the diversity of L2 learning contexts, pedagogical decisions regarding standards and curriculum should be made in the local context, language needs and social and educational factors.

2) The belief that an English-only classroom is the most productive for language learners' needs should be fully investigated and thought should be given to how best use the L1 in developing language proficiency.
3) Intercultural competence should exist in all EIL classrooms (McKay, 2018, p.11)

There is no doubt that in general, EIL teachers should help students develop expertise in standard written English since this is the variety of English that has the most global currency and power (McKay, 2018). However, Giles and Coupland (1991) have suggested that mutual accommodation in terms of communication may have greater importance than 'correctness' or 'idiomaticity' in the language (Ferguson, 2011, p.20). This is supported by Jenkins (2000) study. As she stated, there is really no justification for doggedly persisting in referring to an item as 'an error' if the vast majority of the world's L2 speakers produce and understand it (Jenkins, 2000, p.109).

Debate in English as a Lingua Franca

Different research has generated debate regarding the role of English as a lingua franca (ELF) and its importance in students' communication in language teaching and learning (Marlina, 2018; Saraceni, 2008; Seidlhofer, 2001, 2009. 2011; Sewel, 2013; Smit, 2010; Sowden, 2012; Suzuki, 2011). The practical implementation in pedagogy therefore, is far from straightforward. As Kachru (1983, p. 215) remarked, "New Englishes cannot be judged by the same norms of English in Inner Circle countries, rather, the form and function of the New Englishes must be considered according to the context of situation which is appropriate to the variety, its uses and users".

English today is not a single entity but rather a multiplex, with different forms, different identities and different histories (Seargeant, 2016). To highlight the multiplexity of the language, Kachru (1985) devised the Three Circles of English. These highlighted issues are fundamental for the identity that language has in different parts of the world. The historical process that has resulted in English occupying its current position in certain countries and how people in that country usually come to acquire the language and the functions to which the language is put. One of the important legacies has been the focus on the diversity of English in terms of history and the cultural identity of non-native varieties. However, people tend to mix English with other languages drawing on the various linguistic and technological resources they have at hand.

Schneider's dynamic model (2003, 2007, 2011) identified a *foundation stage* when English was brought to a territory where it was not previous spoken. This was followed by an *exonormative stabilization* where English started to be used on a more regular basis in domains such as education, administration and the legal system based on models external to the territory itself. The *nativization stage* would develop a new cultural identity which included a localized variety of English. It is from this stage that possible *endonormative stabilization* could take place where the local variety was seen as a legitimate entity in its own right: with forms of codification in national dictionary projects and use in literature, movies and so on. Finally, there is *differentiation*, in that parts of the territory begin to establish their own pattern of usage. Schneider did not envisage all territories going through all five stages as this would depend on the circumstances as different parts of the process would be more prominent than others (Schneider, 2003, 2007, 2011).

One of the issues in describing the various varieties of English has been the terminology used. World Englishes (WE) seems to focus on the identification of varieties in specific geographical areas (McKay, 2018). While in English as a Lingua Franca (EFL), researchers do not focus on fixed communities but examine how English is used in more virtual and transient contexts worldwide (Jenkins, 2000, 2007, 2011, 2014, 2015; Sewel, 2013; Smit, 2010; Sowden, 2012; Suzuki, 2011). On the other hand, English as an International Language (EIL) is concerned with content and the features of interaction between second language users in a pedagogical context, in other words, the process and not on the linguistic/cultural background (McKay, 2018).

The EIL Concept

Apart from the debate on the inclusion-exclusion of native speakers (NS), conceptualisation of EIL has evolved around notions of variety, community and language. Corpus research was initially concerned with identifying recurrent and systematic characteristics of EIL and pragmatics mainly in spoken usage (Tsuchiya & Handford, 2014; Cogo, 2015; Björkman, 2011). This descriptive research produced a number of corpora of spoken data (VOICE, 2013; ELFA, 2008; ACE, 2014; Cogo, 2015), as well as some-small scale corpus data (WrELFA, 2015). More recently, work has been done on the pragmatics of EIL and Academic discourse (Jenkins 2007; 2014; Cogo & Dewey 2012; Mauranen 2010, 2012). In an academic domain there seems to be agreement that the spoken medium content-orientation is more important than 'linguistic correctness' (Cogo, 2015). Also, there has been a marked increase in the number of studies addressing the written mode, especially research in WrELFA (WrELFA, 2015; Cogo, 2015).

If we look at attitudes and ideologies, EIL researchers have more often engaged with English language policies in institutions where English is used as the medium of instruction. Jenkins (2000,2015) work in this area has commented upon the 'international students' who are required to conform to 'inner circle varieties' norms in their use of English based on Cogo's (2015) emphasized. Consequently, according to Cogo (2015) international students' academic performance is measured against Native Speaker (NS) norms. This extends to the publishing practices of scholars and the normative basis required for those publishing in English although working out-side the English-speaking world. However, the activity of students of English and their teachers' interaction in the social environment of the classroom English is often been as an 'English only classroom' (Jenkins 2014; Mauranen, 2012, 2014). Recent trends towards Teaching English as an International Language (TEIL) suggests the need for a shift in perspective towards EIL'multilingualism' (Jenkins, 2015). Dewey (2015) proposed developing teacher awareness of EIL research findings and to reflect on their beliefs and practices in teaching English.

The fact is that pedagogical considerations of EIL are very limited in language teaching curricula and materials (Xu, 2018). The focus has been on 'cumulative' proficiency' that is to become better at speaking and writing English as native speakers (NS) and on the goal of successful communication with NS. There has been a certain shift in curricular guidelines from 'correctness' to 'appropriateness' and 'intelligibility' but what this means is intelligibility to NSs (Xu, 2018; Baker, 2012; Jenkins, 2007, 2009, 2014, 2015). This has been reinforced by the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR, 2001) as indicated in some of the descriptors of language proficiency as originally described.

> Based on CEFR (2001), the B2 of Speaker Interaction means: I can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible. I can take an active part in discussion in familiar contexts, accounting for and sustaining my views (as cited in Seidlhofer, 2003, 13).

Teachers are expected to help their learners cope with 'real English' which is taken to be the English used by NSs in the UK or the US. The argument being that, 'real English' can now be described with unprecedented accuracy due to corpora of native English such as the Bank of English/COBUILD, British National Corpus and more recently CANCODE (Leech, 1991). However, even such detailed descriptions are from resources prepared from native speaker/writer English rather than EIL.

Nevertheless, the identification of developing varieties English had already been noted in this part of the world (Southeast Asia) with Tongue's *The English of Singapore and Malaysia* (1974); Crewe in *The English Language in Singapore* (1977). Such publications ran in parallel with research into Filipino English by Gonzalez, Bonifacio and Bautista (2000). In 1980, Platt and Weber published their study on *English in Malaysia and Singapore* and the sociolinguistic changes taking place in these two post- colonial territories. Foley (1988) published a study on the local variety of English as used by young children both at home and in school settings in Singapore and two overviews of English in Singapore (Foley et al.,1998; Foley, 2006) and Lim (2004). These studies reflected the reality of what was termed, *The New Englishes* (Foley, 1988; Foley et al., 1998; Foley 2006).These detailed studies look back and look forward on what was happening in the process of the development of Singapore English with the larger context of New English. The features found were summarized as follows:

- Dropping the 3rd person present tense-s

  Mama tell you something.

- Dropping the copula.

  I very hungry you know.

- Use of *one* rather than *who* as the relative pronoun.

  That boy pinch my sister one very naughty.

- Verbs of 'motion' send, bring, fetch.

  I send him to the airport.

- Pro Drop: Verb without a subject or object

  Every year must buy for Chinese New Year

- Confusing the relative pronoun *who* and *which*

  ...the arrest of two thieves which tried to pull off last year the robbery

- Omitting the definite and indefinite article.

  She got car or not?

- The use of aspect marking for the completion of an action.

  He go already.

- *Already* to show the sequence of two events.

  Drink already cannot sleep.

- Restricting the use of the question tag to *is it? /isn't it?*

  Crawl on the floor is it?

- Inserting redundant prepositions,

  We have to study about…

- Overusing certain verbs of high semantic generality,

  do, have, make, put, take

- Replacing infinitive-constructions with *that*-clauses,

  I want that rather than I want to

- Overdoing explicitness as in *black color* rather than just *black* (Foley et al. 1998, p.58-62)

In 2000, Jenkins published her work on the phonological features of a *Lingua Franca Core* (Jenkins, 2000, 2007, 2009, 2014, 2015) and the developing research by Seidlhofer (2011) based on the Vienna-Oxford International Corpus of English (VOICE, 2013) which further identified a small but significant number of lexicogrammatical items that seemed to be used regularly and systematically among English speakers from a wide range of languages without causing communication problems. These following features were found in the study:

- Uncountable nouns to countable: *informations.*
- Zero marking of 3rd person –s: *she suggest*
- Merging of who/which: *a paper who will be published*
- Use of all-purpose question:-tag *isn't it? is it?*
- Use if greater explicitness: *how long time* (will you stay here)?
- Use of morphemes: *forsify levelize*

In addition, House (2009) study of the pragmatics of English identified similar features. The summary of these features are illustrated:

- Non-marking of 3rd person singular with's'
- Interchangability of the relative pronouns 'who' and 'which'.
- Flexible use of definite and indefinite articles
- Extended use of common verbs of 'motion': *do, make, bring, send, fetch*.
- Treating uncountables as countable
- Use of uniform question tags: *Is it? Isn't?*
- Use of demonstrative 'this' with both singular and plural nouns
- Use of prepositions in different contexts.

With the increasing development of studies on the new varieties of English, Li (2010) pointed out several illogicalities of the grammatical system of English concerning generalizations and analogies being frequent sources of students' errors. He argued:

> For a long time, deviations from Standard English norms were characterized as unsuccessful attempts at imitating the ways native speakers use English, or ‘errors’ in short. Research in World Englishes…has made a very strong case for the legitimacy of ‘non-standard’ features found in the Englishes of ESL users who use English for intra–ethnic communication. The fine line between errors and innovation is being challenged (Li, 2010, 631).

The patterns and generalizations that emerge when investigating morphosyntactic variations, in the varieties of English seem to have yielded generalizations relating to what Kortmann and Szmrecsanyi (2004) have termed vernacular *angloversals* and *universals* of New Englishes.

Other studies such as the research of Breiteneder (2005) on the analysis of the third –person –*s*, she came across in an ELF corpus. The reason for selecting this morpheme was because it is often viewed as ‘the most typical English’ feature (Seidlhofer, 2001). Breiteneder gave the following examples from the speech of 47 participants with 21 European languages of which 14 made use of ELF:

- Overgeneralisation: a committee that *mets* every couple of months;
- Verbs which have plural subjects: Many of the questions *relates* to the operation of the system itself; and
- e:r *the thing function* in both e:r possibilities (Breiteneder, 2005 as cited in Onraët 2011, p.30)

Nevertheless, the author specifically notes that overgeneralization and erratic omission of the third-person –*s* does not affect mutual intelligibility between the participants.

Researchers, Dyers and Davids (2015), in South Africa have looked at text messaging among the youth. Vosloo (2009) sees it as the emerging register in its own right as the written lingua franca of many youth today in the South African context.

There were several earlier studies such as Malan (1996) quoted in de Klerke (1996, 134) of English spoken in Western Cape, called Cape Flats English (CFE). South Africa. These following features were found:

The copula be can take the third-person singular with plural and singular subjects

- The girls *was* singing

The deletion of the copula

- We ^ going to the movies

The deletion of the past tense morpheme

- Yesterday, we *fetch* her from school.

Adverbials places in penultimate position

- I want *now* a biscuit.

(Malan,1996 as cited in de Klerke, 1996, p.134)

Watermeyer (1996) in de Klerke (1996) noted that Afrikaans English (AfrE) presents some features in studies of New Englishes, these include:

- Zero-marking of the third-person present tense verb
  He drive to the shop
- Not marking the verb in the past tense
  Yesterday, she find him.
- Use of aspect rather than tense
  If we go to the beach, I would have seen my friends.
- Be + verb + ing in stative verbs
  She was having feelings towards him.

(Watermeyer, 1996 as cited in de Klerke, 1996, p.99)

Blommaert's (2010) study in Western Cape of South Africa identified the following in students' writing:

- Difficulties with singular and plural markers;
- Difficulties with verb inflections, plural marking and past tense marking
- Problems with the use of definite and indefinite articles
- Erratic use of capitalizations and punctuation.

Cukor-Avila (2003) and Green (2002) attested to similar variations in Afro-American Vernacular English (AAVE). In short, there is evidence of shared features across these varieties. It is not known however, what is the primary cause of these similarities and differences. This has been the subject of the debate over the presence of 'universals' in terms of vernacular varieties of English or substrate influences (Chambers, 2004; Kortmann, 2010; Kortmann & Szmrecsanyi, 2004). However, Kirkpatrick & Subhan (2014), Lim & Gisbourne (2009) have stated that any argument would have to be based more on frequency and consistency of use. Additionally, Bamgbose (1998) also pointed out, the following areas that need consideration in identifying these features:

- How many people use it?
- How widely is it used?
- Who are the people who use it?
- Where is the use sanctioned?
- Is the use accepted?

(Bamgbose, 1998, p. 13**)**

As illustrated in various study, analysis of typical learners' 'errors' which most English teachers would consider in need of correction and remediation appear to be generally unproblematic and of no obstacle to communicative success. The International Corpus of Learner English (ICLE) (Granger, 1993; Freginal, 2018) was established chiefly to identify characteristics of learner English from different L1 backgrounds and native speaker writing inorder to make it easier for these learners to conform to NS norms. However, Bamgbose (1998), McKay and Bokhorst-Heng (2008) pointed out there is always the ambivalence between recognition and acceptance of non-native norms.

Teaching English as an International Language (TEIL)

Recently, there was a special issue on the teaching of English as an international language (RELC Journal, 2018). The articles concerned exposure to different types of English mainly from countries from the Outer Circle in Teaching English as an International Language (TEIL) (Matsuda, 2012, 2014, 2018). In the past, there have been several studies from South-east Asia about awareness of the sociolinguistic role of English as an international language, in Thailand (Wongsothorn, Hiranburana & Chinnawongs, 2003); Indonesia (Nur, 2003), and Vietnam (Nguyen, 2003), countries without post-colonial English speaking backgrounds. In the RELCJ special issue, various authors posed the question whether TEIL was 'Realistic or Idealistic'. Doan Ba Ngoe (2011) had earlier studied three EIL programs in Australia and two programs in TEIL in Hong Kong and Thailand. The details of these studies would demand a much larger expansion here, but a summary of the relevant findings are as follows. The EIL programs mainly attended to the students' development of English proficiency and the teaching of EIL (Mauranen, 2014).

The TEIL programs were more focused on the linguistics of English and the pedagogy of English language teaching. In Hong Kong constructs of EIL were integrated into the linguistic and pedagogical content of the courses, while in Thailand constructs of EIL were offered mainly in certain elective courses. This brings to the issue of context and register. In the context of International Universities in Thailand, formal written discourse is taught as a core subject and the students' most frequent form of writing is now electronic based. However, much of the informal writing, using the morphosyntactic features reflects their spoken form of English and seems to have little influence on the communicative ability of the students (Mauranen, 2012, 2014; Mauranen, Pérez-Llantada, & Swales, 2010).

Computer mediated communication and its influence on digital writing

The increased use computer mediated communication has involved something of a paradigm shift in teaching and learning in a big way. The emergence of written text or typographical literacies through electronic means changes its' ways of 'producing, distributing, exchanging and receiving texts (Lankshear & Knobel, 2003, p.16). This notion was also supported by Leu (2000) study that electronic communication leads to a 'deictic shift' where literacy would undergo certain changes that could influence communication specifically in educational settings. Emails for example are used as one of many digital communication tools among students and teachers becomes common. However, although CMC can widen students' learning language exposure, there are an ever growing number of students whose first language (L1) seeps perhaps unconsciously into their spoken and written language.

Research Methodology

Sampling technique and the participants

This study used purposive sampling for selecting the data. The participants involved were eight graduate students studying in an MA course in ELT, composed of four Chinese, two Thai and two Myanmar. The aim was to identify the morphological features that would be considered as 'errors' by the teachers in the students' informal digital writing using emails in student/supervisor interaction. The reason why informal writing was chosen simply because in general, formal writing, at least in Academic Englishes often has to conform to standard British or American English (Mauranen, 2012; Mauranen, Pérez-Llantada & Swales, 2010).

Textual analyses were used to identify the features the morphological features that would be considered 'errors'. The morphology of the syntax is in reference to Standard English (UK/USA). Throughout the interactions the students were coded *S1* to *S8* based on their nationality, *Ch* for Chinese, *M* for Myanmar and *T* for Thai. The morphological features of syntax code used to categorize the features were in brackets.

Research Findings and Discussion

The analysis found that apart from the level of formality in informal students/teacher interaction in the emails, a growing speech-writing interconnectedness often described as 'spoken language written down' was common. Some of features of the spoken form of

English as an International language are illustrated and supported by the following examples found in students' digital writing:

1. *Copula deleted or inserted where not required* **[C]**

    1) S2Ch: << Good evening, the attached file is my Thematic paper chapter one to five, I'*m* [**C**] hope to know what is …next step when [**C**] *you are* convenient :)
    2) S3Ch :<< Could you please send us the photo […] we [**C**]all together this afternoon.

2. *Omitting definite/indefinite article* **(^)**

    1) S2Ch: << Good evening, the attached file is my Thematic paper chapter one to five, I'*m* [C] hope to know what is ^next step when […] *you are* convenient :)
    2) S3Ch: << Actually, we submitted our abstracts […] ^ *in one* coming conference in BKK. But […] […] still waiting for the reply.
    3) S5CH: << I want to do ^ proposal but I don't want that I cannot finish within this month, [crying]. I plan to write more *on* […] this coming Sunday, then I will *sent* it to you to check, if that's okay
    << Since […] is ^ urgent situation, if is better that I send to her next week …
    4) S6T: << This version *has done* […] grammar check and I revised some details, so you can use this one to do ^ duplicate checking.
    5) S7T: << I have ^ question that I need your suggestions again. We need to write about ^ Future of English in each field, right? …

3. *Adverb/adverbial phrase required* **[A]**

    1) S3Ch :<< Could you please send us the photo **[A]** we […] all together this afternoon.

4. *Modification after the Head as in Thai* **[Adj]**

    1) S4Ch: << Hi xxx Do you mean the translation **[Adj]** *form sample* or the one that I finished […] back translation?

5. *Redundant or wrong preposition* **[P]**

    1) S3Ch: << Actually, we submitted our abstracts **[P]** ^ *in one* coming conference in BKK. But […] […] still waiting for the reply.

    2) S5Ch: << I came back to BKK *already* […] but I need to deal with my work issues these days, may I meet you *on* **[P]** this Friday

3) S5Ch: << I want to do ^ proposal but I don't want that I cannot finish within this month, [crying]. I plan to write more *on* **[P]** this coming Sunday, then I will *sent* it to you to check, if that's okay

6. Prodrop, verb without subject or object **[PD]**

1) S3Ch: << Actually, we submitted our abstracts […] … *in one* coming conference in BKK. But **[PD]** […] still waiting for the reply.
2) S8M :<< Everything *need* […] to devote the time and try hard… at first **[PD]** [..] *me* definitely full of sorrow because of various issues and [**PD**] really want *to get* […] smile and be very happy. Absolutely **[PD]** want to laugh wholeheartedly to relax.

7. Aspect marking, for completion of an action **[As]**

1) S5Ch :<< Dear xxx, I **[As]** *already* come back to BKK, do u have any time tmr, I would like to do […] registration and discuss my thematic paper with u if you have time

8. Plural form required/ no plural required **[P1]**

1) S5Ch: << I read it through and found it more related to the cultural revolution in China. Maybe I can analyze the *metaphor* **[Pl]** to describe this revolution

9. No inflection of the verb, either dropping 3rd person present tense-s or ed ending in regular verbs **[I]**

1) S7T: << I'm really sorry I *disturb* **[I]** [you] teacher and Thank you so much teacher *ka* [Particle used for politeness, female].

10. Overusing certain verbs of high semantic generality **[V. freq]**

1) S8M: << at first […] […] *me* definitely full of sorrow because of various issues and [PD] really want *to get* [**V. freq**] smile and be very happy. Absolutely […] want to laugh wholeheartedly to relax.

