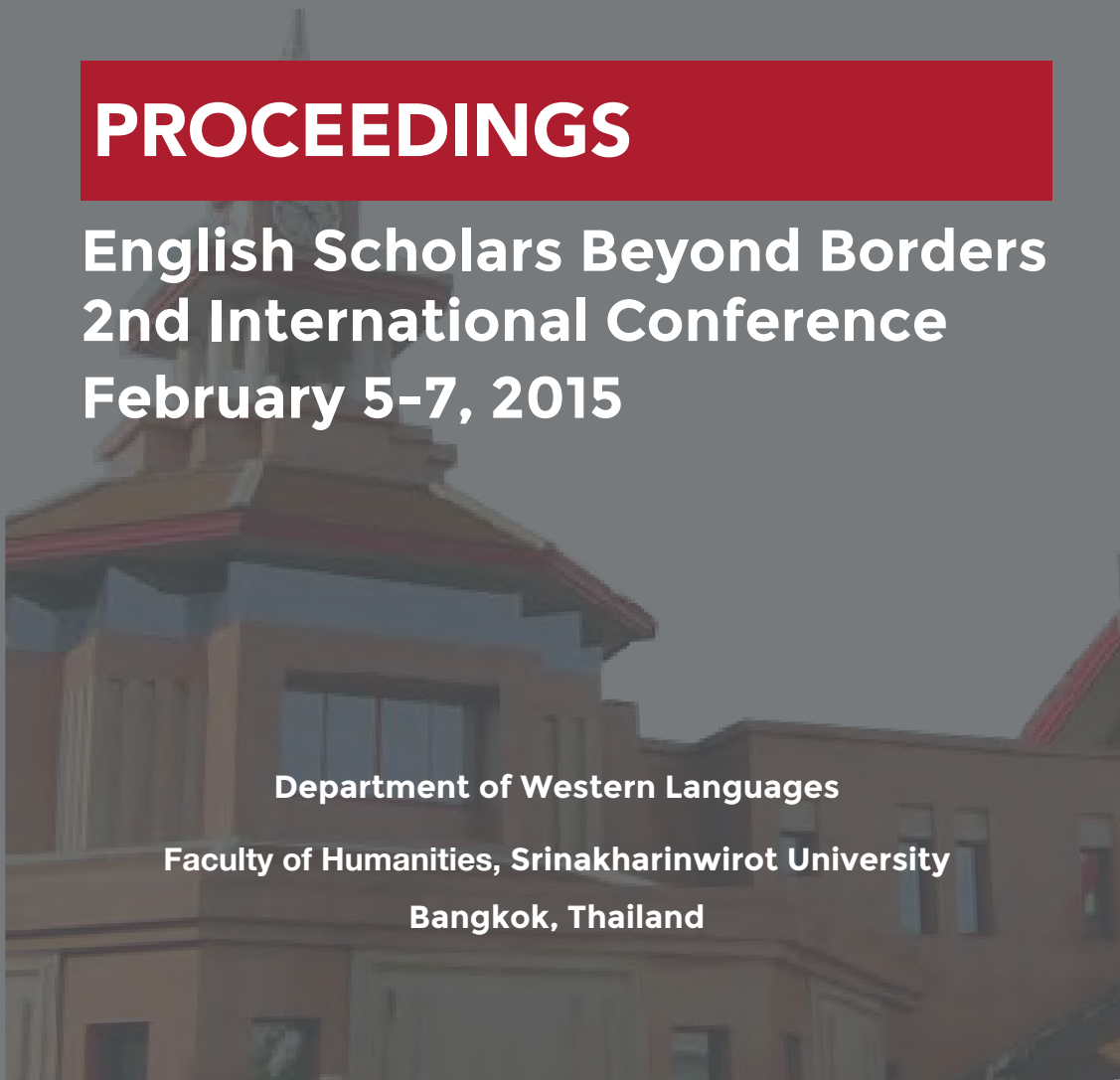
ESBB

2nd

PROCEEDINGS

English Scholars Beyond Borders
2nd International Conference
February 5-7, 2015



Department of Western Languages

Faculty of Humanities, Srinakharinwirot University

Bangkok, Thailand

Conference Proceedings
2nd English Scholars Beyond Borders International Conference 2015

Co-hosted by
Department of Western Languages,
Faculty of Humanities
Srinakharinwirot University
& English Scholars Beyond Borders

February 5-7, 2015

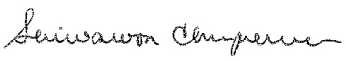
Bangkok, Thailand

Message from the Chair of the Department of Western Languages
Faculty of Humanities, Srinakharinwirot University

On behalf of the Department of Western Languages, I would like to welcome all participants who are here to attend the second English Scholars Beyond Borders International Conference hosted by English Scholars Beyond Borders and the Department of Western Languages, Faculty of Humanities, Srinakharinwirot University.

The objective of this conference is to assemble scholars from across the globe to share ideas and expand epistemological horizons. Our intention is to embrace epistemological diversity in English education and research. English Scholars Beyond Borders International Conference was in Turkey in 2014, is in Thailand this year, will be in Taiwan next year, Oman in 2017, Japan in 2018. Each conference will add further energy to empower its members to keep crossing borders.

It is an honor that we have Mr. Korn Chatikavanij, Former Minister of Ministry of Finance and Chairman of Democrat Party Policy Unit, as the keynote speaker. We also have the speakers from many countries in our plenary sessions and parallel sessions who will share with us their insightful papers, which will contribute to the development of language education. We really appreciate your kind contribution. Thank you.