11. Confusing the relative pronoun **[RP]**

1) S8M :<< I do as much as I can *on* […] everything which **[RP]** I deal. Everything *need* […] to devote the time and try hard.

12. No finite clause **(**)**

1). << Since […] is … urgent situation, if is better that I send to her next week ***13. In a sentence where there is no auxiliary, the dummy operator do is normally not used (^^***)***

1) S5Ch: << Ok the copyshop *ask* […] me to pick up the copy around 5 pm, then I will *sent* it to the Building, I ^^need to give you or XXX. *** << for the copies ^^ I need to do back to back or one side only? ***

These examples of morphosyntactic features might be telling us that learning strategies in general and the natural process of how language develops in the oral form gradually seeps through into the written discourse. From the perspective of TEIL exposing the students to varieties of English other than British or American English does seem logical as this would help them (as well as the teachers) to develop an awareness of the Englishes in use today.

Hence, it is argued that any view that ELF *only* exists in the spoken form of the language would seem inadequate to represent communication in all its complexity (Jones, 2016). There is the dominance of technologies through which 'spoken' language can now be mediated, (including telephones, computers, television, gestures and facial expressions). Indeed, the primacy given to the spoken form has to some extent distorted reality by presenting 'such' discourse as the exclusive way ELF and EIL can be used in communicating. This seems to ignore the other forms of technology that people use when engaging in social action. Indeed, in the use of English as EIL in multilingual situations, one would expect some influence from other languages in their English. Such 'leakage' or 'seepage' can influence not only the languages in a person's repertoire but also in their writing, thus extending the potential range and degree of hybridity in subsequent EIL interaction. 'Seepage' in an EIL context broadens the semiotic 'tool-kit' (Jones, 2016, p.56-57) of the user in that it extends from the oral use of language through the various technologies to the ever-increasing digital modes of writing. The borders between written and spoken discourse are mainly concerned with two things: the way we package what we say and how we arrange these packages to create a flow of communication (Gee, 2014). Language is a tool and as such, tools are 'variable, locally adapted, and saturated by context, never quite the same and constantly adjusting to the world beyond their own limits' (Hanks, 1996, 7). Certainly, formal written English tends to display far fewer features of EIL and in many ways comes closer to what might be thought of as Standard English usage (Seidlhofer, 2011; Mauranen, 2012, 2014; Mauranen, Pérez-Llantada & Swales, 2010).

It is evident that most teachers will naturally help students to develop expertise in standard written English since this is the variety of English that has most global currency and power. However, what is being argued in this article is that, in TEIL the focus is to prepare students as competent users of English as an International Language and as such, is an attempt to show the reality of language that includes variation from a single norm.

Implications and Conclusion

The goal of accepting features of EIL is not to increase the diversity or to further complicate the status and use of English as an international language but to acknowledge the diversity and complexity as part of reality (Matsuda, 2018, 31). The implication is that, EIL transcends the contact of any individual or group and is the means of communicating between people from anywhere in the world. Globally, it is not restricted to simply usages in politics, international business or academia, but it is employed by people in their daily lives over digital media, as such, it is not even needed to move around physically to be in contact with English. In short, EIL communities are defuse, network-based multilingual communities where English is a dominant lingua franca. It is not a focused variety or language, but not unlike the English language itself, in which focused varieties only arose as standardized varieties in the modern period, however, this did not prevent change or evolution in its lexical and grammatical structures (Mauranen, 2018).

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The Acquisition of English Affix Knowledge in L2 Learners

Apisak Sukying

Abstract

When learners know one member of a word family, they are assumed to know other members of the same word family. While knowledge one member does facilitate receptive knowledge of the other members of the word family, few existing studies suggest that L2 learners often have problems recognizing and recalling inflected and derived forms. The current study investigated productive knowledge of 32 word families and the relationship between L2 learners' productive affix knowledge and their vocabulary in a Thai university context. The results revealed that participants rarely recalled all forms of the word family. Indeed, the participants showed incomplete knowledge of word families and this knowledge appeared to be incremental. The university participants also appeared to overvalue their knowledge of the word families. The implications of these findings are discussed in regards to current pedagogical practice and theory.

Keywords: word family, affixes, receptive, productive vocabulary

Introduction

The ability to produce the appropriate form of a word is crucial for developing the grammatical aspect of language production. For example, learners must produce *communication* when a noun is needed but *communicative* in a context requiring an adjective. Without this ability, learners must either use only the form of the word they know or substitute another word that fits the grammatical context. It is often not clear if knowledge of the word *communicate* implies knowledge of other related words, for instance *communicative* and *communication*. While a learner may be able to use one form correctly, it is not immediately clear whether or not the learner knows other members within the word family.

Research on second language (L2) vocabulary acquisition has shown that word knowledge includes multidimensional aspects, such as knowledge of spelling, meaning, associations, collocations, register traits and grammatical features (Nation, 2013). Given this complex and multidimensional nature, knowledge about a word is considered incremental and increases with frequency of exposures. Infact, previous research suggests that acquisition of one word is related to acquisition of other related words (Nation, 2013; Schmitt, 2000; Schmitt & Zimmerman, 2002; Sukying, 2017). This research investigated the role of word families and the acquisition of related word forms in an English as foreign language (EFL) context. At present, there is little research on the acquisition of the productive use of inflected and derived forms of a word family. As a result, the current study examined the extent to which Thai learners' knowledge of a word indicates knowledge of related word forms within a word family. This study will increase our understanding of how the ability to produce English words develops among L2 English learners.

Word knowledge

Learning the vocabulary of a target language and knowing a particular word is often a long and complex process. This word knowledge may be either receptive or productive; the former generally precedes and is easier to master than the latter. Receptive vocabulary includes words that learners are able to understand from spoken or written input, whereas productive vocabulary incorporates words that are able to be successfully expressed through speaking or writing (Nation, 2013). Nation suggested that the receptive and productive continuum comprises all aspects of what is involved in knowing a word. He clustered these properties of word knowledge in terms of form (spoken, written, word parts), meaning (form and meaning, concept and referents, associations), and use (grammatical function, collocations, constraints on use). Regarding form, learners must be able to recognize and produce accurate spelling and pronunciation of a word, identify its morphemic components and their meaning, and use those components to generate appropriate word forms. Concerning meaning, learners need to understand and create the sense a word carries in a given context and identify and produce its synonyms or antonyms. Appropriate use of a word involves the ability to recognize and produce grammatically correct sentences in which the word occurs, understanding its collocations and the constraints on use as well as register of the word.

Receptive and productive word knowledge is often used interchangeably with the terms passive and active (Nation, 2013). Receptive or passive word knowledge involves the ability to recognize a form-meaning link of a word, at least to some extent, whereas productive or active word knowledge is the ability to retrieve/recall the word and use it in appropriate contexts. Vocabulary research has shown that English language learners are likely to acquire word knowledge incrementally and mastering one aspect does not necessarily indicate competence in other aspects (Schmitt & Meara, 1997; Schmitt & Zimmerman, 2002; Sukying, 2017). Research also asserts that each of the different dimensions of word knowledge is known to different degrees of reception and production and even relatively advanced language students may still lack proficiency in word formation processes (Schmitt, 1998; Schmitt & Zimmerman, 2002; Sukying, 2017).

Affixes and word families

Affixes in English are subcomponents of a word and represent all the smallest units of meaning morphemes (Lieber, 2010). Affixes (morphemes) can be categorised as either bound, meaning that they cannot occur in isolation (e.g., -er in teacher), or free (e.g., teach). Bound affixes can be further divided into inflectional versus derivational affixes and roots. Inflectional affixes add grammatical information but do not form new words, whereas derivational affixes include prefixes and suffixes added to base forms of words to create new words. Bound roots (e.g., 'port' in export or 'pec' in spectator) must occur with a prefix and/or a suffix in order to create a word (Birch, 2007). All English inflectional affixes exist in the form of suffixes, and the word classes that can be inflected in English are verbs, nouns, adjectives and adverbs. By contrast, derivational affixes are either prefixes or suffixes, and they usually change the word class or meaning of the word to which they are attached.

Inflected and derived words that share a base form with a common meaning constitute one word family. A word family consists of a base word plus all its inflections and derivations (clear: cleared, clears, clearing, clearer, clearest, clearly, clearance, unclear) that can be understood by a learner without learning them separately (Bauer & Nation, 1993). This group of words is considered one word family and knowledge of these words will develop as the learner becomes more proficient and incorporates other words into the group (Nation, 2013). Therefore, the size of a word family for a given lexical item will vary based on the learner's language proficiency.

Research shows that each dimension of a word is acquired at different stages. Word knowledge develops incrementally and positively correlates with the learner's increasing exposure to language use (Laufer & Goldstein, 2004; Nation, 2013; Schmitt, 2014; Webb, 2005). For instance, native children develop knowledge of affixes over a period of time (Nagy, Diakidoy, & Anderson, 1993; Tyler & Nagy, 1989). Reading seems to play a crucial role in L1 affix acquisition, which expands greatly as native children begin to read more. Reading facilitates affix knowledge partly because affixes are more common in the written mode than in oral mode and are associated with formal and academic discourse (Schmitt & Zimmerman, 2002). Indeed, 34.7% of the words occurring in English school texts are inflectional and derivational affixes (Nation, 2013, 391-392).

Few studies have focused on L2 learners' knowledge of English affixes. A longitudinal study of three postgraduate students found that these advanced students had gaps in their derivational affixes, especially adjectival and adverbial derivatives (Schmitt, 1998). Furthermore, Schmitt and Meara (1997) investigated the relationship between different aspects of vocabulary knowledge, vocabulary size and general English language proficiency in 95 Japanese participants. The participants' verbal suffixes and word association knowledge on receptive and productive tasks were measured over one academic year. Participants were required to choose three word associations out of four options and all allowable verbal suffixes on the receptive affix knowledge task. On the productive knowledge task, they were to supply three word associations and all acceptable verbal suffixes for each of 20 prompt words. The findings showed that participants gradually developed their affix knowledge and the annual increase was 4% on the receptive task and 5% on the productive task. These increases are considered modest and it was concluded that Japanese participants have a weak knowledge of affixes and their use (Schmitt & Meara, 1997).

Similarly, Schmitt and Zimmerman (2002) investigated the productive derivative knowledge (syntactic class) of 106 English as a second language (ESL) learners at a tertiary level and 36 native English speakers by asking them to produce the target words in the correct word forms in a prompted context. Their findings showed that English learners produced an average of 37.6 (58.8%) of the 64 derived forms (16 target words x 4 derived forms per word). That is, the learners could produce, on average, two of the four possible derived forms within a given word family. Their findings also showed that learners with higher proficiency tended to produce more derived forms (more members of the target words). This result is consistent with other literature showing that knowing one derived form of a word family does not imply knowledge of other word family members (Ward & Chuenjundaeng, 2009). Furthermore it was shown that verb derivatives were the best known syntactic category (67%), followed by noun derivatives (63%). Adjective (54%) and adverb suffixes (52%) were the lesser known word classes (Schmitt & Zimmerman, 2002). The relationship between self-reported knowledge of the target word and productive derivative knowledge was also examined. Learners produced 36.8% of the derivatives of the words they reported as unknown, and 65.5% for the words reported as well known. Moreover, the results showed that learners' productive derivational knowledge increased in proportion to the level of overall knowledge of the word. Specifically, 36.9% of the possible derivational words were produced by the least proficient ESL learners, whereas the most proficient students generated 79.4%. Their findings also indicated that complete mastery of the productive use of a word family is not easy for L2 learners of English or native speakers.

Previous work has also found that ESL students at the tertiary level tend to have a relatively strong sense of morphological knowledge of a word, although its meanings are not fully understood (Schmitt, 1998). Indeed, despite reporting a 'strong sense', learners did not know all four syntactic categories of a word (verbs, nouns, adjectives, and adverbs). The findings revealed that 60% of learners knew about a few forms of a word and appeared to know verbs and nouns better than the others. This is congruent with Ward and Chuenjundaeng's (2009) study of Thai EFL university students. Similarly, Schmitt (1999) investigated knowledge of target words from the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) and found that undergraduate L2 students could generate derivative forms for all four major syntactic classes: nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs in only 12 of 180 cases. These findings suggest that there is no facilitative influence in the productive mode, or at least not one that works equally well for all syntactic classes and that L2 learners have considerable difficulty acquiring the full production of word family members even when they already know one or more member.

The acquisition of word knowledge involves a linguistic feature that has received little attention in second language acquisition (SLA) research. Acquisition is the process of generating new forms of morphologically complex words on the basis of existing words, such as *used*, *using*, *reused*, *misused*, *usable*, *usability*, *useful*, *usefully* and *usefulness* from *use*. It involves the addition of a bound morpheme such as a prefix and/or a suffix and/or both (i.e., *re*- and *mis*- are examples of prefixes and -*able*, and -*ly* are examples of suffixes). Importantly, inflections and derivations have distinct characteristics. Derivations produce new lexemes and thus differ from inflections, which generate grammatical variants.

Overall, there are few studies examining learners' English affixes, subsequently these existing studies show mixed findings. These studies often consider only a limited number of aspects of morphologically complex words, which adds to the difficulty of operationalizing and generalizing the learners' English affix knowledge. The current study investigated the depth of L2 English affix knowledge based on Nation's (2013) description of word knowledge.

The current study

The current study investigated productive knowledge of vocabulary across members of a word family and in relation to knowledge of the prompt words. The specific research questions were:

1. To what extent do Thai university learners know English affixes within a word family?
2. What is the relationship between L2 learners' productive affix knowledge and their vocabulary?

Participants

The participants were 62 Thai university students (16 males, 46 females) from two different intact classes. All the participants were English majors from a recognized government university in Thailand. Two of the 62 participants did not satisfactorily complete every section of the task and were, therefore, excluded from the data analysis. The age range of the participants was 20-21 years old and all participants' native language were Thai. Thai-speaking participants were selected because Thai is an isolating language. That is, unlike in English where words contain several morphemes, each Thai word comprises one morpheme. All participants had learned English as a foreign language (EFL) and received English lessons for at least 14 years of systematic schooling. During data collection, all the participants received regular English courses and an average of 15 hours of English instruction per week.

Research instruments

The cross-sectional study was designed to examine participants' depth of lexical knowledge, based on Bauer and Nation's (1993) word family construct, and its link to their vocabulary. As all participants were English-major university students, a slightly revised version of Sukying's (2017) productive affix knowledge (PAK) task was used to measure their knowledge of affixations of a word family. Examples of Sukying's (2017) PAK task are as follows:

1. a) __________(familiar)_______________________________.

A	B	C	D

   b) The taxi driver was ______________ with my suburb, so he used a car navigator.

2. a) __________(clear) _____________________________.
   b) It should ________________ show your name.

A	B	C	D

Following Sukying (2017), the affix knowledge task was divided into two main parts. The affix retrieval/recall task (Part A) provided participants with a list of the prompt words and they were required to generate any acceptable English affixes, including prefixes and suffixes. Participants were also required to make a cross (X) in the box provided on the right that best described how well they knew the prompt word. The self-rating test of lexical knowledge used in this study was derived from Schmitt and Zimmerman's (2002) version of the self-identify four levels of word knowledge: A) I don't know the word, B) I have seen the word before but am not sure of the meaning, C) I understand the word when I see it or hear it in a sentence, but I don't know how to use it in my own speaking or writing, and D) I know this word and can use it in my own speaking and writing. The sentence-completion task (Part B) required participants to complete a given sentence using the correct affixation in Part A.

Two existing measures of receptive and productive vocabulary were also used to determine the relationship between participants' affix production and their vocabulary. The Vocabulary Size test (VS) developed by Nation and Beglar (2007) was used to measure participants' receptive vocabulary. The VS consists of 100 multiple-choice items in the tenth 1,000 British National Corpus (BNC) word lists. There are 10 items from each 1,000 word-family level, and each item represents a word family member. No points were awarded for a blank or an incorrect answer and one point was awarded for each correct response. The individual's total score was multiplied by 100 to estimate overall receptive vocabulary.

The Productive Vocabulary Levels Test (PVLT) developed by Laufer and Nation (1999) was used to measure participants' productive vocabulary. The PVLT was presented as a sentence-completion format to serve as a productive measure of vocabulary knowledge. The PVLT uses four levels of frequency words, including the 2,000, 3,000, 5,000 and the university word list. The PVLT contains 72 items, 18 at each frequency level. For each item, the first few letters of the prompt words were given to avoid non-target words that might fit semantically in the sentence: *They will restore the house to its ori_____ state*. Every answer with the correct form and syntax received one point. No points were given for incorrect or blank answers.

Procedure

The VS and PVLT were administered in the second week of the semester. Each participant completed both vocabulary tests on the same day. The productive affix knowledge (PAK) task was conducted a week later. Before the tests, the instructions, together with illustrations of the affix tasks, were provided to the participants in their native Thai language. Two screening measures were also implemented: participants who left answers blank for all questions were excluded from the analysis and those who provided the same five successive answers in response to different questions were also excluded. Participants' answers on the VS and PVLT were scored as either correct or incorrect. Minor spelling mistakes on the PVLT were ignored if the meaning of the sentence remained successfully expressed (Laufer & Nation, 1999).

In the PAK task, the number of acceptable affixes varied depending on the prompt words of the retrieval/recall task (Part A). The participants' responses were compared with the total possible number of correct responses within a word family based on Nation's (2006) BNC word lists. If the affix was outside the word family list, two skilled native English speakers judged its suitability (see Sukying, 2017). In the sentence-completion task (Part B), the correct affixation, including each acceptable prefix and suffix, was awarded one point and a non-answer (blank space) received no points. When a participant provided an unfitting affix, one point was deducted to reduce the possibility of guessing. Minor spelling errors of the affixation were ignored and no points were deducted in the case of an incorrect word being supplied to complete a given sentence, as the participants might have partial knowledge of the word but be unable to produce the accurate form of the word.

Results

Productive affix knowledge (PAK) in Thai university learners

The participants' performance with PAK indicated that Thai university learners have weak knowledge of affix production. On average, the participants' affix knowledge performance was 36.83%. As shown in Table 1, participants' performance on the retrieval/recall task was considerably lower than their performance on the sentence-completion task. The results also showed that participants could produce affixes for a relatively small percentage of the prompt word even though the word was rated as 'well-known'. Indeed, as shown in Table 2, the participants' ability to produce affixes varied greatly, ranging from 19.67% to 64.67%. These results support the notion that full mastery of the lexical forms of a word family is difficult for English language learners and that knowing one member of a word family does not necessarily imply knowledge of other members within that word family (Schmitt & Zimmerman, 2002; Sukying, 2017).

Table 1. Descriptive statistics for the productive affix knowledge task (PAK)

Affix knowledge task	Mean (%)	SD	Min	Max
Part A: Affix retrieval/recall task	33.61	9.47	14.00	52.00
Part B: Sentence-completion task	61.98	17.27	18.75	90.63
Overall affix knowledge performance	36.83	9.38	18.09	54.61

N = 60

Table 2. Affixes produced and self-identify rating

	Affixes produced			Self-identify rating							
				A		B		C		D	
Items	Score/total	Mean (%)	SD	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1	262/840	31.19	1.61	-	-	-	-	7	11.77	53	88.33
2	199/480	41.46	1.10	-	-	1	1.7	24	40	35	58.3
3	202/540	37.41	1.26	-	-	1	1.7	19	31.7	40	66.7
4	181/480	37.71	1.52	-	-	7	11.7	29	48.3	24	40
5	150/420	35.71	1.07	1	1.7	3	5	23	38.3	33	55
6	149/540	27.59	1.40	1	1.7	7	11.7	33	55	19	31.7
7	128/420	30.48	0.98	-	-	3	5	24	40	33	55
8	101/360	28.06	0.91	2	3.3	4	6.7	31	51.7	23	38.3
9	164/540	30.37	1.34	-	-	7	11.7	32	53.3	21	35
10	145/360	40.28	1.03	-	-	3	5	26	43.3	31	51.7

11	173/420	41.19	1.12	-	-	2	3.3	22	36.7	36	60
12	194/300	64.67	1.28	-	-	1	1.7	15	25	44	73.3
13	118/600	19.67	1.07	1	1.7	2	3.3	23	38.3	34	56.7
14	201/480	41.88	1.89	-	-	3	5	22	36.7	35	58.3
15	246/540	45.56	1.60	-	-	2	3.3	19	31.7	39	65
16	103/420	24.52	0.98	2	3.3	4	6.7	21	35	33	55
17	105/240	43.75	0.73	1	1.7	1	1.7	20	33.3	38	63.3
18	162/540	30.00	1.12	-	-	3	5	24	40	33	55
19	126/360	35.00	1.39	2	3.3	4	6.7	30	50	24	40
20	101/360	28.06	0.83	-	-	3	5	25	41.7	32	53.3
21	141/420	33.57	1.31	1	1.7	3	5	32	53.3	24	40
22	210/540	38.89	1.58	-	-	6	10	29	48.3	25	41.7
23	120/480	25.00	0.97	-	-	5	8.3	38	63.3	17	28.3
24	181/600	30.17	1.38	1	1.7	6	10	15	25	38	63.3
25	216/600	36.00	1.58	-	-	5	8.3	31	51.7	24	40
26	103/360	28.61	0.76	-	-	8	13.3	38	63.3	14	23.3
27	132/360	36.67	1.21	2	3.3	7	11.7	28	46.7	23	38.3
28	139/420	33.10	1.30	7	11.7	27	45	20	33.3	6	10
29	201/660	30.46	1.23	1	1.7	3	5	25	41.7	31	51.7
30	213/600	35.50	1.49	-	-	2	3.3	23	38.3	35	58.3
31	76/360	21.11	0.82	-	-	17	28.3	38	63.3	5	8.3
32	168/360	46.67	1.31	1	1.7	17	28.3	31	51.7	11	18.3

N = 60

The nexus between productive affix knowledge and vocabulary

The means and standard deviations for performance on the receptive vocabulary test (VS) and productive vocabulary test (PVLT) are presented in Table 3. The total scores obtained from both vocabulary tasks were converted into percentages to allow comparisons between tasks. As demonstrated in Table 4, correlational analyses of productive measures of affix knowledge and vocabulary showed a range between 0.27 and 0.60, suggesting moderate to large relationships and medium to large effect sizes. The statistical analysis also revealed that participants' performance on the sentence-completion task had a stronger relationship with productive vocabulary than receptive vocabulary. However, affix retrieval/recall knowledge had a larger influence on receptive vocabulary than productive vocabulary in Thai university learners. These results support previous claims that a learner's affix knowledge is positively associated with their vocabulary size (e.g., Danilović, Savić, & Dimitrijević, 2013; Hayashi & Murphy, 2011; Mochizuki & Aizawa, 2000; Schmitt & Meara, 1997).

Table 3. Descriptive statistics

Task type	Mean (%)	SD	Min	Max
VS	56.43	7.19	39	76
PVLT	30.97	12.05	4.17	61.11
Overall vocabulary	43.72	8.66	26.58	67.86

N = 60

Table 4. Correlations between productive knowledge of affixes and vocabulary

Task type	Affix retrieval	Sentence completion	Overall affix knowledge
VS	.51**	.27*	.52**
PVLT	.49**	.56**	.55*
Overall vocabulary	.55**	.50**	.60**

N = 60; * $p < .05$ (two-tailed); *8 $p < .01$ (two-tailed)

Discussion

The results of the current study indicate that knowledge of one lexical form within a word family does not necessarily imply productive knowledge of other word family members. Learners were able to produce only a small number of inflected and derived forms of given prompt words. Moreover, learners appear to overstate their word knowledge simply because they are able to recognize some aspects (e.g., form and/or meaning) of a given prompt word. Therefore, like vocabulary, inflectional and derivational affix knowledge seems to be acquired incrementally, learners typically knowing one, but not all, of the inflected and derived forms within a word family. These findings are consistent with previous studies that challenge the facilitative effect of word family knowledge in productive mode, at least with the L1 group of participants.

If acquiring one form in a word family were automatic when a learner knows one member, the participants would have produced all inflected and derived forms for the prompt words. Instead, participants tended to know only some members of the word family, even the words were rated well known (D). In this regard, word family knowledge is difficult to master among EFL learners. Moreover, EFL learners indicated that they could use the prompt words in their speech and writing. This is partly because the word (e.g., form and/or meaning) is recognized.

Although learners rated inflectional and derivational knowledge as well-known (D), extending this affix knowledge to other related forms of the word family is difficult for learners. Hay (2002) suggests that affix acquisition is based on the degree of parsability hypothesis (e.g., phonology, productivity, regularity, semantic transparency and frequency); a more parsable affix should occur outside a less parsable affix because this order is easier to process. Affixes that follow the affix D on the ordering can be attached to words already affixed by D, whereas affixes preceding D on the ordering cannot be added to words containing D. For example, if there is an ordering of affixes A-B-C-D-E, then combinations of a word-A-B-C and a base word-B-D-E would be possible, whereas combinations of a word-A-E-D and a word-E-A-D would not be possible. Indeed, a parsable affix adds an affix to a word step by step, making the latter more complex morphologically (e.g., use-usable-usability). Affix acquisition also involves grammatical principles. These grammatical principles reflect the organisation of grammar where form and meaning of an affix play a decisive role. For instance, the nominal suffix *-ization* in English always selects the adjectival suffix *-al*. The concatenation of these affixes involves selectional restriction, where affix requires the addition of another affix, indicating affix ordering (Hay & Plag, 2004; Manova & Aronoff, 2010).

Participants' performance on the affix retrieval/recall task was much lower than the sentence-completion task. This could be explained by the level of cognitive demand across the different tasks in L2 contexts (Henriksen, 1999). More specifically, the affix retrieval/recall task requires a substantial knowledge of affixes, including the psycholinguistic and grammatical awareness, and therefore it likely placed a heavier processing demand on Thai learners than the sentence-completion task. It should also be noted that the participants' weak affix knowledge proficiency level may reflect their stage of L2 development; that is, a level where productive use of affixes is partially mastered. The current results illustrate the association between the development of explicit knowledge of affixes and the learner's ability to recall and produce affixed forms in decontextualized and contextualized settings.

The nexus between Thai learners' productive affix knowledge and their vocabulary

The results of the current study showed a positive relationship between learners' productive knowledge of affixes and their vocabulary. This indicates that the development of a learner's productive knowledge of affixes has a positive influence on the development of their lexical knowledge, which, in turn, benefits their productive affix knowledge. Consistent with previous studies (Hayashi & Murphy, 2011; Mochizuki & Aizawa, 2000; Schmitt & Meara, 1997; Sukying, 2017), the current study demonstrated an association between receptive and productive vocabulary and productive affix knowledge, which are critical components for the development of a learner's lexicon. As such, systematic instruction of English affixes must be used to target and develop productive skills and knowledge.

Conclusion

The current study shows that L2 learners have a superficial knowledge of words. This may be the result of burdens imposed by learning the inflected and derived forms of particular words. The results of this study also indicate that practitioners should not assume that learners know the inflected and derived forms of the word family simply from their exposure. Instead, these findings suggest that systematic instruction of English affixes would benefit learners. Furthermore, the results demonstrated a positive link between productive affix knowledge and vocabulary both receptively and productively. Like previous studies, the findings of this study are consistent with the notion that L2 affix knowledge is incremental and requires varied degrees of metalinguistic knowledge that including explicit knowledge of affixes.

It is not clear whether learners may avoid constructing inflected and derived forms of the prompt words even though the given target words are rated well-known. Learners may prefer to create particular words but realize they are unsure of the correct forms, or they may simply learn how to express a particular idea without needing to attempt unknown affixes. In the current study, a substantial proportion of a learner’s lexical items may remain unused due to the lack of requisite knowledge of particular affixes. This aspect of lexical knowledge and use appears to be an opportune focus for additional research.

It should be noted that a small number of participants was used in the current study and the sample was limited to one L1 group of participants. Additional research would benefit from a larger-scaled group of participants with different levels of language proficiency. Also, the current study did not include receptive knowledge of affixes in English. Given that an affix appears to be learned incrementally, future studies should include different affix knowledge measures to capture learners’ varied degrees of affix knowledge. Finally, there are a number of word knowledge abilities that form the complete knowledge of a word requiring additional research that takes all these dimensions into consideration (e.g., form, meaning and use) to provide a clearer understanding of the complexities of word acquisition among L2 learners.

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The Translator's Challenges in English-to-Thai Idiom Translation of Hillary Rodham Clinton's Memoir, *Hard Choices*

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Abstract

The aim of this study was to investigate the challenges in translating from English into Thai the idiomatic expressions used by Hillary Rodham Clinton in her memoir, *Hard Choices* (2014) and the strategies the translator employed in the translated version called ชีวิตและทางเลือก (Life and Choices) when dealing with such challenges. A questionnaire and an in-depth interview were used as methods of data collection regarding challenges the translator encountered and the strategies she applied while translating *Hard Choices*'s 149 idioms into Thai. The results revealed that there were three challenges with idiom translation and that the translator coped with these idiom translation challenges by using various strategies. The translator's main focus was correctness in idiom translation and the target readers' understanding.

Keywords: idiom translation, idiom translation challenges, English to Thai translation, memoir, Hard Choices

Introduction

Culture of any society is reflected through the use of language and the reflection of the cultures is visible in idiomatic expressions within the language. Consequently, translating idiomatic expressions into other languages and making the translated text clear to target readers require great competence and knowledge in linguistics of a translator, not only great competence and knowledge in linguistics but also skills on how to deal with differences across cultures are needed. The more differences in idiom use between two languages, the more complex and difficult task a translator is likely to experience when handling idioms. Taylor (1998, 4) states that a translator's task is to work towards the target text by dealing with "linguistic, semantic, pragmatic, cultural, and stylistic components, the number and complexity of which will vary greatly from text to text". House (2014) also agrees that the linguistic factor is not the only factor that complicates translation, in fact it is communication across cultures, which should be counted as a key factor in the complexity.

A clear example could be seen in a case of English to Thai translation. If one literally translates the English expression *as easy as pie* into Thai as ง่ายเหมือนพาย, it would sound nonsensical to Thai ears. Thai people would not understand what it is like to be easy as pie since they are familiar with ง่ายเหมือนปอกกล้วยเข้าปาก, which can be literally translated into English *as easy as peeling a banana and putting it into one's mouth*. Therefore, in the process of English-to-Thai idiom translation, translators are not dealing with factors related to linguistics alone, but they should know what strategies should be employed when encountering challenges in translating English idioms into Thai.

Due to the challenges idioms pose in translation, many studies have been carried out in various fields regarding idiom translation, ranging from fiction, literary works and religious books to subtitles in movies. However, to the best of our knowledge, no research on challenges in idiom translation has been done on a memoir. To fill this gap, the researchers investigated the challenges encountered by the translator, Ms. Boonrat Apicharttrisorn, while translating from English into Thai idiomatic expressions used by Hillary Clinton in her memoir, *Hard Choices* (2014) and the strategies the translator adopted to cope with such challenges.

Literature Review

An idiom refers to "a group of words in a fixed order that have a particular meaning that is different from the meanings of each word on its own", according to the Cambridge Dictionary (2017). It is also "a form of expression natural to a language, person, or group of people", as stated by the Oxford Dictionaries (2017). To understand the meaning of an idiom it is necessary to look at the words that comprise it as a whole, not individually.

There are several definitions and classifications given by linguists that illustrate idioms differently. O'Dell and McCarthy (2010) define an idiom as a combination of words whose form must be fixed and whose meaning can only be understood as a unit, not as an individual.

Newmark (1995) is in agreement with O'Dell and McCarthy that idioms are groups of words whose meaning cannot be understood by the meaning of individual words. He adds that idioms cannot be translated word for word and that their equivalent can be hard to find in the target language.

According to Baker (2011, p. 67), "one cannot infer the meaning from idioms by understanding their separate components". To put it simply and avoid any confusion about idioms, she lists the characteristics of an idiom as follows:

1) The order of the words in an idiom and the grammatical structure cannot be changed;
2) No word in an idiom can be deleted nor can any word be added to the idiom; and
3) The words in an idiom cannot be replaced by any other words.

However, in some cases it may not be possible to identify an idiom by considering its structure. According to Larson (1998), the use of an idiom is very specific to a given language because different cultures use different idioms. She classifies idioms as a class of figurative expression and figurative expressions are perceived differently by different groups of people, depending on the culture in which the idioms are used. In English a person who *has a hard heart* does not care about other people's needs, whereas for the Shipibo Indians of Peru the expression represents braveness within the person (Larson, 1998).

Larson (1998) also defines idioms as "dead metaphors", which refers to expressions that no one hearing or reading them would think of their primary meaning. She gives the example that when people use the phrase *leg of a table*, the sense of idiomatic expression is understood directly and no one would think of leg as a part of the human body (Larson, 1998).

The characteristics of idioms, given by theorists, can be seen from what precedes them so that they share the same concepts in translation. One is that their structure cannot be changed, although some cases may allow some variation. For example, we can say that *to break the ice* is an idiom because it cannot change its structure into 'the ice is broken'. If the phrase is written so, its meaning would be understood literally or metaphorically. No one would think of its idiomatic sense of making strangers feel more relaxed with each other. Another concept is that the meaning of each idiom could be related to the different cultures associated with different languages. As previously mentioned, *easy as pie* may represent the easiness of doing something in the English language while in Thai such action is represented by *peeling a banana and putting it into one's mouth*. It could be inferred from these two concepts of idioms that each idiom has its own structure which does not have to go according to the grammatical rules and that each idiom has its own special meaning which cannot be understood by literal translation due to differences across cultures.

Idioms as Translation Problem

Based on the characteristics of idioms, translating idioms into the target language can be challenging for translators particularly for those who are not accustomed to the structure and the culture of the idioms.

Baker (2011) states that difficulties caused by idioms can occur at two different stages: before the beginning of the translating process and during translation. Due to their varying types and characteristics, it is not too difficult to recognize the expressions as idioms. However, for those who are not familiar with them, some idioms can be misinterpreted, leading to mistranslation. As Baker (2011) explains, a great number of idioms in English have both literal meaning and idiomatic sense. She provides as an example the expression to go out with. On the one hand it conveys the literal meaning of going outside without any special kind of relationship but on the other hand it contains the idiomatic sense of having a romantic or sexual relationship with someone. This implies that the expression can blind translators who are not familiar with its idiomatic sense to accepting its literal meaning, especially when there is no clue given.

"Another problem occurs when a similar counterpart does exist in the target language but with a totally or partially different meaning" (Baker, 2011, p. 70). She gives the example of the expression *has the cat got your tongue*, which is used in English when the speaker would like to drive someone to answer a question, especially when the person says nothing at all and his or her passivity becomes annoying. The expression has a counterpart of sorts in French but it conveys a completely different meaning. In French when you "*give your tongue to the cat*" (donner sa langue au chat), it means you give up on a riddle. This is a good example of pitfall for the unwary translator. If translators are familiar with the idiomatic meaning of the expression in its context and do not know the exact meaning in the target language, then the meaning they accept and translate into their language could be different from the target text. The translated text might not go according to the intended meaning of the author.

Challenges all professional translators inevitably come across while translating idioms are similar to those that occur at word level. As Baker (2011) points out, the main problem is that an equivalent idiom cannot be found in the target language. This is because the way idioms are expressed may be different from language to language. Some items contain aspects that are really culture-specific. Baker (2011) emphasizes that what makes idioms untranslatable is not the specific words they contain but the meaning and the culture of the source text that are reflected through the idioms.

Another problem that occurs when there is a similar counterpart in the target language is that the idiom is used differently in the target context (Baker, 2011). Due to its different usage, the meaning can be unintentionally changed from the intended meaning in the source text if the similar counterpart is used. As Baker (2011) exemplifies, *to sing a different tune* is used both in English and Chinese, but differently. In English, it refers to a change of heart or point of view over something, not necessarily related to political issues. In Chinese, the idiom is used specifically in a political context.

Like Baker, Larson (1998, p. 276) agrees that "one of the more serious problems is the fact that the point of similarity may be understood differently in one culture from another". She clarifies that animals like pigs are images that can represent various meanings depending on each culture. In some cultures, because of their characteristics, pigs give the sense of dirtiness or gluttony, while some may use pig to describe a person who does not listen to other people (Larson, 1998). This can be compared with the usage of pig in a Thai context. A pig can refer to a person who becomes *as fat as a pig* regardless of how dirty he or she is; only the size of a pig is related. Hence, identifying the exact meaning of the sentence 'he is a pig' can be difficult for translators. Due to the various connotations of a word in different cultures, one challenge for the translator is to find the appropriate formulation in the receptor language.

Previous Studies

Given that idioms can pose challenging problems in translation, difficulties encountered during the translation process and the strategies translators used to handle with such difficulties have been studied to reflect how idioms and cultural differences affect translation.

Nudtakien (2007) conducted a study on problems in English-to-Thai translation encountered by professional translators, to explore difficulties and suggest practical solutions. Both translators working for a government agency and translators working as freelancers were interviewed in person. Problems found in translation are related to misunderstanding of idiomatic expressions, slangs, word connotations and technical terms. The differences between English and Thai cultures were also a great source of confusion and perplexity.

Sornsuwannasri (2010) collected English idioms from the children's novel The Chronicles of Narnia and compared them with the Thai version to explore techniques used in English-to-Thai idiom translation by applying Seidl and McMordie (1988)'s categorization of approaches. It was found that free translation was the most frequently used technique while literal translation was least employed. Since there are huge differences in idioms between English and Thai, free translation rather than literal translation was thus employed to simplify English idioms for Thai readers. The result also reflected that the main focus of the translator was on the readers.

Kunasaraphun (2006) examined the techniques used in idiom translation and the differences in meaning between English idioms and their Thai translations. Newmark's concepts in translation (1995) together with Nida's analysis theory (1975) were used in the study. According to Kunasaraphun (2006), free translation was the most used idiom translation technique, followed by idiomatic translation. In all cases, rendering the meaning was central to the endeavour.

Bunchutrakun (2014) studied the techniques employed in translating two English romance fictions from English into Thai, namely Mr. Maybe and The Trials of Tiffany Trott. In her study, thirty idioms were selected from each fiction and analyzed. To gain an in-depth knowledge, a questionnaire was handed over and interviews were conducted to find out how the two translators of the fictions dealt with the difficulties. One of the findings was that the most frequently used technique was interpreting and translating idioms into non-idiomatic expressions. The use of cultural substitutes, a technique proposed by Larson (1998), was also applied when facing cultural differences. Idioms related to culture were found to be the most challenging. And even though the translators applied different translation approaches, the way they solved problems when encountering challenges was similar. Besides looking up meaning from dictionaries or encyclopedias, and trawling the internet for information, consulting a native speaker was one effective way of solving problems.

Although the studies reviewed above focus on different types of text, the findings show two main similarities regarding idiom translation. One is that the strategies adopted by the translators in translating idioms still vary, depending on their perception of their readers' needs and on the context. Another is that there seems to be no absolute strategy for idiom translation. If the English idiom is deemed too complicated for Thai readers to understand or if they might not be familiar with the signification of the original idiom, translators attempt to simplify the meaning by paraphrasing or translating idioms into non-idiomatic expressions.

Research Methodology

Data Collection and Research Instrument

Hard Choices (2014), a 635-page memoir written by Hillary Rodham Clinton, the unlucky finalist of the 2016 U.S. presidential election. contains a series of situations Mrs. Clinton encountered during her position as United States Secretary of State, from 2009 to 2013, making it rich in political information on just about everywhere in the world. *Hard Choices* was published in Great Britain in 2014 and later in the same year was translated into many languages, including Thai as ชีวิตและทางเลือก (Life and Choices) by Ms. Boonrat Apicharttrisorn, a Thai professional translator who has long experience in translation. The language styles and choices used in both original and translated books are worth studying in the field of translation studies based on the criteria of language used and value. The original book contains several types of English phrases and sentences, as well as various idioms which are common in American English. It is therefore interesting to explore the challenges and strategies in translating those idioms into Thai.

The researcher first collected idioms from *Hard Choices*, focusing on English expressions that are considered idioms based on the characteristics suggested by Baker (2011). After identifying the idioms found in *Hard Choices* (2014), the researchers matched their translation in the Thai version and had them verified by an external inter-rater. Once a corpus of 149 idioms was created, a questionnaire and an in-depth interview were used as instruments for data collection regarding the challenges the translator encountered and the strategies she used while translating 149 idioms in *Hard Choices*. Then the researchers sent a self-introduction letter with a request for online questionnaire survey as well as an appointment for a face-to-face interview.

Data Analysis

In this study, the researcher employed the descriptive approach to identify and classify the challenges the translator faced during the process of idiom translation and the strategies she applied to handle those challenges.

Research Findings

The questionnaire was adopted in order to obtain general information about the translator and her experience in the field of translation. In addition, questions regarding the challenges involved with translating *Hard Choices*, the memoir of Hillary Clinton, from English into Thai were included in the questionnaire to gain primary information on whether the translator considers idioms as one of the challenges of translation. The following are findings gained from the questionnaire.

Questionnaire

Ms. Boonrat Apicharttrisorn has long-term experience in translating international news from English into Thai as both a journalist and editor, although it was found that she did not take any formal courses in translation and does not hold any certification related to translation. Aside from Hillary Clinton's memoir, *Hard Choices*, she has also translated several works that are related to politics and economics, which are her main interests for translation. For example, she translated *The Entrepreneur: 25 Golden Rules for the Global Business Manager* written by William H. Overholt into Thai as เถ้าแก่มือโปร: เคล็ดลับ 25 ข้อ สำหรับผู้บริหารในโลกยุคไร้พรมแดน. Despite politics and economics being her main interests, her decisions on which works she translates are not dictated by them. She is open to all kinds of pieces as long as they hold an interest for her. As for the challenges in translating Hard Choices into Thai, the results can be summarized as follows:

1) The structures of the English language and general vocabulary are not the translator's main concerns. Rather, the correctness of the information and the author's intended messages are considered to be the most important things for the translator.

2) Apart from challenges in translating words related to politics and global issues which require extensive knowledge from the translator, the difference between cultures were another main difficulty while translating *Hard Choices*, especially expressions related to cultural aspects.

3) According to the translator, translating idioms from English into Thai is relatively time consuming since she had to work with several sources before she could decide which Thai expression to use. Factors were brought to the translator's consideration, focused mostly on her assessment of the average Thai reader's understanding.

Regarding strategies in idiom translation, the translator did not use any specific strategy when translating idioms because the use of a strategy depends on the context in which the idiom is used. Based on the information gained from the questionnaire, it could be inferred that idiomatic expressions are one of the main factors that make translation challenging. According to the translator, they made the process of translating *Hard Choices* more complex and time consuming. It is not only the correctness of the meaning of each idiom that concerns the translator during translation, but also the style of writing that the translator endeavored to use for easier understanding. The following are details obtained from the in-depth interview, which focused mainly on the challenges in idiom translation and how she coped with them.

Interview

Based on the information gained from the interview, the translator revealed that she had no difficulty recognizing the idioms in *Hard Choices*. Thanks to her long experience working in the field of journalism, she found it not too difficult to spot the idioms and their meanings in the book. Apart from this, she had translate another work of Hillary Clinton, *Living History*, which was translated into Thai บันทึก ฮิลลารี คลินตัน. Hence, the translator is familiar with the writing style of Hillary Clinton. The followings are example the translator did not find problematic during her translation.

Example 1

Source Language Text (English)	**Target Language Text (Thai)**
"… And once you get over the hurdle, the rest of it kind of <u>falls into place</u>." (p. 25)	"... และทันทีที่คุณก้าวข้ามอุปสรรคต่าง ๆ ทุกอย่างก็จะ<u>เข้ารูปเข้ารอย</u>เอง - (น. 33)

The two expressions, เข้ารูปเข้ารอย and *fall into place*, have different lexical structures. However, both expressions have the same meaning. In addition, the Thai expression เข้ารูปเข้ารอย is an idiom in Thai. Consequently, the translator picked the Thai idiom เข้ารูปเข้ารอย (to get into the shape and get into the notch) to represent the meaning of the English idiom *fall into place*, which refers to a situation that shapes up in a satisfactory way, without problems.

Example 2

Source Language Text (English)	**Target Language Text (Thai)**
Would Pakistan be <u>pulling the strings</u> from Islamabad? (p. 168)	ปากีสถานจะ<u>ชักใย</u>จากอิสลามาบัดหรือไม่ - (น. 221)

The idiom ชักใย (to pull strings) in Thai and the expression *to pull strings* in English in Example 2 express the meaning of controlling the actions of a person or group, which often happens secretly. In this case the translator could translate the idiom into Thai immediately because she is familiar with both idioms.

However, "challenges occur continuously along the way when you translate your work", stated Ms. Boonrat Apicharttrisorn. She explained that it is part and parcel of handling languages with different grammatical structures and vocabulary, and mirroring traditions and cultures foreign to each other. This may reflect that it is not possible to translate any work without encountering challenges; however, it does not mean that the translation is so difficult that we cannot cope with those difficulties. According to the translator, "It's necessary to be prepared for challenges and see them as something very simple because they are a major part of translation." From the in-depth interview, the challenges the translator encountered during idiom translation of *Hard Choices* could be listed as follows:

1. Lack of Equivalence

There are times that the translator could not find a Thai idiom with exactly the same meaning as the idiom in the original text.

Example 3

Source Language Text (English)	Target Language Text (Thai)
Make sure he is <u>safe and sound</u>. (p. 376)	เพราะฉะนั้นดูแลให้เขา<u>ปลอดภัยที่สุด</u> - (น. 492)

As shown in Example 3, the English idiom *safe and sound* is used to explain the condition of someone whom the writer would like to make sure is safe and free from danger/flaw/defect/disease. In this case, the translator could not find any Thai idiom with the same meaning as the English expression. Neither could the expression be translated literally as ปลอดภัยและไม่เสียหาย (ไม่บกพร่อง ปราศจากตำหนิ หรือปลอดโรค), which might have been good enough for both living and non-living things. The translator therefore used *the technique of paraphrase*, rephrasing the expression with the neutral words ปลอดภัยที่สุด (completely/utterly safe), explaining that in this case it was appropriate to make the expression sound neutral, short yet complete in meaning. There was no need to use a Thai idiom in this context.

Other examples in this category include the following:

> Like his great friend Richard Holbrooke, Wisner <u>cut his diplomatic teeth</u> in Vietnam before representing our country in hotspots all over the world. (p. 342)ไวส์เนอร์จะเหมือนกับริชาร์ด โฮลบรูก เพื่อนสนิทอีกคนของเขา<u>เริ่มต้นประสบการณ์การทูต</u>ในเวียดนาม ก่อนจะเป็นตัวแทนของประเทศเราในพื้นที่จุดล่อแหลมทั่วโลก - (น.448)
>
> That was <u>hard to stomach</u>. (p. 143)
>
> เป็น<u>สิ่งที่รับได้ยาก</u>จริง ๆ - (น. 187)

2. Dynamic Equivalence

In some cases, the translator could find a Thai idiom conveying a similar meaning and form to the English idiom yet frequently it is necessary to use a Thai idiom with a similar meaning but dissimilar form in order to fit in the context of the target language. This modification can be compared to what is known as dynamic equivalence.

Example 4

Source Language Text (English)	Target Language Text (Thai)
I thought her best option was to <u>grit her teeth</u>, keep pushing Thein Sein to follow through on his commitments, and keep their partnership alive at least through the next election. (p. 122)	ดิฉันคิดว่า ทางเลือกที่ดีที่สุดของเธอก็คือ <u>กัดฟัน</u>**ทนเข้าไว้** ผลักดัน เต็ง เส่งให้ทำตามสิ่งที่ให้สัญญาไว้ และรักษา ความเป็นพันธมิตรของพวกเธอไว้ อย่างน้อยก็ให้ผ่านพ้นการเลือกตั้งครั้งหน้า - (น. 160)

The translator rendered the expression *to grit her teeth* in Example 4 into Thai as กัดฟันทนเข้าไว้ (clench teeth and endure), adding a brief explanation to the Thai idiom กัดฟัน, to make the translated version more understandable to readers, even though the expression กัดฟัน already carries the meaning of *to grit one's teeth*. If translated without the additional explanation ทนเข้าไว้ (to endure), the meaning of the English expression *to grit one's teeth* would not be complete.

Another example in this category includes the following:

Judith and I agreed we needed to overhaul and update our capabilities, but it proved to be an uphill struggle to convince either Congress or the White House to make this priority. (p. 180)

จูดิธกับดิฉันเห็นพ้องต้องกันว่าเราจำเป็นต้องยกเครื่องและพัฒนาประสิทธิภาพของเราให้ทันสมัย แต่ก็เห็นได้ว่าการโน้มน้าวใจรัฐสภาหรือทำเนียบขาวให้ยอมรับเรื่องนี้ว่าเป็นเรื่องสำคัญในระดับต้นๆนั้น **เป็นงานยาก**เหมือนเข็นครกขึ้นภูเขา - (น. 236)

3. Cultural Difference

Concepts related to the source language's culture make an idiom untranslatable because they may not be simply understood in the target language.

Example 5

Source Language Text (English)	**Target Language Text (Thai)**
"We'll always have to walk and chew gum at the same time." (p. 360)	"เรามักจะต้องทำอะไรหลายอย่างพร้อมกันในเวลาเดียวกัน" - (น. 472)

The idiom in Example 5 could not be translated literally because the concept of walking and chewing gum at the same time is simply unknown to Thais. If the translator brought in the concept of this expression into the Thai context by translating it literally as เดินและเคี้ยวหมากฝรั่งไปพร้อมๆกัน (walk and chew gum at the same time) or borrowing the English idiom without translation, readers would not understand what was meant. As a result, the translator explained the idiom as ทำอะไรหลายอย่างพร้อมกันในเวลาเดียวกัน (doing many things at the same time) which Thai readers understand readily.

Another example in this category includes the following:

And many of those trying to make hay of it know that, but don't care. (p. 414)
หลายคนที่กำลังใช้ประโยชน์จากเรื่องนี้ก็รู้ดี แต่พวกเขาไม่สนใจ - (น. 541)

Based on the challenges mentioned above, the translator found it challenging but not problematic; "To translate is to challenge yourself", she said. There are always strategies for those challenges as long as the readers' understanding is taken into consideration. According to the interview, the strategies the translator adopted to cope with those challenges can be summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. Challenges that occurred and strategies found while translating idioms in Hard Choices from English into Thai

Challenges	SL Text (English)	TL Text (Thai)	Strategies
1. Lack of Equivalence	Make sure he is safe and sound. (p. 376)	เพราะฉะนั้นดูแลให้เขาปลอดภัยที่สุด - (น. 492)	Interpreting the idiom from the context and translating it with a non-idiom
2. Dynamic Equivalence	I thought her best option was to grit her teeth, keep pushing Thein Sein to follow through on his commitments, and keep their partnership alive at least through the next election. (p. 122)	ดิฉันคิดว่า ทางเลือก ที่ดีที่สุดของเธอก็คือ กัดฟันทนเข้าไว้ ผลักดัน เต็ง เส่งให้ทำตามสิ่งที่ให้สัญญาไว้และรักษาความเป็นพันธมิตรของพวกเธอไว้ อย่างน้อย ก็ให้ผ่านพ้น การเลือกตั้งครั้งหน้า - (น. 160)	Using a Thai idiom with an additional explanation
3. Cultural Difference	We'll always have to walk and chew gum at the same time." (p. 360)	เรามักจะต้องทำอะไรหลายอย่างพร้อมกัน ในเวลาเดียวกัน"- (น. 472)	Interpreting the meaning of the idiom and translating it with a non-idiom

From Table 1, the strategies of challenges occurring in the translation process varies. One strategy the translator normally applied when there was lack of equivalence was *paraphrasing*. In other words, when she understood the meaning of an idiom but could not find a Thai idiom with exactly the same meaning and the same structure, she translated it with a non- idiom. Another strategy for dealing with dynamic equivalence is the combination of appropriate strategies. The additional explanation was added to complete the meaning of the idiom. The translator did not adhere to a single strategy when translating idioms into Thai. Sometimes she could find a Thai idiom which share the same sense of meaning as the English language. However, in a specific context, the translator would find that that was not enough, so she added a few short words of explanation to the Thai idiom for less ambiguity.

Regarding cultural difference, *paraphrasing* is the strategy used to make the meaning of an idiom clear to readers in the target language. Dealing with such challenge, the translator first looked up the meaning of the idiom by using dictionaries both online and offline. Then she checked the meaning of the idiom again in Google to see whether she understood the original idiom correctly; in doing so, she aimed to find examples of the idiom's use to double check her own understanding. When she could not find any meaning or did not understand the meaning of the idiom from the original text, she would consult native American English speakers present in Thailand. After she was convinced of her understanding, the translator explained the meaning in Thai without using any idiomatic expression.

Another interesting finding obtained from the in-depth interview was related to the translator's strategies in idiom translation. Ms. Boonrat Apicharttrisorn revealed that she does not have specific strategies in mind both before and during translating idioms into Thai. She stated, "Sometimes challenges go beyond which strategies to use". She added that readers' understanding should be focused on in stead of focusing on strategy.

Discussion and Conclusion

Although problems regarding idiom translation could occur before the translation process begins, according to Baker (2011), the translator had no difficulty recognizing the idioms in the book. In addition, still according to Baker (2011), some English idioms can have both literal meaning and idiomatic sense, which could be a challenge to translators who are not familiar with the idiom as they could be blinded by the literal meaning, which could lead to mistranslation. Thanks to the translator's long experience, she found it easy to spot the idioms and their meaning. An example given by the translator was the meaning of the expression *to fall into place* that she could understand the meaning right away without looking up its meaning. When she came across with the expression, she translated it into Thai เข้ารูปเข้ารอย or เข้าที่เข้าทาง depending on the context.

However, it is interesting to note, based on the results of this study, what made the idiom translation process more complex and more time consuming was when a close match for an English idiom could be found in Thai, but which did not totally express the meaning of the original idiom. In fact, sometimes the translator found that even when a Thai idiom closely matched an English one it was not enough to use the former alone to convey the meaning of the latter. This was because some English idioms convey both literal meaning and idiomatic sense, according to Baker (2011). Based on the results of this study, when lack of equivalence occurred, rephrasing with a neutral expression was most appropriate to convey the meaning of the English idiom. With non-idiomatic expressions, at least, the message from the author was still preserved and explained as clearly as possible. This goes according to Baker (2011) that *translation by paraphrase* is the common strategy in idiom translation when a match cannot be found in the target language.

The strategy the translator used revealed in the present study was *paraphrasing*, which was similar to the results of Bunchutrakun (2014) who found that the most frequently used strategy was interpreting and translating idioms into non-idiomatic expressions. This method could also be considered as free translation, as in Sornsuwannasri (2010) which revealed the same result in that it was the most frequently used approach when dealing with idiom translation, which was a reflection of the translators' main focus being conveyed to their readers. When lack of equivalence occurred, rephrasing with a neutral expression was most appropriate to convey the meaning of the English idiom. With non-idiomatic expressions, at least, the message from the author was still preserved and explained as clearly as possible.

In some cases, the context in which the idiom is used plays its role, making it one of the challenges for the translator. This occurred when the equivalent of an idiom could be found in Thai but still did not convey the complete meaning of the English idiom. Such challenge was coped with by adding an explanation at the end of the Thai idiom that completely elucidated the meaning of the English idiom thus making it a combination of idiom translation strategies.

When dealing with a lack of equivalence between two languages and the presence of concepts steeped in the culture of the source language, the translator would consult native speakers to make sure she had perceived the meaning correctly before deciding how to render such cultural concepts for her readers. She has found that this is the most appropriate way to understand concepts and cultures she does not know. Most of the idioms related to culture found in the current study were thus handled by the strategy of translation by paraphrase. Ms.Boonrat Apicharttrisorn also stated that *paraphrasing* to provide an explanation was the strategy she often used when dealing with cultural concepts of the source language, as she considered that ensuring that the target readers understood was paramount.

Another point arising from the interview had to do with concepts in the source language's culture that do not exist in Thai and cannot be translated literally. Lack of equivalence between two languages and the presence of concepts steeped in the culture of the source language remain challenges for translators when tackling idioms, whose meaning and style must be preserved as much as possible. Preserving the style was attempted whenever it was appropriate, but it was not the main factor taken into consideration when translating idioms. Instead, the need for Thai readers to understand was the determinant, thus implying the recourse to several strategies, used independently or together, to achieve that purpose. The translator also suggested that when readers' understanding and the outcome of the translation were kept in the translator's mind, difficulties in translating idioms could be challenging but they would not amount to an impossible task.

Recommendations for further studies

Regarding the recommendations for further studies, since there are a significant number of political jargons and expressions as well as technical terms related to political or global issues and foreign affairs in Hillary Clinton's Hard Choices, it would be interesting to analyze the techniques or strategies used in translating such lexical items into Thai through a strategy-based translation framework and to conduct a questionnaire survey and/or an interview among the target readers in order to determine their understanding and attitude toward the current Thai translation.

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APPENDIX A

Questionnaire

PART A

Please kindly answer the following questions.

I. Personal information

1. Name ___________________________
2. Date of birth ___________________________
3. Nationality ___________________________
4. Gender ___________________________
5. Phone number ___________________________
6. Cell number ___________________________
7. Email address ___________________________

II. Education information

8. Please indicate university qualifications (degree, subject, name of university).
____
9. Have you studied translation formally? If so, where and how?
____
10. Do you hold any translation certifications?
____

III. Experience in translation

11. Which languages do you translate from and into?
____
12. Do you translate on generic translation or work in a certain area of specialisation?
____
13. What is your area of interest in translation?
____
14. How long have you worked as a translator?
____
15. How many works have you translated?
____

V. Translation of Hillary Clinton's memoir Hard Choices

16. Why did you choose to translate Hard Choices?
____
17. How long did it take you to translate Hard Choices?
____
18. What was the most difficult chapter for you to translate?
____
19. What obstacles did you encounter while translating Hard Choices?
____
20. Do you think idiomatic expressions make translation challenging?
____

PART B

Please circle the most appropriate number of each statement, which corresponds most closely to your desired response.

1. Hillary Rodham Clinton's memoir Hard Choices is worth reading both in terms of information contained and the language used in the book.

1 Strongly disagree 2 Disagree 3 Uncertain 4 Agree 5 Strongly agree

2. One of the most difficult tasks in translating Hard Choices is the differences between language uses between English and Thai.

1 Strongly disagree 2 Disagree 3 Uncertain 4 Agree 5 Strongly agree

3. English idioms found in the book make translation more difficult and time consuming.

1 Strongly disagree 2 Disagree 3 Uncertain 4 Agree 5 Strongly agree

4. Idioms related to cultural aspects are hard to translate into Thai.

1 Strongly disagree 2 Disagree 3 Uncertain 4 Agree 5 Strongly agree

5. Paraphrasing is the most suitable translation strategy to make Thai readers understand the meaning of an English idiom.

1 Strongly disagree 2 Disagree 3 Uncertain 4 Agree 5 Strongly agree

6. If the meaning of an idiom cannot be found in a dictionary or on the internet, consulting a native speaker could be the best way to find the meaning.

1 Strongly disagree 2 Disagree 3 Uncertain 4 Agree 5 Strongly agree

7. If the meaning of an idiom cannot be found in a dictionary, on the internet or thanks to a native English speaker, omission of the whole idiom should be adopted instead of translating it literally.

1 Strongly disagree 2 Disagree 3 Uncertain 4 Agree 5 Strongly agree

8. A Thai idiom should be used if it conveys the same meaning as an English idiom in the source text although their forms are different.

1 Strongly disagree 2 Disagree 3 Uncertain 4 Agree 5 Strongly agree

9. There is no specific strategy for idiom translation of Hard Choices.

1 Strongly disagree 2 Disagree 3 Uncertain 4 Agree 5 Strongly agree

10. Strategies employed while translating Hard Choices are various, depending on the context around the English text.

1 Strongly disagree 2 Disagree 3 Uncertain 4 Agree 5 Strongly agree

Appendix B

Interview Questions

1. As the translator of the book, what do you think are the main factors that made Hard Choices challenging to translate?

2. What part of the book did you find most difficult to translate?

3. What part of the book did you find most interesting and worth translating?

4. What are the main difficulties you encountered when you translated this book from English into Thai?

5. What are your strategies when you translate idiomatic expressions found in the book?

6. What are the obstacles in idiom translation from English into Thai?

7. How did you deal with those difficulties when translating idioms in order to best serve Thai readers?

8. Do you have specific strategies when you translate idioms from English into Thai?

9. Could you please explain the methods you adopted when translating Hard Choices?

10. As a professional translator, could you make any suggestions to novice translators?

11. What sources did you use to get information on the meaning of idioms?

12. What are the challenges of translation when working as a team?

"This Hotel Sucks!" Using Appraisal Framework to Analyze TripAdvisor's Negative Reviews of a Bangkok Four-Star Hotel

Apisak Pupipat

Abstract

This paper explores customer complaints of an international four-star hotel in Bangkok. A corpus of 40 negative hotel reviews, taken from TripAdvisor.com in early 2018, was manually coded and annotated using the UAM Corpus Tool 3.3. Results were threefold. First, ATTITUDE ranked first, followed by ENGAGEMENT and lastly GRADUATION, meaning customers/reviewers were more preoccupied with giving opinions and expressing emotions rather than simply affirming relationship with online community members or intensifying the comments. Second, in ATTITUDE, Appreciation ranked first, followed by Judgement and Affect, thus customers/reviewers complained more about things than staff's personality, and they did not show much emotion in their reviews. Also, inscribed and negative lexis prevailed over invoked and positive ones; therefore, these customers/reviewers tended to be explicit about their negativity, perhaps due to technology's anonymity. However, they masked their negative emotion by using Praise-then-criticism pattern, a mitigation strategy. Third, in GRADUATION, the six most popular intensifiers were Common Devices (25%), followed by Lexical Coloring (19%), Graphology (15.5%), Maximizers (15%), Figurative Language (6.5%), and Sarcasm and Rhetorical Questions (5.5%). Occasionally, combinations of these devices were used for more effect. Regarding top service failures, the complaint topics mentioned the most, in order of frequency, were the hotel, its rooms, staff, food/restaurant and service.

Key words: Evaluative language, APPRAISAL, negative online reviews, Bangkok hotel, TripAdvisor, UAM Corpus Tool 3.3

Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to explore negative comments of a large and popular Bangkok hotel, 'the Suda' (the hotel's real name disclosed for ethnical purposes), in terms of the APPRAISAL Framework, to see how customers/reviewers wrote complaints online, how their evaluative language was intensified and what they complained about.

Evaluative language (EL) can be defined as 'an attitude towards a person, situation or other entity and is both subjective and located within a societal value-system' (Hunston, 1994, cited in Hunston, 2011, p. 1). EL is pervasive in reviews: 'subjective pieces of non-structured texts describing the user's product knowledge, experiences and opinions, together with a final product rating' (Ricci & Wietsma, 2006, p. 297). The main purposes of reviews are (1) to assess an object or a service, (2) to disseminate knowledge (thus, in business, to persuade customers to buy a product/service), and (3) to create rapport and/or build a community of like-minds, as in online reviews (Sparks & Browning, 2010). These online reviews, a type of electronic words of mouth (eWOM), reflect customers' satisfaction: When they are pleased with the hotel stay, they will write positive reviews; and, if not, negative ones. In general, online reviews are very powerful since they are easily accessible (i.e. 24/7 globally retrievable, free and permanently recorded in certain websites) and trusted by most travelers (since they are written by other customers with first-hand experience, recent, abundant, varied and probably more specific and accurate) (Schuckert, et al, 2015). Travelers normally use them to find basic information on available hotels and to make decision (Sparks & Browning, 2011). In fact, negative reviews are even more trusted due to the negativity effect (Manganari & Dimara, 2017), i.e. 'bad is stronger than good' (Fong, et al, 2017, p. 70) and because they are 'considered more truthful, influential, helpful and valuable' (Fernandez & Fernandez, 2018, p. 131). Besides complaining/venting frustration, and/or persuading others to avoid the property, travelers write reviews for 'social interaction, … helping [the travel website], and exerting collective power (Tian, 2013, p. 185). Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC) allows writing negative reviews to be convenient, safe and universal. First, due to technology's anonymity, customers/reviewers, feeling that power is in their hands, can write about anything negative and virtually in any way, with no gatekeeper (Fuchs, 2008), except a few simple regulations from the website. The nature of online writing, i.e. essentially 'loosely-structured, interpersonal and informal,' a hybrid form of speech and writing (Durant & Lambrou, 2009, p. 12) further facilitates the customers/reviewers (Herring, 1993, cited in Lengel, 2009). Second, customers/reviewers can choose to appear or disappear online at will mainly to hide their identity (Fuchs, 2008). Finally, through technology's 'virtual democracy,' customers/reviewers feel that they are joining the bandwagon to assert their rights to voice their opinions (Atique, 2013). Negative reviews are, therefore, viewed as User-Generated Content (UGC), valuable for both customers and hoteliers (Litvin & Dowling, 2016).

This study focused on reviews from TripAdvisor[1] since it is the largest US travel website with 320 million reviews on hotels, restaurants and travel attractions (Ghazi, 2017), and considered the most reliable website for both customers and hoteliers (Casaló, et al, 2015; Filieri, et al, 2015). Bangkok, Thailand's capital, was chosen because in 2017 it was ranked first by Mastercard's Global Destination Cities Index, along with London, Paris, Dubai and Singapore (https://newsroom.mastercard.com/digital-press-kits/mastercard-global-destination-cities-index-2017/) and in 2016 it had the country's highest hotel average

[1] See Appendix 1 for a negative review from TripAdvisor.

occupancy rate (www.krungsri.com/bank/getmedia/5de62d20-1706-48c1-9573-65359fdbc76c/IO_Hotel_2017_EN.aspx).

The Appraisal Framework (AF)

At the heart of this study lies the APPRAISAL Framework (henceforth, AF), developed by Martin and White (2005). APPRAISAL is embedded in the discourse-semantic level and, thus, situated above the Lexico-grammatical level in Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics. The AF, a complex theory to analyze evaluative language, consists of three main systems: ATTITUDE (evaluator's emotions and opinions on people and things), ENGAGEMENT (evaluator's aligning him/herself with other evaluators) and GRADUATION (evaluator's way of grading emotions/opinions). All three can be either positive or negative, as well as inscribed or invoked. Due to space limitations, this paper deals only with ATTITUDE and GRADUATION.

ATTITUDE, AF's main system, contains three sub-systems: Affect, Judgement and Appreciation. Affect assesses people and things in terms of the evaluator's feelings, e.g. *Wirat <u>adores</u>* [Affect+[2]] *the Warin Hotel but Arunee <u>hates</u>* [Affect-] *it*. Judgement appraises a person's personality or valuation, e.g. *Usually, the receptionist is <u>patient</u>* [Judgement+] *but at times she can be <u>rude</u>* [Judgement-]. And, Appreciation evaluates an object and, to a lesser extent, a person's appearance, e.g. *The Suda Hotel is <u>old</u>* [Appreciation-]; *Parntong looks <u>younger</u>* [Appreciation+] *than we thought*.

Appreciation can also be divided into five resources: Composition-Balance, Composition-Complexity, Reaction-Impact, Reaction-Quality and Valuation. However, since the researcher felt that the original system was not compatible with hotel reviews, he decided to revise the scheme. First, Appreciation's two initial sub-systems (i.e. Composition-Balance and Composition-Complexity) were removed. Then, the three remaining sub-systems were revised to be more compatible with hotels and to be clearer. (See Methodology below.)

The system of Graduation is how one grades one's evaluation (Martin & White, 2005). It is done in two main ways, i.e. Force (which grades people or things by intensity or amount, e.g. *Siriwong is <u>extremely</u> kind*) and Focus (which can sharpen or soften the value (Payaprom, 2012), e.g. *Jirawat is a <u>true</u> artist*). Force, the more popular of the two, consists of Intensification and Quantification. Intensification can be upscale or downscale, and has several types (Alshaar, 2017; Lorenz, 1999; Napoli & Ravetto, 2017; Poonlarp, 2009), e.g. Common Devices (*<u>very</u> old hotel*), Lexical Coloring (*<u>terrible</u> wifi*), Graphology

[2] The + and – signs after the sub-systems show positivity and negativity, respectively. Thus, [Affect+] means that someone is happy, confident or satisfied. (See below)

(*BIG PROBLEM!!*), Maximizers (*I felt totally insulted*) and Figurative Language (*A dinosaur kept alive by its great location*).

Most of the APPRAISAL research seems to be centered on off-line texts, i.e. edited, generic writing, be it academic (e.g. Lee, 2008; Payaprom, 2012) or professional genres (e.g. Aungsuwan, 2016; Wislocka Breit, 2014). Research using AF on online texts, i.e. spontaneous, unedited, and often non-generic writing[3] appears rare, especially focusing on hotel reviews. At any rate, there were several main findings. First, to show objectivity (not their feelings), resulting in mature prose, customers/reviewers usually use Appreciation (*The Suda is terrible*) more than Judgement (*The receptionist is impatient*) and, worst, Affect (*I hate the Suda*) (Derewianka, 2008; Drasovean & Tagg, 2015; Lee, 2008; Love, 2006; Mayo & Taboada, 2017). Second, inscribedness prevailed over invokedness probably due to the customers/reviewers' perceived power of anonymity granted by technology (as mentioned above) (Vásquez, 2011). Third, negativity prevailed (Mayo & Taboada, 2017). Negative complaints were usually mixed with positive ones to show mitigation, a form of politeness. The Praise-then-criticism pattern, starting from the positive and moving on to the negative, was in order here, e.g. *The hotel is conveniently located but tired and dated* (Cenni & Goethals, 2017; Drasovean & Tagg, 2015; Vásquez, 2011). Finally, the frequently-mentioned complaint topics included the condition of the guest room, hotel itself (location, looks), service, staff, price, restaurant and security (Cenni & Goethals, 2017; Vásquez, 2011). Most of these aspects from discourse studies reflect what Hospitality Marketing Mix's 7Ps and customer satisfaction report (Bowie & Buttle, 2004; Dinçer & Alrawadieh, 2017; Loo & Leung, 2018; Walker, 2009; Wirtz & Lovelock, 2016).

Considering the AF literature and the fact that little research had been done on negative online hotel reviews, there are three research questions:

1) What does the AF reflect about the two main systems (ATTITUDE and GRADUATION) and their sub-systems when applied to online hotel reviews?
2) How are the evaluative words intensified in online hotel reviews?
3) What does the AF reflect about the Suda Hotel's customer dissatisfaction?

Methodology

In February 2018, a corpus of 40 customers' negative online hotel reviews from TripAdvisor was compiled. The Suda Hotel, a popular four-star hotel situated in downtown Bangkok, was chosen due to its prime location, and its rank as four star, thus attracting mid-income local and international guests of various kinds.

[3] Neil E. J. A. Bowen, personal communication

Out of the Suda's total of 1,465 positive and negative reviews posted on TripAdvisor, the ones labeled 'Average,' 'Poor' and 'Terrible' were selected, and a systematic sampling was performed to reduce these to 40.

These 40 reviews were copied verbatim into plain txt files—no attempts were made to fix mistakes, which included typos, incorrect punctuation, spellings, grammar or style. However, a 'mistake' that could impede comprehension would be corrected, e.g. *They wanted ø [us] to pay money for the towel*.

The UAM Corpus Tool 3.3 (O'Donnell, 2012) was used to code the corpus according to the modified scheme shown in Figure 1 below.

Occasionally, a double coding (Lee, 2008) was performed when a word had two layers of meaning; therefore, in *Bob is an angel*, the phrase *an angel* is [Judgement+/Propriety+] and it is [lexical coloring] since there is a positive connotation here, comparing *Bob* with *an angel*.

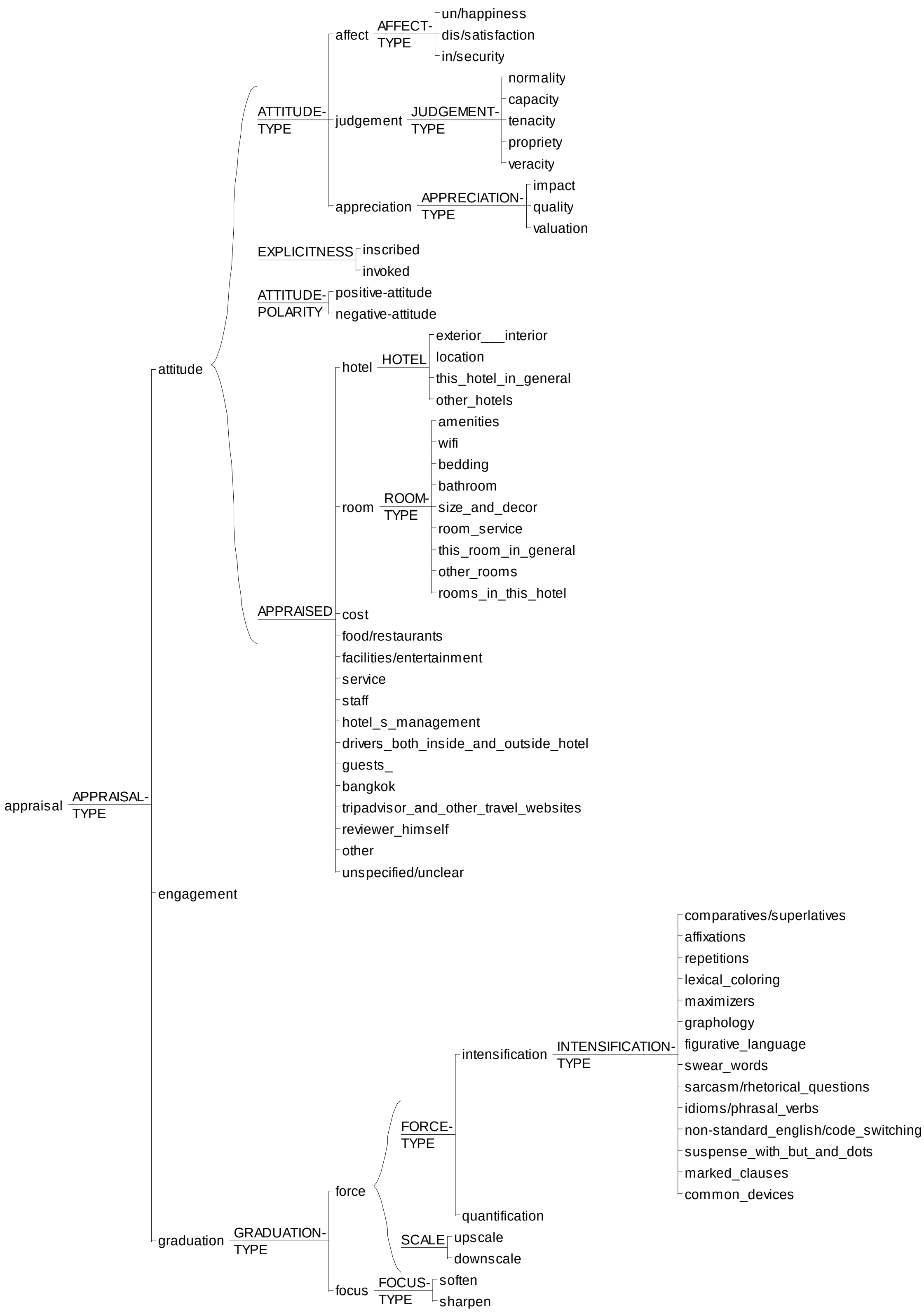

Figure 1. This study's framework

To elaborate the revised AF/UAM framework, most of the original scheme of the AF, i.e. the two systems of ATTITUDE and GRADUATION, along with most of the sub-systems in each, remained untouched. However, revisions were made to the following points.

Appreciation was revised to accommodate hotel reviews. Composition-Balance and Composition-Complexity in the old framework were removed since they more suited academic essays or films. The next three sub-systems were revised to be more compatible with hotels and to be clearer. Impact now refers to aesthetics that deal with the five senses, e.g. *beautiful* lobby vs. *old hotel*. Quality means effectiveness (e.g. *modern facilities*) and convenience (e.g. *centrally-located hotel*). Lastly, Valuation answers *Do you (the reviewer) recommend it?* It is the overall picture and normally appears at the start or end, e.g. *a good/poor hotel*. Sometimes Valuation refers to ethical issues, e.g. *hotel taxi scams*.

Regarding explicitness, Inscribed refers to (a) a text with a word/phrase that explicitly evaluates a person or something, or an attitudinal lexis, e.g. *a lazy/dishonest staff*; *amazingly, Bob could speak Russian*; (b) a text with at least one 'no' (etc.), e.g. *The staff cannot clean the room in time (= He is incapable of [Judgement-] cleaning it)*. In contrast, Invoked deals with a text with no explicit evaluative word/phrase; thus, meaning is inferred from the context. For example, (a) Figurative language, e.g. *Bob is a tiger* (= He is unkind, cruel); (b) Non-verbal action, e.g. *Bob hugged Ploysuay tightly* (= He loved Ploysuay a lot).

In ATTITUDE, 'the Appraised' is what is talked about, here referring to Hotel, Room, Cost, Food/Restaurants, Facilities/Entertainment, Service, Staff, Hotel's Management, Drivers both inside and outside hotel, Guests, Bangkok, TripAdvisor and other travel websites, Reviewer himself, Other, and Unspecified/Unclear. To be specific, 'Hotel' refers to Exterior and Interior, Location, This hotel in general, and Other hotels. A room consists of Amenities, Wifi (Speed, Cost, Access/Location and Unspecified), Bedding, Bathroom, Size and décor, Room service, This room in general, Other rooms and Rooms in this hotel.

GRADUATION/Force consists of 14 types of Intensification: Comparatives/Superlatives, Affixations, Repetitions, Lexical Coloring, Maximizers, Graphology, Figurative Language, Swear Words, Sarcasm/Rhetorical Questions, Idioms/Phrasal Verbs, Non-standard English/Code Switching, Suspense with *but* and dots, Marked Clauses, and Common Devices.

Results and discussion

This section describes and interprets the data. To start with some basic descriptive statistics, the corpus consists of 40 reviews or about 5,000 words. The average word length is about 4.5 characters and a normal sentence here would be about 4 words. And, the average review is about 125 words, i.e. a short paragraph only. (See Appendix 2 for a sample review.)

1. What does the AF reflect about the two main systems and their sub-systems when applied to online hotel reviews?

Table 1 gives an overview of the appraisal analysis for the corpus as a whole:

Table 1. AF overview (N = 1,370)

ATTITUDE	50%	ATTITUDE-Polarity		Explicitness	
• ENGAGEMENT	27%	• Negative	67%	• Inscribed	74%
• GRADUATION	22%	• Positive	33%	• Invoked	26%

Table 1 indicates that the highest occurring system involved in these online reviews is ATTITUDE (50%), followed by ENGAGEMENT (27%) and GRADUATION (22%). Instances of each are shown below:

(1) ATTITUDE: *the 'Premier' room*[4]*; a bloody spoon*

(2) ENGAGEMENT: *It might once have been five stars but lack of modernization has let it slip gracefully into the Tourist category*.

(3) GRADUATION: *super convenient; very uncomfortable; The staff are like turtle*.

RQ1 involved EL as seen from an AF perspective. The fact that ATTITUDE ranks top probably indicates that the customers/reviewers' main interest was on expressing opinions about people and things, as well as showing their feelings, and not on strengthening the online community by using negative words (ENGAGEMENT), and not much thinking about intensifying their opinions/emotions with words like *very* or *rather* (GRADUATION). These findings support those of off-line studies like Lee (2008), who compared persuasive essays written by native speaking and ESL undergraduate students.

Regarding polarity, Negative instances outweigh Positive ones at 67% to 33%. Examples are:

(4) Negative: *dirty hotel! Overpriced!*; *wifi is terrible*; *bad-tempered receptionist*

(5) Positive: *the room was large, carpeted and wall-papered; helpful receptionist*

As expected, the negative cases (67%) are double the positive (33%) but perhaps more interesting is the fact that one-third of the dataset is positive. Two factors are probably

[4] Due to space constraint, there will be no indication of the review number.

behind this negative to positive ratio: (1) because the researcher included the Average reviews (which might be 'low positive'); and (2) the customers/reviewers' mixed the positives with negatives, instead of being totally negative. This hypothesis is in line with Cenni & Goethals (2017) and Vásquez (2011), and is probably because the customers/reviewers wanted to show fairness or politeness (i.e. mitigation strategy) when making comments.

As for explicitness, Inscribed (74%) is far more common than Invoked (26%); examples are

(6) Inscribed: *horrible service; friendly/rude staff; old but adequate equipment*

(7) Invoked: *The floor carpet is in dire need of a major cosmetic surgery* (figurative language); *The pool attendant folded the used towels and put them out to be used again* (non-verbal act)

It is perhaps unsurprising that Inscribed is more frequent than Invoked. This may be because the customers/reviewers could remain anonymous by using computer technology, thus allowing them the freedom of speech to attack the target (Fuchs, 2008)—so long as they complied with TripAdvisor's regulations. Herring (2007) also states that anonymity '[increases] self-disclosure, antisocial behavior and play with identity' (p. 16). Even more interesting here is the rather high percentage of Invoked instances (26%), i.e. non-verbal (e.g. describing the dirty room as *with nail cuts on the carpet*) and Figurative Language (calling the hotel *a fading dame*, to ascribe to its age). Possibly, to some, this indirectness signals politeness (Félix-Brasdefer, 2005), and, as discussed below, this metaphorical example is a subtle way of intensifying negative value.

Next, ATTITUDE's three systems, i.e. Affect, Judgement and Appreciation, are described.

Table 2. ATTITUDE & its systems (N = 462)

Appreciation	Judgement	Affect
73%	20%	7%

Regarding ATTITUDE, Appreciation ranks first at 73%, followed by Judgement (20%), and, to a much lesser extent, Affect (7%). Some examples of each are:

(8) Appreciation: *terrible Wi-Fi* (Appreciation-); *great location* (Appreciation+)

(9) Judgement: *a rude night manager* (Judgement-); *friendly staff* (Judgement+)

(10) Affect: *We were very disappointed* (Affect-); *I like this hotel* (Affect+)

The fact that Appreciation is almost three quarters of the whole dataset is perhaps unsurprising, because these choices represent what the customers/reviewers complained about the most, i.e. the Suda Hotel and its worn-out amenities. Judgement, in the form of the staff's inefficiency, ranked low, about one fifth. This could mean that the customers/reviewers had a lot more contact with the hotel's tangibles, especially the room and its amenities, more than the staff, except for the front office (See Judgement below). These findings about the hotel's poor amenities and its unmotivated staff concur with Cenni & Goethals (2017) and Vásquez (2011) (See more below.). More interestingly, however, is that Appreciation appears more often than Judgement (*The service was slow*, rather than *The staff was lousy*); this probably reflects the customers/reviewers' politeness in not directing their accusations at the staff (Drasovean &Tagg, 2015; Mayo & Taboada, 2017).

Finally, in ATTITUDE, very little Affect is used here (less than one tenth). This probably indicates that the customers/reviewers were trying to express little of their own emotions (*I hate this hotel*), perhaps indicating politeness and reduced egotism (Drasovean &Tagg, 2015), and thus the writing seems more objective and mature (Lee, 2008; Love, 2006).

Table 3. Appreciation & its sub-systems (N = 334)

Impact	Quality	Valuation
43%	38%	19%

Table 3 shows the negative choices in Appreciation: Impact ranks first (43%), followed somewhat closely by Quality (38%) and finally Valuation (19%). Examples are:

> (11) Impact: *a deteriorated hotel, smelly and not clean rooms, stained carpets, a tasteless buffet* (negative); *comfy/spacious rooms* (positive)
>
> (12) Quality: *an extremely slow and arduous check-in procedure, terrible wifi, erratic air-con, expensive laundry* (negative); *an affordable hotel* (positive)
>
> (13) Valuation: *tired old hotel; horrible service; Do not stay here; breakfast the worst I had* (negative); *excellent location* (positive)

Although comparing the Appreciation findings here to other AF studies may be difficult, since this study's framework was adapted to fit online hotel reviews, one can use hospitality concepts—Marketing Mix and Customer Satisfaction, emphasizing their lack or low quality.

First, Impact, here taken to mean the poor aesthetics that has to do with the five senses, including dirtiness, ranks first, perhaps because the customers/reviewers emphasized the physical environment – looks being the first tangible aspect that they encountered at the hotel. In fact, the five senses bring about the hotel's atmosphere, 'a critical element in services' (Kotler, et al, 2010, p. 234). The importance of the hotel's looks concurs with what most hospitality experts have said (Berezina, et al, 2016; Walker, 2009). Second, Quality refers to effectiveness and convenience, and is second to Impact, thus the customers/reviewers also prioritized the reliability of hotel amenities and location. While the Suda was praised for its excellent location, other factors suffered. This attention to effectiveness, time management and convenience (or lack of them) is in line with hospitality scholars (e.g. Bowie & Buttle, 2004; Wirtz & Lovelock, 2016). Finally, Valuation, the evaluation of the stay, ranks last. Nearly one fifth of the customers/reviewers judged the hotel negatively, except for its location, as mentioned above. While most of them complained about the hotel, not too many assessed the experience. This is probably because evaluation needs time for reflection, which they may not have had, or maybe because they thought it sufficed to rate the hotel with numbers.

Table 4. Judgement & its sub-systems (N = 92)

Capacity	Propriety	Veracity	Tenacity	Normality
38%	26%	24%	10%	2%

Table 4 shows that, in Judgement, Capacity ranks first (38%), followed by Propriety (26%), Veracity (24%), Tenacity (10%), and finally Normality, lagging behind (2%).

(14) Capacity: *They <u>barely speak English</u>*; *They <u>neglected</u> us*

(15) Propriety: *<u>Unpleasant</u>/<u>rude</u> staff*

(16) Veracity: *Bunch of <u>cheaters</u>*; *<u>money stolen by room service</u>*

(17) Tenacity: *A <u>bad-tempered</u> receptionist*

(18) Normality: *their '<u>ladyboy'</u> receptionist*

The high occurrence of Capacity reflects the customers/reviewers' frustrations with the staff's poor English, made worse by their little motivation and incompetence. Next, Propriety and Veracity, both about one fifth of the total number, shows that the staff were perceived to be rude and dishonest. Finally, only a few customers/reviewers mentioned the staff's Tenacity (one tenth) and, to a much lesser degree, Normality (only 2%). The Tenacity data probably mean that some of them found the staff impatient and careless; and, for Normality, very few found their abnormality offensive, as in the mentioning of one 'ladyboy' receptionist.

To discuss, Narangajavana & Hu (2008) stressed five aspects for hotel employees at a Thai hotel: Language Proficiency, Quality Service, Positive Attitude, Good Manners and Appropriate Clothing. Interestingly, this work emphasized English proficiency, a major persistent shortcoming for Thai people in general, not only for the hotel staff (Lai & Aksornjarung, 2018; Nomnian & Arphattananon, 2018). Also, one can see that these five aspects parallel most of the sub-systems of Judgement. Language Proficiency and Quality Service correspond to Capacity; Positive Attitude roughly to Tenacity; Good Manners to Propriety; and, Appropriate Clothing to Impact (since it deals with the appearance, not personality). The fact that no match exists for Normality and Veracity (ethics) is probably because most hotels assume that their staff already possess them. At any rate, to achieve customer satisfaction, most, if not all, of these service aspects must be met (Walker, 2009).

Table 5. Affect & its sub-systems (N = 34)

Dis/Satisfaction	Un/Happiness	In/Security
68%	23%	9%

Finally, in ATTITUDE's last system, Affect, Table 5 shows how Dis/Satisfaction is top (68%), followed by Un/Happiness (23%) and In/Security (9%). Examples are:

(19) Dis/Satisfaction: *The room which I was annoyed about*.

(20) Un/Happiness: *We absolutely hated this place*.

(21) In/Security: *I felt totally insulted and embarrassed in front of waiting guests....*

The high Dissatisfaction may point to the customers/reviewers' focus on anger/boredom more than sadness/hatred and surprise/fear (Martin & Rose, 2007), probably due to the obvious fact that they are mainly interested in venting frustration and anger. The result concurs with Lee's (2008) successful essays written by native English-speaking undergraduates in Australia.

2. How are the evaluative words intensified?

Often, the high-frequency evaluative language in this corpus came in the form of single adjectives or adverbs, e.g. *an old hotel*, *uninviting breakfast*, *absolutely awful wifi*; *They barely speak English*. Sometimes, the EL used nouns (e.g. *a big drawback*, *a mistake*), nominalizations (e.g. *to report of a loss*) and verbs (e.g. *They wanted us to pay money for the towel [which we didn't take], i.e. the staff were unscrupulous*).

Occasionally, the evaluative language would come in patterns, especially the Praise-then-criticism pattern, starting with the positive and juxtaposing it with a negative. This pattern is often found in the titles:

(22) *Hotel OK but BIG PROBLEM!!*
(23) *Excellent location, dated hotel*
(24) *The only positive aspect is the direct access to BTS; other than that, BAIL!!!*
(25) *Overall, I think the Suda Hotel is a good choice if your intention is to travel around Bangkok and shop's your heart's content, however if […], personally I think look elsewhere*.

The Praise-then-criticism pattern, a kind of mitigation to soften the harshness of the negativity, is common in negative reviews. It can be found in Cenni & Goethals (2017), Drasovean & Tagg (2015) and Vásquez (2011). In contrast, Hyon (2011) found the opposite—the Criticism-then-praise pattern in department chairs' formal letters to evaluate faculty members.

To continue with how the EL was intensified, Table 6 shows the major intensifiers found in the corpus:

Table 6. Intensification types (N = 241)

Common Devices	Lexical Coloring	Graphology	Maximizers	Figurative Language	Sarcasm/Rhetorical Questions	Other
25%	19%	15.5%	15%	6.5%	5.5%	14%

The main intensifiers, according to Table 6, are Common Devices (*very old hotel*; 25%), Lexical Coloring (*terrible wifi*; 19%), Graphology (*Never again at this hotel!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!*; 15.5%), Maximizers (*The waiting time to check in was extremely long and chaotic*; 15%), Figurative Language (*A Dinosaur Kept Alive by its great location*; 6.5%), and Sarcasm and Rhetorical Questions (*The 'lovely' reception; Should I go on?*; 5.5%). Most of these intensifiers are upscale (out of 301 intensification instances, the current study had a 90% upscale and only 10% downscale). The types of Intensification, along with the amplification, as opposed to downtoning, are basically consistent with what is found in other online writings, e.g. Cenni & Goethals (2017), Derewianka (2008), Drasovean & Tagg (2015), Mayo & Taboada (2017) and Vásquez (2011). In general, by expressing degree on a scale (Bolinger, 1972), intensifiers function (1) to strengthen or emphasize the meaning (Paradis, 1997), especially praising and insulting (Partington, 1993), thus to express ATTITUDE more explicitly (Hood, 2004) without being offensive; (2) to show the speaker's confidence (Poonlarp, 2009) and identity (Lorenz, 1999; Napoli & Ravetto, 2017); and, (3) coupled with negativity, to create a more powerful effect, e.g. in sensational news (Bednarek, 2016). Most of the six intensifiers found in this study performed these roles.

To elaborate, Common Devices, mainly adverbs modifying adjectives, are essentially universal, thus they rank first here. Interestingly, similar to other intensifier types, different terms are being used by different scholars: Boosters (Alshaar, 2017; Quirk, et al, 1985) and Intensifiers (Martin & Rose, 2007) (Notice this term being used exclusively for this type). Examples here are *very dirty hotel; The breakfast was OK-ish but quite asian*.

Next, Lexical Coloring, adding connotation to words (Poonlarp, 2009), is basically Martin and White's (2005) sense of 'vigour.' While Common Devices upscale the degree, Lexical Coloring amplifies the vigour. To Poonlarp (2009), this intensifier can be divided into two categories: Intensified Lexis (e.g. *Groggy guests stumbling about grumpily*, i.e. sleepy and tired guests) and Attitudinal Lexis (*Carpet in hallways is BADLY stained and dirty*). Other examples include *Wifi was awful*; *Seriously showing its age*; and, *Nasty dripping water coming from the institutional toilet*.

Graphology, ranking third in frequency, is prevalent in online English and discussed much in CMC studies, e.g. Baron (2000 & 2011), Crystal (2006), probably because of its saliency. Graphology is divided into three categories: (1) All-caps, Underlining, Italics, Bolding, e.g. *Hotel OK but BIG PROBLEMS!!*; (2) Punctuation, e.g. *BAIL!!!*; and, (3) Acronyms/abbreviations, emoticons and e-stickers, e.g. *I changed 3 times room key bcuz* *its card key is very easy to unread the door....* It is interesting to see in the corpus that very few instances of acronyms/abbreviations, emoticons and e-stickers were found despite their prominence in online writing. This may be due to TripAdvisor's regulation to keep the writing accessible to the general readers.

To show intense emotions, the customers/reviewers also used Maximizers, which express 'the extreme end of the scale of intensity' (Alshaar, 2017, p. 8), e.g. *utterly, total, thoroughly, completely, absolutely, entirely* and *fully* (Quirk et al, 1985, p. 590). This includes the highest or lowest value of frequency, i.e. *always* and *never,* as well. Examples from this corpus include *We absolutely hated this hotel*; *Will never stay there again; and, That receptionist didn't care at all.*

Placed fifth and sixth (12% in total), Figurative Language and Sarcasm/Rhetorical Questions, being more creative and complex than the others perhaps due to their being indirect or nonliteral (Chandler, 2017), demand sophisticated language ability. Figurative Language, essentially comparing one abstract entity with a concrete one, e.g. metaphors, similes, personifications (Deignan, et al, 2013) and pervasive in both literature and everyday life domains (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980), is a powerful tool to intensify feelings and values (Knowles & Moon, 2006). Here, the Suda was compared, negatively but quite imaginatively, to *a huge, unclean factory, a fading dame*, and *a dinosaur kept alive by its great location* who was going *so downhill, way past its prime day*, and its carpet being *in dire need of a major cosmetic surgery*.

Finally, Sarcasm/Rhetorical Questions can be even more subtle than Figurative Language since they concern more implicitness and complexity (Chandler, 2017). They 'usually involve saying one thing with the intention of communicating the opposite' (Thompson & Filik, 2016, p. 107) often with some verbal aggression (Haiman, 1998) softened to show the customers/reviewers' being in control of the situation (Dews, et al, 1995). Compared with directly venting negative emotions, these devices are less face-threatening and more interesting (Giora, 1995), particularly for Rhetorical Questions which directly address the reader (Myers, 2010). Examples from this study are:

- *It might have once been a five-star but lack of modernization has let it slip gracefully into the Tourist category* (sarcasm)
- *Some nails [sic] cuts on the carpets: Yummy!* (sarcasm)
- *Should I go on?* (Rhetorical Question used when the writer was already determined to complain some more anyway)

Other minor types (14% in total) include Affixation *(a hotel that gives one ultrasmall shampoo for two people*), Comparatives/Superlatives (*the biggest scam in Thailand*), Repetitions (*Very, very soft*), Swear Words (*Your hotel would be dishonest about a bloody spoon!*), Idioms/Phrasal Verbs (*I got 'taken in' by this*), Non-standard English (*Your room no have[;] only executive rooms [do]*.), Marked Clauses (*What really annoyed me was the* *fact that the Hotel seem to be complicit in this scam….* instead of *I'm really annoyed because the Hotel….*), and Suspense with *but* + dots (*Good location* *but…*). Although some of these devices (e.g. Affixation, Comparatives/Superlatives and Repetition) figured more prominently in other research (e.g. Hunston & Sinclair, 2001; Mayo & Taboada, 2017; Poonlarp, 2009), this study found few of them. This is probably because the corpus of this study is small and intensifiers are 'context-dependent' (Napoli & Ravetto, 2017, p. 3), i.e. certain types of intensifiers appear more in certain genres (Alshaar, 2017).

Occasionally, combinations of these intensifiers were used to create an even more powerful effect on the reader, e.g. *Much, much better!!!* (Repetition + Graphology); *yummy yummy!!!* (Lexical Coloring + Graphology + Sarcasm); *…obviously had been trained in the same Concentration Camp/Prison as the receptionist* (Figurative Language + Graphology).

This result concurs with Alshaar (2017) and Poonlarp (2009), who talk about multiple intensifiers 'carrying extra intensifying force and enriching emotivity in the text' (p. 188).

3. What does the AF tell us about customer dissatisfaction?

Table 7 indicates what the customers/reviewers were dissatisfied with.

Table 7: Service failure topics (N = 462)

Hotel	Room	Staff	Food/Restaurants	Service	Other
28%	24%	17.5%	8%	6%	16%

Based on Table 7, the top five things that the customers/reviewers talked (mainly negatively) about, from high to low, were Hotel (28%), Room (24%), Staff (17.5%), Food/Restaurants (8%), and Service (6%)[5]. To elaborate, in general, they complained that the hotel was old (*outdated, run down*), dirty and with poor ambience (*an odd musty feel to the building*):

> *This is an old hotel (room were renovated, they claimed, a few years ago). Do not believe the hotel saying it's a 4 star on their website. It's a solid 3-star hotel but no more than that.*

[5] The rest included Reviewer himself/herself (*Let me tell you how terrible they treated their regular customers*; 4%), Facilities/Entertainment (3%), Cost (1.5%), Drivers (1.5%), Unclear (which happened when the customers/reviewers did not specify what/who they were referring to, e.g. when they said, *There'd been a mistake*; 1.5%), Hotel Management (1.3%), Other (e.g. skytrain and its access, the booking, Bangkok roads, other people; 1.3%), Bangkok (0.6%) and Guests (0.6%).

With *no fresh air*, the rooms had *stained carpets, black hair in the bed, dirty bed valance, filthy-looking bathrooms* with *nasty dripping water from the toilet*, and outside *the hallway phone ringing incessantly*. Also:

> *Our friends had to change their room because it was smelly and the walls are so thin that we woke up 4 am with the neighbour guest yelling.*

Besides not being able to use English much, the staff, especially the front-line officers, were seen as rude and incompetent:

> *As soon as we arrived, reception staff who do not look professional neglected us, leaving us with no info on wifi, breakfast or lift... No help with our luggage as well!*

To complicate the matter more, *[the] staff never smiled*. One 'lovely' receptionist and the night manager were seen as *being trained in the same Concentration Camp/Prison*! When the customers/reviewers complained about not getting the right amount of cash back from room service, they were treated like *forgetful children who were throwing a tantrum*.

Regarding the food, the customers/reviewers considered the hotel food *average to poor, expensive* and *quite asian* (with a negative sense here). It was mainly unappetizing:

> *Breakfast uninviting and I didn't want to eat, looked dirty. And what hotel doesn't serve bacon with your breakfast.*

Besides, the restaurant which the food was served in had a dismal atmosphere: *very noisy in a dark and cold room*. It was patronized by *groggy guests* who sometimes got involved in *a hectic, unpleasant bunfight*.

Finally, along with the unmotivated and impolite staff came the inefficient service (e.g. *extremely poor and arduous check-in procedure*) and …

> *The service rendered at this hotel is very bad. We book for 2 rooms. When check in we were given a room which was occupied; and at the night time one Chinese guest wrongly open room as she thought it was her room. When we asked for spoon to the waiter ask for a deposit.*

To discuss, the top five complaint topics complement what has been mentioned above, especially talking about customer satisfaction in Judgement (Table 4). In exploring this crucial topic in the hospitality industry, the customers/reviewers are often found complaining about the tangibles, i.e. things that are more concrete, here, the appearance of the hotel, room, staff, restaurant and food, and service. Perhaps this is because the customers tend to see them as the 'core products of the hotel' (Berezina, et al, 2016, p. 16) and so may be easily upset when they are at fault. Almost as a rule of thumb, the staff, especially the front office, have to smile (Walker, 2009). Ironically, this is in contrast to the image of Thailand as 'The Land of Smiles' (Berger, 2007). Regarding the ranking, although the top complaint topics may not be exactly the same, the general trend is. The finding concurs with several scholars, e.g. Dinçer & Alrawadieh (2017), Loo & Leung (2018), Sparks & Browning (2011) and Yaemwannang & Pramoolsook (2017). Sadly, these complaints point to the Suda's lack of professionalism in rendering quality service (Wirtz & Lovelock, 2016).

Table 8 shows customers/reviewers' dissatisfaction about the hotel and its elements.

Table 8. Hotel & its elements (N = 130)

This hotel in general	Exterior & interior	Other hotels
70%	28%	2%

In terms of the hotel, most customers/reviewers complained about 'This hotel in general' (70%), followed by Hotel's exterior & interior (28%), and, to a much lesser extent, Other hotels (2%). The majority of them, being so frustrated with the Suda, did not bother to compare it much to other hotels. In any case, some of them expressed their disgust of the hotel's exterior and interior, like this customer/reviewer who sums it up quite eloquently:

> *This is a grand edifice, 1980s style, hence something of a fading dame. It might once have been five stars but lack of modernisation has let it slip gracefully into the Tourist category. The room was large, carpeted, wallpapered... the bathroom a testimony to marble's enduring significance as an ode to wealth. But all these marks nevertheless are also signs of those times.*

Regarding the hotel's appearance, the outward and inward lead one to an earlier AF point in this study: Impact (i.e. looks), which is similar to the Physical environment, a crucial element in Hospitality Marketing Mix's 7Ps (Bowie & Buttle, 2004; Loo & Leung, 2018; Walker, 2009; Wirtz & Lovelock, 2016).

Table 9 describes what the customers/reviewers found defective in a most important aspect of a hotel experience: the room.

Table 9. The room & its elements (N = 151)

This room in general	Wifi	Size & décor	Bathroom	Amenities	Other
25%	19%	16%	13%	10%	17%

Regarding the room, the customers/reviewers complained quite a lot about the room they stayed in (25%), followed by Wi-Fi (19%), the room size and décor (16%), bathroom (13%) and amenities (10%)[6].

The room is obviously the most important factor in their stay since it is what the customers/reviewers would have the most contact with (Walker, 2009). In several negative hotel review studies, the room would be among the top priorities (usually behind the hotel's location), e.g. Berezina, et al (2016), Cenni & Goethals (2017), Ekiz, et al (2012), Vásquez (2011). One interesting fact here is that within the Room category, Wifi ranked second, even more than the room's size and décor, bathroom and other amenities:

> *There is NO wifi in your hotel rooms!!! Why not! So frustrating.*

The complaints were made concerning the unavailability of wifi, its access, cost and speed. This shows how important the internet was for these savvy customers/reviewers and it is consistent with Loo & Leung (2018).

Conclusion

This research aimed at studying the Evaluative Language of negative online hotel reviews, a popular genre extensively researched in the hospitality industry, but little in discourse analysis, especially using Martin and White's APPRAISAL Framework (2005). Three main objectives of this study included (1) to discover more about the corpus' AF systems, ATTITUDE and GRADUATION, and their sub-systems; (2) to know how the evaluative words were intensified; and, (3) to arrive at what the Suda's customers/reviewers were dissatisfied with.

Regarding the AF, one can say that the framework is fairly powerful with its ability to describe the EL used in the Suda's negative reviews, especially when its sub-system Appreciation was modified in this study. There were several interesting findings. To begin with, in ATTITUDE, Appreciation ranked first, followed by Judgement and, to a lesser degree, Affect. This means that the customers/reviewers, despite their desire to vent frustration at the hotel and its staff, targeted the criticism at elements (e.g. the service) rather than at people, thus producing an effective prose with very few emotional expressions like *I hate the hotel*. Next, in Polarity, although Negative value prevailed, to criticize, many customers/reviewers would mix the negative with the positive, using Praise-then-criticism pattern, a mitigation strategy. All these devices helped make them look good, i.e. polite and objective. In ATTITUDE's system Appreciation, Impact ranked first over Quality, implying that the customers/reviewers considered appearance most

[6] The other minor topics included Bedding (7%), Rooms in this hotel (7%), Other rooms (2.5%) and Room service (0.5%).

important. Interestingly, hospitality literature stated that the guests normally emphasized the tangibles, e.g. the hotel's looks. In Judgement, Capacity surpassed all, followed by Propriety, Veracity and the rest. This means the customers/reviewers valued the staff's enthusiasm and competence, i.e. English ability and local area knowledge. They also cherished the staff's politeness and honesty.

Concerning Intensification, i.e. RQ2, the study found 14 types of intensifiers in these negative reviews. The top six included Common Devices, Lexical Coloring, Graphology, Maximizers, Figurative Language and Sarcasm/Rhetorical Questions. Also, to enhance the effect, occasionally, multiple intensifiers would be combined.

RQ3 explored what the customers/reviewers were dissatisfied with, using the modified AF, thus extending the framework to the domain of hospitality industry. The top complaint issues, starting with the highest, included the Hotel, Room, Staff, Food and Restaurant, and Service.

Finally, the reason that the customers/reviewers wrote these reviews was probably to vent their frustrations at the hotel via a third party, i.e. TripAdvisor, empowered by computer technology's anonymity, virtual democracy, social decontextualization and relaxed style of writing. Thus, a few things that the Suda can do to redress the situation and to regain customers' credibility are

1) To bring a modern look to the hotel's exterior and interior
2) To renovate its guest rooms to have free Wi-Fi access, a contemporary décor, a clean bathroom and bedding.
3) To retrain its staff, especially the front line, to deliver quality service as well as to speak good English and have local area knowledge
4) To combine the perspectives of the customers, staff and manager.

Above all, all these factors need to be done in a speedy manner to insure that the Suda wins back the customers' satisfaction and later loyalty.

Limitations of the Study and Further Research

First, the study was based on a limited set of data: 40 negative reviews based on one hotel, from one hotel category (i.e. four-star) and one travel website TripAdvisor. Future research, therefore, may analyze more reviews, positive ones as well, two or more from each hotel category, and based on other websites like Booking.com and Hotels.com, too. Moreover, Thai language reviews can be compared with their English counterparts.

Second, the study focused only on two AF systems, i.e. ATTITUDE and GRADUATION, nothing on ENGAGEMENT. No intensifier pattern was sought; no real participants were brought in to evaluate the intensifiers' effects. Also, nothing was done to tap into how these negative reviews were handled by the hotel. Future studies, therefore, can include ENGAGEMENT and more exploration of intensifiers, along with their collocations. Also, a modification of the sub-systems may be made. To see a bigger picture, the AF can be complemented by other frameworks, e.g. genre analysis, MDA, intercultural communication, speech acts and stance. More topics can be analyzed, both online written and spoken. Thus, other types of reviews can be analyzed and compared, e.g. services (e.g. restaurant, cruise ship) and products (music). Also, the definition of certain AF systems can be made clearer, e.g. 'Dis/Satisfaction' vs. 'Un/Happiness.' Instead of dichotomy, more clines can be used, e.g. adding Ambiguous or Neutral to Positive/Negative polarity.

Finally, for data analysis, this study suffered from only one inter-rater to help confirm the validity of the results. Thus, future research may include more inter-raters, supplemented by other corpus tools besides the UAM, and by interviews with both potential customers and hotel staff to gain reliability of analysis. In fact, researchers can work in teams, rather than individually. For example, a language specialist can collaborate with a content specialist.

Pedagogical Implications

As this AF research analyzes online hotel reviews, it has several benefits, for both general English and English for Specific Purposes (ESP).

In general English classes, students can begin with negative/positive word lists and, more interestingly, they can practice distinguishing the polarity of words by using the co-text (i.e. surrounding words) and context (e.g. culture). For example, using co-text, students can determine that *Asian* in *<u>Asian</u> vibe* is positive while the same word in *Breakfast was very <u>asian</u>* [sic], *no cheese as we are used to* is negative. Or, at a broader, i.e. cultural, level, students can infer what the word *bunfight* means in *The free breakfast buffet we skipped 3 times because it was such a hectic, unpleasant <u>bunfight</u>*. They can make use of online dictionaries to determine whether the word is British English or American English. In British English, the word refers to 'an angry argument or discussion' (Hornby, 2015, p. 197) but in American English, 'a chaotic rush to get the best food, e.g. at a breakfast buffet' (Randal Rice, personal communication).

Next, more advanced students can study synonyms, e.g. of a negative word, meaning nuances (*<u>snobby/arrogant/rude</u> staff*), word patterns or collocations (*dirty toilet* and not *noisy toilet*) and even word history (how word meaning changes from positive or neutral to negative, or vice versa). To express more emotions, students can use various intensifiers, from the basic ones like the Common Devices or Graphology (*The room is <u>very</u> dirty*; *Avoid this hotel<u>!!!</u>*) to the more advanced like Lexical Coloring, Figurative Language and Sarcasm/Rhetorical Questions (*The room <u>sucks</u>; The Suda is <u>a dinosaur</u> kept alive by its great location*; *this <u>'wonderful'</u> receptionist*). They can also combine them (*<u>THE ROOM</u>*

<u>SUCKS!!!</u>). They can also practice politely criticizing things by using Praise-then-criticism pattern (*The hotel has energetic staff but it is far from downtown*) and writing in different styles (*I hate the Suda Hotel* vs. *The staff are lousy* vs. *The Suda is terrible* vs. *The Suda fails to satisfy the guests, including me*). Concerning critical thinking, students can analyze the reviews' argument structure and see if they are supported by good evidence. They can try to come up with an intelligent guess to see whether the online reviews are authentic or fake. Two debatable issues here are using these online reviews as writing models and studying taboo words. While unorthodox teachers may embrace authentic writing and taboo language, traditional teachers may value accuracy and shun 'inappropriate' topics. These issues warrant substantial research.

Regarding ESP, hospitality management students can study how customers complain, off-line and online, and (not included in this study) how hotels respond and whether the responses are appropriate or not. They can compare the typical issues that international customers complain about and see if the complaints are justified or not, from multiple perspectives. They can be given cases of good and poor four-star hotels in Thailand, say Chiang Rai, Pattaya, Phuket and Ubon Ratchathani, and asked to write reviews; or, if they can stay at a hotel, they can write reviews on TripAdvisor and Booking.com—for a real audience. Finally, they can complement their study with indispensable technical terms (e.g. *a premiere room, an executive suite,* *a twin/double room*) and the crucial schematic structure (i.e. possible moves in a review).

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Appendices

Appendix 1: A negative review from TripAdvisor

Overview Rooms **Reviews** About Photos Nearby Q&A

AdelaideGuy7272
Adelaide, Australia
48 25

Reviewed December 27, 2016 via mobile

A big disappointment

Well this may be my last stay at this hotel. I've been a regular for the past few years but the hotel is getting tired.

I checked in yesterday to room 3014. Received an upgrade as I'm a platinum IHG member, so that was welcomed. But the upgraded room is tired. Carpet has a number of stains on it and decor not upgraded. Seems in all the times I have stayed here I have never, never stayed in a room that looks like the one on the web site. You would think that as a top member of the hotel loyalty program that they might give me a room I can tell others about. Seems not.

But the positive news is that the staff are fantastic, especially in the club lounge. Seems that they have this right at least.

As an Ambassador member of the intercontinental, I'll be there next time I think.

Show less

Appendix 2: A sample review (with minimal language corrections)

Worst Hotel Ever!!
I have stayed at many hotels across Thailand and this by far is the worst hotel i have stayed. Suda Hotel Bangkok has many issues.
1. Building is old and dated.
2. Cleanliness is very poor. bathrooms and amenities are very old and dirty.
3. Reception staff where very rude! One staff member tried to charge me 600 baht as they thought i was bringing an escort up to our room when really it was my wife!! (even with passport photos they still wanted to charge me).
4. Food is very poor.
5. Very noisy hotel.
6. Staff are not helpful.

The only upside was that the hotel connects to bts sky train.
I would never stay at the hotel again. would not recommend especially if you are travelling with family.

The Interface between SLA and English as a Lingua Franca (ELF): A dynamic perspective

Anuchit Toomaneejinda

Abstract

Given the great diversity of English used around the globe, particularly when English becomes the world's common means of communication, the changing role of English calls into question the way the language is learned, acquired and conceptualized, especially when the native speaker norm is no longer the ultimate goal of intercultural interactions. Embracing a dynamic perspective and English as a lingua franca in L2-study will thus enhance our understanding of how L2 is acquired in new, different contexts rather than in the traditional English-speaking countries namely the UK, USA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. Moreover, such incorporation will help extend L2 study to appropriately reflect and explicate the emerging norms of English language use and also bridge the theoretical gap between SLA study in which native-speaker competency needs to be attained and English as a lingua franca (ELF), where successful communication is of most significance.

Keywords: second language acquisition (SLA), English as a lingua franca (ELF), dynamic perspective

Introduction

The study of second language acquisition (SLA) has recently been influenced by the advent of English as a lingua franca (ELF). From a linguistic perspective, SLA and ELF appear to belong to two distinct realms of language analysis. While SLA stresses a final goal of achieving native-like or near-native competency, ELF highlights the real use of English in dynamic and heteroglossic contexts where native-like mastery is perceived as less important than cross-cultural communicative competence (Canagarajah, 2007). However, with serious scrutiny, an argument can be made that ELF might better shed light on SLA processes. The purpose of this essay is to discuss the potential of this dynamic perspective to reconceptualise traditional SLA. This paper begins with an overview of behaviorism and the transition to a cognitive perspective. It then sketched key concepts of a dynamic perspective which will provide valuable insights into the possibility of uniting two dichotomies-specially SLA vs ELF, the divisive stance which epitomizes what Young (2009) perceives as problematic in the field of language learning and applied linguistics, followed by a definition and characteristics of English as a lingua franca. Finally, I will delineate the common ground between second language development and ELF.

Cognition and Second Language Acquisition (SLA)

From the 1940s to the 1960s, the focus of SLA was on external factors that influenced the process of learning. L2 learning was recognized as a process of habit formation, of making links between stimuli and response. The behaviorism tradition viewed learning as the ability to discover patterns of rule-governed behavior from the repetitive linguistic input which L2 learners received in their environment (Johnson, 2004). However, behaviorism failed to account for the capacity of language users to produce novel utterances that they had never heard before, and learners' failure in habit formation was partly blamed on L1 transfer, an important construct of SLA at that time (Johnson, 2004; VanPatten & Williams, 2007). After behaviorism failed to account for successful L2 acquisition, the field of SLA turned to the cognitive tradition, aiming to describe a linguistic representation or knowledge-stored in the mind, its way of processing information, the role of memory and attention in second language learning (Ortega, 2009) and explaining developmental success and failure (Long & Doughty, 2003). A key tenet of the cognitive tradition is that the human mind is viewed as an information processor, similar to a computer, which engages in rule-governed mental processes involving a search for "generalizability, the power of statistical procedures, the uniformity of human mental processes, the universality of rule-governed mental behaviors, the existence of one reality for all human beings, the collective mind, and idealized human being placed in a homogenous external reality speaking with one voice, and a giant and complex information processor that runs the program in solitude" (Johnson, 2004, p. 14).

Cognitive SLA provides descriptions and explanations of how linguistic components develop over time, particularly in terms of internalization, integration, storage, retrieval and the use of linguistic knowledge (Zuengler & Miller, 2006) by reflecting the patterns of language acquisition of those in a monolingual community (Canagarajah, 2007; Schneider, 2012). As Firth and Wagner (2007) put it, "the native speaker continues to predominate as the baseline or target that learners should seek to emulate; learning is conceived as a cognitive process that is in essence context neutral; competence is defined largely in terms of the individual's grammatical competence; etic prevails over emic; and learners in classrooms remains the standard data set" (p. 804). It thus fails to account for more complicated learning processes outside such a context in which SLA is rooted. Currently, the majority of the world's population are likely to be more multilingual than monolingual (Canagarajah, 2007; Herdina & Jessner, 2002). The acquisition pattern of monolingual individuals may not sufficiently explicate the different ways in which language is acquired. Accordingly, the study of how L2 developed requires a re-evaluation of the dominant concepts and a reassessment of relevant theories in the field (Herdina & Jessner, 2002). As can be seen from the development of SLA research, it is evident that the field has moved dynamically from a self-contained cognitive enterprise towards other external contributing factors and a language ecology whereby language users' cognition grows and matures, as Atkinson (2010) found in the extension of two cognitivist approaches – extended and embodied cognition – which put the emphasis on the inextricable linkage of cognition, bodily states and action, and the external environment.

Dynamic Perspective

Unlike traditional cognitive SLA perspectives, the dynamic perspective does not specify the end point of learning but rather the vibrant processes of language change resulting from the environment and internal reorganization perceived as a self-organized system (de Bot, Lowie, Thorne & Verspoor, 2013). According to Ellis (2007), language users learn or figure out linguistic constructions from their involvement in communicative situations from which they can deduce regularities from utterances they frequently encounter, resulting in the emergence of creative linguistic competence. Recent research in the cognitive sciences has indicated that language use strongly affects the way language is organized, processed, acquired, learned and changes within the same complex adaptive system (Beckner et al., 2009; de Bot et al., 2013; Larsen-Freeman, 1997). The theoretical development of a dynamic perspective in SLA has incorporated usage-based thinking about language learning, including dynamic systems theory, connectionism, chaos-complexity theory and emergentism to investigate the emergence of systematicity and patterns from dynamic interactions (Ellis, 2007, 2008; de Bot et al., 2013; Ortega, 2013).

Because human language is an open dynamic system, even small changes may have a strong effect on other parts and the whole system (de Bot et al., 2013; Ellis, 2008) whereby patterns, regularities and systems emerge from the interaction of language users, their brains, themselves, cultures and societies (Ellis, 2008; de Bot, 2008). Thus Ellis (2008) proposed dynamic cycles of language use, language change, language perception and language learning to account for the different ways in which adult language learners, with different L1 experience and cognitive bias, acquire their L2, as depicted in Figure 1. He argues that like other patterns in the natural and social sciences, languages change from the bottom up, over time and through space, as a result of their frequent usage. That is, very frequently used constructions are more easily affected than less frequently used ones (Ellis, 2007, 2008), and such changes or phase shifts can be seen at any linguistic levels, ranging from phonology, morphology and syntax to pragmatics (Cameron & Larsen-Freeman, 2007). Ellis (2008) exemplifies this by phonological processes, such as sound reduction, assimilation and lenition, which result in a large number of homonyms and polysemes as well as in the ambiguity caused by low-salience grammatical function words. Due to the deformation of such linguistic features, these low-salience cues have a strong effect on language users' perceptions and attention. It is argued that attention seems to be indispensable in SLA. Therefore, when salience is below the perception threshold, it means low learnability, various linguistic learning outcomes or even learning difficulties, particularly among adult L2 learners whose cognitive patterns are different from their young native counterparts. This seems to be problematic, especially when it comes to naturalistic L2 learning contexts in which learners are surrounded by implicit linguistic input, but cannot internalize it.

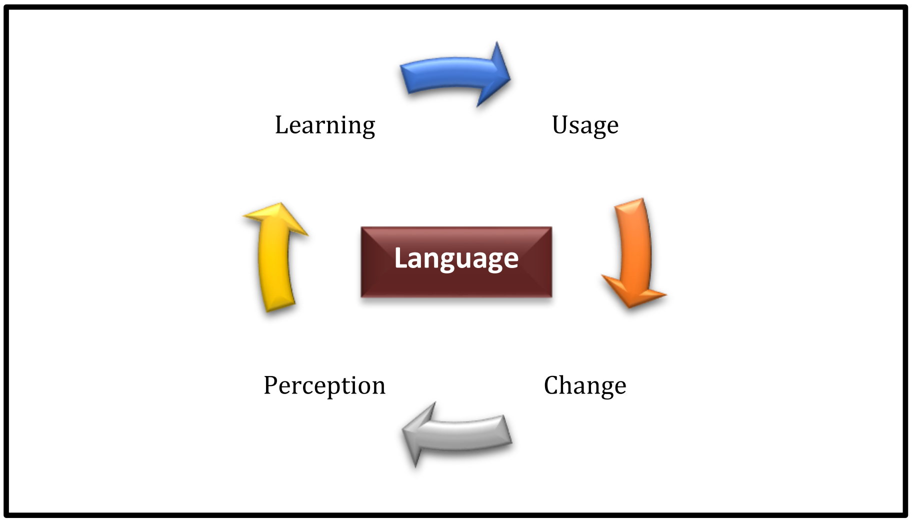

Figure 1. Dynamic cycles of language use (adapted from Ellis, 2008)

Given the significance of the dynamic perspective discussed above, L2 acquisition should be reconceptualized vis-à-vis the dynamic perspective, requiring a change from English as a foreign language (EFL) to English as a lingua franca (ELF).

English as a Lingua Franca

For Schneider (2012), ELF is the use of English as an auxiliary language spoken by participants who do not share the same first language, which is congruent with the definition of Seidlhofer (2004), who defines it as an additionally acquired language system which serves as a common means of communication for speakers of different first languages. ELF, in this case, thus includes English native speakers. On the other hand, according to Firth (1996), ELF can be defined as a contact language for speakers whose L1 and culture are different, such that English is chosen as a foreign language of communication. From this perspective, a key feature of Firth's definition excludes native speakers of English.

Instead of seeking an exact definition for this dynamic tool of communication, Jenkins (2003) provides the main characteristics of ELF, which are as follows: (1) it is a means of communication needed in the context where speakers are from different L1s; (2) it is an alternative for learners or speakers rather than a replacement for English as a foreign language (EFL) and it depends crucially on their needs and preferences; (3) ELF is a unique linguistic innovation shared by most ELF speakers; (4) because ELF forms and meanings are situated in context, it involves the use of various kinds of communicative skills and pragmatic strategies, such as accommodation and code-switching, to facilitate communication; (5) codification is drawn from the description of proficient ELF users. Figure 2 illustrates the differences between traditional SLA (EFL) characteristics and newly emerging ELF norms. Schneider (2012) found that English is now in ‘a cybernetic process’ involving the effect of ongoing monitoring of one’s successful contributions to adaptive behavior and linguistic negotiation, i.e. the presence of certain linguistic features that speakers find linguistically successful will result in change to an open linguistic system, and in the course of time this may result in linguistic behavior stabilization. ELF is thus a truly adaptive and complex system which is context- and usage-oriented in nature.

Canagarajah (2013) demonstrates important characteristics of English language that are used in multilingual communities, or ‘translingual communities’, in his work ‘Translingual Practice: Global Englishes and Cosmopolitan Relations’. He defines the dynamic interactions as communication’s transcendence of the aforementioned individual languages and linguistic forms and involves different linguistic resources and ecological affordances; or as Cogo (2008) puts it, ‘form follows function’. In these multi-ethnic contexts, meaning arises through negotiation practices in local situations, rather than from the use of correct grammatical norms, which are open to be negotiated and reconstructed by individual interlocutors in specific (new) communicative situations (Canagarajah, 2013). Languages used in context thus change over time and through space to generate new grammars and meanings. Despite the dynamic nature of ELF interactions, they do not lead to disunity or miscommunication because interlocutors tend to use and transform available (non-)linguistic resources and a fairly broad set of lexico-grammar to accommodate their interactions (Dewey, 2007).

The interface between SLA and ELF

Like other types of learning, language learning, especially in multilingualism, is a non-linear process (Menezes, 2013). According to Williams (1987), what SLA and ELF have in common is that ELF is the product of SLA processes via language contact and language learning and what she calls the “economy principle”, such as regularization or the minimization of redundancy, which resonates with the study of Ellis (2008) who illustrates the limited end-state of adult L2 language learners resulting from the adaptive characteristics of the language system itself and its users.

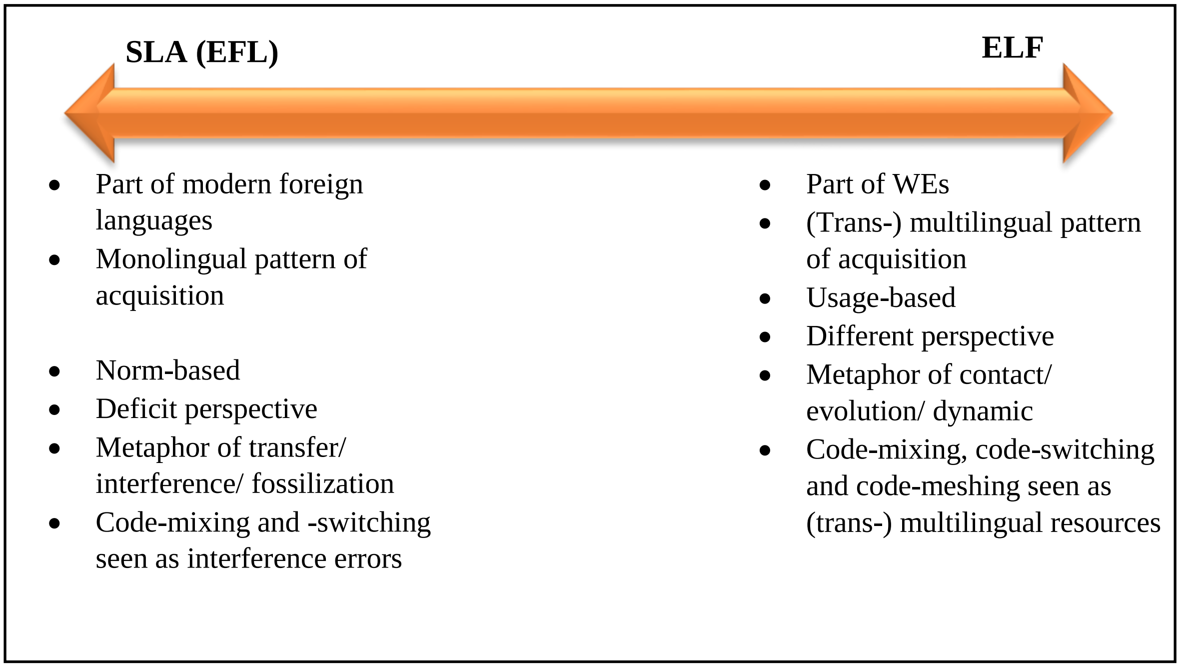

Figure 2. SLA vs EFL (adapted from Jenkins, 2003)

The use of a dynamic perspective helps to extend the field of SLA, in that it includes L2 learning and linguistic phenomena in multilingual societies, a current trend in a globalized world. As far as traditional SLA is concerned, according to Canagarajah (2007), the dominant constructs are well-grounded with monolingual norms and practices, resulting in treating language as an objective, identifiable product and giving importance to form rather than processes and practices that play a central role in dynamic social interaction. Then, differences from native gatekeepers are perceived as deviations or errors and are acceptable. Consequently, in seeking to understand ELF, cognitive orientation alone cannot adequately explain unique dynamic ELF interaction because, according to Canagarajah (2007), successful ELF communication involves the alignment of linguistic resources of its users and their physical environments and social context of interaction. In this case, the term ‘second language development’ (SLD) is proposed to reflect the bi-directionality of change in one’s language ability and performance instead of second language acquisition which conveys a unidirectional vector (de Bot et al., 2013).

From a complex theory perspective, there is no need for learners to comply with standards that they will never be exposed to, in this case English native-speaker norms. Instead, learners can design their own language systems to which they are directly exposed or adopt a frequently salient or similar form in their own language (Larsen-Freeman, 2012), particularly when it comes to language learning situations in multilingial societies. From a CT perspective, Larsen-Freeman (2012) asserts that language is an open system which interacts with language users' experiences and other systems in the context of use. It is thus impossible to expect the same details of acquisition routes in all contexts, and a comparison of the language produced by leaners with the target language should be avoided.

It should be noted that although these two perspectives represent two different paradigms, Schneider (2012) asserts that they have a shared psycholinguistic learners' dimension. That is to say, learners are seen as grappling with linguistic systems in the target language, some of which are close to, and some of which differ from, their first language. In so doing, they resort to the most salient properties of systems and sometimes adjust them in ways that enable them to use new and unfamiliar systems most readily. It is no surprise, that new systems may not bear a direct or close resemblance to the original systems as far as form is concerned. Nevertheless, in terms of meaning and communication, the new systems may enable them to communicate successfully.

In this way, a dynamic systems perspective with an explanation of how language use affects language change thus serves as a bridge between SLA and language acquisition patterns in multilingualism, English as a lingua franca (ELF) and/or World Englishes helps to overcome monolingual orientations to language and competence or monolingual bias (see Figure 3), thus providing a scientific tool for the study of the factors involved in multilingual development and a broader perspective of language use and learning in multilingual societies, as well as contributing 'a profound shift' in second language development (Canagarajah, 2013; Herdina & Jessner, 2002; Larsen-Freeman, 2012).

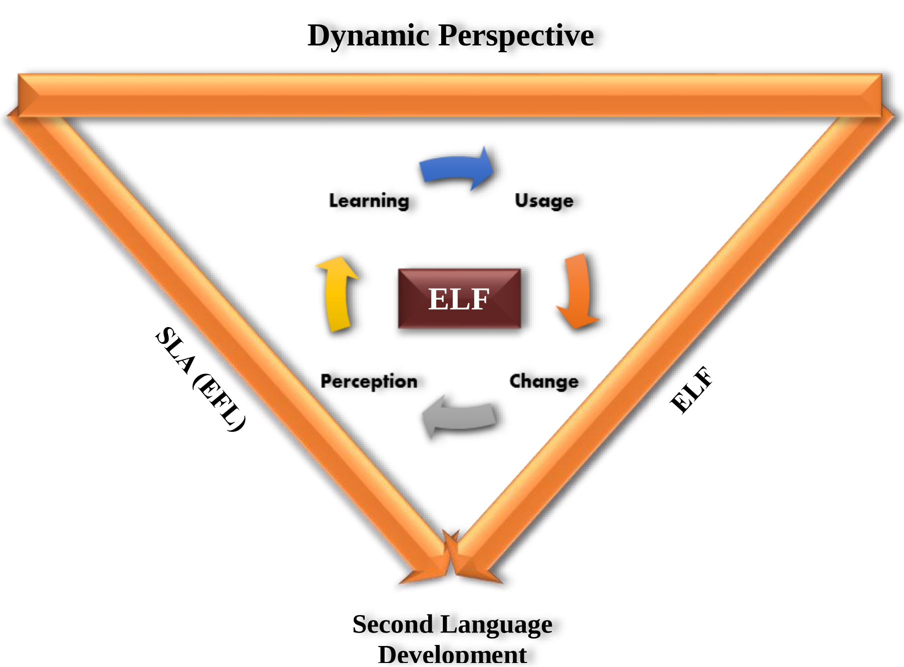

Figure 3. The process of language use and language change: The interface between ELF and SLD from a dynamic perspective

Conclusion

By embracing a dynamic perspective and English as a lingua franca in L2 study, this will broaden the study of how a second language is actually used, acquired, learned, taught and conceptualised holistically (Canagarajah, 2007; Jenkins, 2003). As Canagarajah puts it, “If the established knowledge in SLA is not informed by the conditions that characterize language practices that are so pervasive among millions of people in the world, it is important to examine the rationale behind knowledge construction in our field.” (p. 934). This assertion clearly runs counter to the traditional, cognitive SLA discussed above, and it raises the awareness of those concerned with SLA about the importance of appropriately utilizing multiple and ecological perspectives in an attempt to gain a better understanding of SLA processes.

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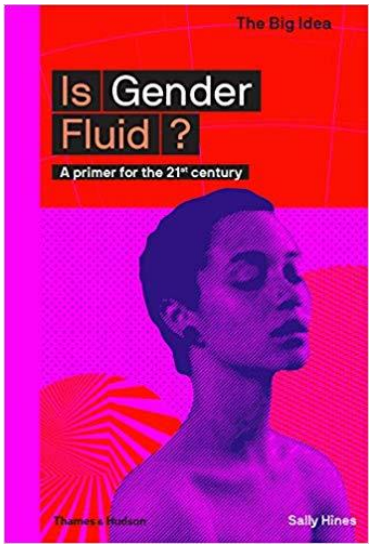
Book Review



Is gender Fluid?: A primer for the 21st century

Matthew Taylor and Sally Hines, London: Thames and Hudson, 2018, 143 pp. ISBN 978-0-500-29368-3

Savitri Gadavanij

One of the buzz words nowadays is gender. Though the word has gained currency in recent years, it is one concepts that is difficult to fully understand. Gender is mentioned in literature of various fields such as sociology, philosophy and discourse analysis. The term also constitutes a field in itself, gender studies.

Gender studies which takes root in women studies has a philosophical basis and is politically committed by nature. Most essential readings of the field touches upon philosophical issues for example *History of Sexuality* (1976) by Michel Foucault or *Gender Troubles* (1990) by Judith Butler. , various fields of studies have contributed to the conceptualization of gender ranging from biology, neuroscience, and psychology to social sciences and humanities such as philosophy, sociology and anthropology. It is difficult to find any single book that can introduce the concept while systematically delineating how gender, as a concept, relates to those interdisciplinary endeavors. This book is an attempt to do just that; it formulates a comprehensive overview of the concept of gender and related terms for instance sex and sexuality.

Is Gender Fluid?: A Primer for 21st Century is part of The Big Idea series that attempts to answer the burning questions of the day; Is Capitalism Working?, Is Democracy Falling?, and What Shape is Space?. Books in this series are published with an aim to provide a simplified yet comprehensive overview of the issue. The book is printed with varying font sized text on each page. The book is richly illustrated with 160 photos from graphic images of human bodies to archive photos of historical significance. As explained on the inside cover, the series aims to present the main issue 'in the way that can be grasped in one hour reading'. Personally, I think it is too ambitious to finish it in an hour given all the key terms and concepts mentioned that require time to digest. Color, highlight, and font style and size are used to indicate the varying significance of the text. In fact, the main issues are presented in large font size to stand out from the rest. The smaller font text provides supporting details which readers can read at a later time. Some of the key words are highlighted and defined in small text glossary printed on the margin of each page. Far from only answering the question "Is gender fluid?", the book provides a reader-friendly introduction to gender studies.

This book presents the conceptualization of gender, exploring 4 areas related to gender namely: gender as an expression of biological sex; gender as social construct; gender diversity and gender activism. The 4 chapters are preceded by an introduction chapter. The introduction chapter sketches out the varying definitions of the keyword, gender, contrasting it with the related term, sex. It moves on to discuss the composition of the term gender. The way that gender is socially constructed and how the concept shapes our everyday life are highlighted. After providing views of gender from various perspectives, ranging from essentialist to social constructionist to intersectionality, the author states the aim of the book is to explore gender by answering the question of whether or not and how gender can be considered fluid. The book ends with a conclusion chapter answering the question whether gender is fluid. The content of each of the 4 core chapters is arranged in the order that portrays the chronological development of each perspective.

Chapter 1, gender as an expression of biological sex, introduces how gender is seen to be determined by biological sex of the individual. This essentialist viewpoint that gender difference is defined by birth. Since it is traditionally believed that people can be classified into 2 sexes, men and women, gender is thought to comprise of 2 corresponding genders. Gender binary leads to a number of studies along difference and similarity axis. The chapter takes us through the early paradigm believing that the biological sex determines our gender and how such perspective leads to the emphasis on gender difference and inequality. It explores to what extent biology determines our gender, gender stereotypes, gender roles and division of labor with reference to contributions from various fields, such as biology, anthropology and sociology. The latter part of the chapter discusses the later development from anthropology, presenting counterevidence from other cultures that contradicts the idea of gender roles and 'natural' gendered division of labor, arguing that these are more the products of social and cultural constructs.

Chapter 2, elaborates the social constructionist approach, arguing that instead of being biologically determined, gender is a social construct. It proposes that men and women from different societies may have differing gender roles as a result different socialization. It argues that gender roles are determined by social, economic, and political system and later confirmed by religion. With an illustration from ancient Greek culture, the book explains how gender discrimination and subordination has been systematically cultivated in the process of socialization and becomes part of the social norms and values. In Europe, only when the European countries went through social transformation during the Industrial Revolution that the social perception regarding genders changed. The chapter also mentions religious reactions around the world in light of these changes. These instances are presented in support of the argument that gender norms have been sustained by religions. Toward the end of the chapter, the book provides accounts of how gender norms have been challenged by different sectors in various societies. The chapter has made the point that gender is biologically determined and that it is not and cannot be expected to be consistent regardless of time and place.

The issue of gender diversity is presented in Chapter 3. This chapter aims to prove that there are neither two sexes nor two corresponding genders. Gender is neither biologically determined nor is it socially constructed. Gender is seen as an individual's choice and that one's gender may change over time. The chapter starts by arguing that gender binary is a western concept and that gender diversity has a long standing recognition in various non-western societies, such as in Asian and Latin American cultures. However, in many cultures, gender diversity and transgender practices are regarded as a threat. Gender diversity is often related to sexual diversity; the display of same sex desire. Nonetheless, the author notes that it is important to understand that these two are not one and the same. To make its point, the chapter introduces Foucault's way of looking at gender as identity; gender is who we are, not what we do. With this concept of gender, one can look beyond the frame of men vs. women sexual binary to see the parallel duality of normal and deviant. The latter duality leads to another kind of sexual discrimination. A person labeled as a deviant would be extensively punished both in real life and in literature by the society. After presenting the traditional culture that promotes rigid demarcation and distinctive differentiation of gender norms and roles, the discussion changes to a more contemporary period in which cross dressing and transgender exist and how society grows to accept these instances over the years. As a matter of fact, studies such as the series of Kinsey's reports published during 1940s and 1950s, proposed the idea of gender and sexuality as a spectrum instead of binary. These are presented as the examples of how society's view toward gender is also fluid.

Chapter 4 steers away from conceptualization of gender to discuss gender activism - the fight to self- identify one's gender, gender equality, fight for rights of all sorts of injustice. This movement is indiscriminative; this activism is not class based or limited only to gender issue. It can be considered a fight for one's freedom from being defined or being controlled by other norms of the society, many of which treat women in an inhumane manner for the benefit of men. Some movement attempts to bring down the gendered treatment, in similar fashion socialization, potentially contribute to gender differences. How the society has responded to the activism in terms of social, political, and legal aspects are discussed with examples from various contexts. Most of them suggest that we are moving toward a future of non-binary gender or even genderless society in which people are not classified, treated, or judged by their gender and sexuality.

Conclusion chapter answers the question: Is gender fluid? Based on the chronological chains of events associated with the development in gender conceptualization presented in Chapter 1-4, it is argued that we are moving towards the world of gender fluidity. It is noted, however, that gender neutrality is still far from conceivable.

Though the book is a simplified version providing brief foundation of gender studies, it makes systematic reference to the key classic works and cites important scholars. The list makes this book a good gender studies anthology. However, since the book is only an introduction, some of the debate that underlies each perspective is glossed over or entirely omitted. Those who are interested in any particular aspect of gender is recommended to find in-depth information from other sources.

For anyone who would like to have some idea of what gender and gender studies are all about but have a limited time and/or background, this book makes a good choice. It is concise, pleasant to look at and well-illustrated. A recommended reading.

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- Submitted manuscripts must be typewritten, double-spaced, and in 12-point Time New Roman font with margins of 1.5 inch for top and 1 inch for bottom, left and right sides.
- Papers should not exceed 30 pages (A4 or letter size), exclusive of tables and references.
- All pages must be numbered except the title page.
- Page numbers must be placed at the top of the page in the upper right hand corner.
- The article title and headings must be printed in bold style and placed at the center of the page. Sub-headings should be italicized and positioned at the left margin.
- Manuscripts must be thoroughly checked for errors prior to submission.

Reference Format

All sources cited in the manuscripts must follow the American Psychological Association (APA) guidelines (*Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 6th edition*), and must be alphabetically ordered. Purdue University provides a comprehensive on-line source for APA guidelines which can be accessed through its website (https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/1).

In-text citation

Within the text, only brief author-date citations should be made, giving the author's surname, year of publication and page number(s) where relevant. With the exception of Thai language sources, only first name(s) or first name(s) and surname(s) can be cited.

According to Jones (1998), "manuscripts must be properly cited" (p. 199).

Long quotations

Direct quotations that are 40 words or longer should be placed in a free-standing block of typewritten lines. Start the quotation on a new line, indented 1/2 inch from the left margin without quotation marks.

Rather than simply being a set of relations between the oppressor and the oppressed, says Foucault (1980) in Power/Knowledge:

> Power must be analyzed as something which circulates, or as something which only functions in the form of a chain.... Power is employed and exercised through a net like organization.... Individuals are the vehicles of power, not its point of application. (p. 89).

Summary or paraphrase

> Kojchakorn Sareechantalerk (2008) states in her study of Thailand's feminine beauty discourse that the traditional description of beauty (before 1868 A.D.) can be segregated by class and ethnic distinctions into different sets of rules governing the presentation of attractive bodies and postures that are said to indicate individual class and ethnic identities (p. 26).

Examples of References

Books

Butler, J. (1993). *Bodies that Matter: On the discursive limits of sex.* London: Routledge.

Butler, J. (1999). *Gender trouble: Feminism and the subversion of identity* (10th anniversary Edition.). London: Routledge. (Original work published 1990)

Articles in Periodicals

Lau, H. H. (2004). The structure of academic journal abstracts written by Taiwanese Ph.D. students. *Taiwan Journal of TESOL*, *1*(1), 1-25.

Li, L.J. & Ge, G.C. (2009). Genre analysis: Structural and linguistic evolution of the English-medium medical research articles (1995-2004). *English for Specific Purposes*, *28*(2), 93-104.

Articles in Edited Books

Mulvey, L. (1985). Visual pleasure and narrative cinema. In B. Nichols (ed.), *Movies and Methods* (Vol. 2). Berkley: University of California Press.

Tonkiss, F. (1998). Analysing discourse. In C. Seale (ed.), *Researching society and culture.* (pp. 245-260). London: Sage.

Unpublished Theses

Kojchakorn Sareechantalerk. (2008). *A Discursive Study of Thai Female Beauty: Multidimensional approach* (Unpublished Master's Thesis). Thammasat University, Bangkok, Thailand. [in Thai]

Notes on Thai Language References

- According to Thai convention, Thai scholars are listed and referred by their first names.
- The Romanization of Thai words should follow the Royal Thai general system of Transcription (RTGS), published by the Royal Institute of Thailand (1999). The RTGS, however, does not include diacritics, which phonetically indicate the variation in vowels and tones.
- The transliteration of Thai names, preferentially adopted by Thai individuals, for example, Nidhi Auesriwongse, Chetta Puanghut, should not be altered.

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