Assistant Professor Dr. Saiwaroon Chumpavan

Chair, the Department of Western Languages

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Introduction to the Conference Proceedings

Z.N. Patil
Former Professor of English,
Former Head, Department of Training and Development,
English and Foreign Languages University,
Hyderabad, India
Presently, Emeritus Professor of Applied Linguistics

This little volume consists of nine papers- 'Factors Affecting English Language Learning in Thai Classrooms' by Somyos Fungchomchoei, 'Unleashing the Innate Capacities through Critical Thinking' by Roy Pushpavilasam Veettil, 'A Study of the Use of Journal Writing Activity in a Basic Writing Class to Enhance Writing Fluency and the Students' Perceptions of Journal Writing' by Phnita Kulsirisawad, 'The Role of Context in Comprehension' by Z. N. Patil, 'The Use of Fillers in American and British Spoken English in Films' by Wasinee Tipsorn and Ubol Dhanesschaiyakupta, 'Analysis of International Civil Aviation Organization Language Proficiency Rating Scale (Pronunciation Category)' by Watthana Suksiripakonchai, and 'Continuous and Comprehensive Assessment' by Z. N. Patil., 'Collocation and English Language Learning' by Jirawoot Sararit, Saiwaroon Chumpavan, and Nitaya Suksaeresup, and ' Low-High Order Cognitive Questions in the Book Series Titled, "Projects: Play & Learn" for Elementary School Levels 2 and 5' by Thanatkon Damrongkhongchai and Sugunya Ruangjaroon.

The volume is an outcome of the international conference on English Language Teaching jointly organized in February 2015 in Bangkok by English Scholars Beyond Borders (ESBB), a voluntary organization working in the service of the global teaching fraternity, and Srinakharinwirot University, Bangkok. The keynote address delivered by Mr. Korn Chatikavanij, Former Minister of Ministry of Finance and Chairman of Democrat Party Policy Unit, and Professor Roger Nunn, the Chief Executive Officer of ESBB, and some plenary talks delivered by members of ESBB and invited speakers were published in the 2015 issue of the online journal run by ESBB publications. Some presentations could not be considered for inclusion in the online journal because they were not submitted to the chief editor in time for review. The nine

articles in this volume are a set of such articles and these constitute partial proceedings of that international conference.

The editors would like to make it clear that the individual authors are solely responsible for the views and ideas they have expressed and that they are answerable for any queries regarding the originality and authorship of the articles.

The first paper by Somyos Fungchomchoei titled 'Factors Affecting English Language Learning in Thai Classrooms' is a research-based paper. The researcher has three objectives in mind: to investigate the attitudes of native Thai teachers of English towards factors that may affect the learning of the English language in Thailand, to find out which factors most affect the success of the learning of English in order that relevant organizations may adopt appropriate ways to improve the learning process and to examine whether teachers' age and experience affect their attitude towards the teaching of the English language. The results of this research revealed that there were five major factors that affected the process of language learning. First, learners' individual characteristics influenced the learning process. This research corroborates the findings of earlier research that shows that learning styles (auditory, visual, kinesthetic, etc.), the learner's type of intelligence (verbal, visual, logical, mathematical, musical, interpersonal, intrapersonal, naturalist, etc.), and the learner's being a sequential/global, thinking/feeling, etc. leaner affect the quantity and quality of learning. Secondly, the interference caused by Thai language also affected the learning process. As we know, mother tongue interference works at phonological, lexical, grammatical and even at semantic and pragmatic levels. Thirdly, the environment in which learners learn a language has some impact on the learning process. The environment can be conducive or detrimental to learning. Fourthly, the curriculum (teaching/learning philosophy, approaches, methods and techniques, teacher and learner roles, objectives, teaching materials, assessment procedures, etc.) has a determining impact on learning, and finally, teacher's professional competence as well as his/her teaching techniques influence the learning process.

Roy Pushpavilasm Veettil's paper titled 'Unleashing the Innate Capacities through Critical Thinking' is about the need and techniques of developing critical thinking in our learners. As we know, educational thinkers have frequently criticized the uniformity that formal instruction requires and perpetuates. They have been critical of a prescribed curriculum, teacher evaluation of students, and of the teacher-as-an-expert student-as-passive learner model of

instruction. Schools are confronted with two contradictory beliefs: one belief is aimed at education toward critical thinking, toward the development of an independent mind, and enough skills to fight and change wrongs. This is what Postman and Weingartner (1969) call "teaching as a subversive activity". The other belief looks at schools as a means of teaching the students to accept the world as it is or to subordinate themselves to culture's rules, constraints and even prejudices. This is Postman's (1979) "teaching as a conserving activity".

I remember to have read on Facebook the following dialogue between a child and his mother. The boy asks a very fundamental question that would shake the very foundation of the so-called civilized system of education. He says, "Why do I have to go to school, mother?" The mother replies, "So you can be molded into a state approved homogenous drone that cannot think outside of the prescribed consensus. You will learn to repeat information instead of how to think for yourself so that you don't become a threat to the status quo. When you graduate, you'll get a job and pay your taxes in order to perpetuate the corporate service of indentured servitude!" The mother's reply is a critique of the prevalent curriculum (approaches, methods, teaching materials, assessment mechanism, etc.)

Roy Pushpavilasam Veettil's paper has Bloom's (1956) taxonomy of educational objectives and Gardner's (1983) notion of multiple intelligences as its backdrop. The paper indirectly suggests a need to change our approach to education and need for (1) cooperative and collaborative work, (2) discussion based work, (3) autonomous, experiential and flexible learning, (4) negotiated learning, (5) community-related learning in order that students can understand and interrogate a range of environments, (6) problem solving activities, (7) increase in students' rights to employ talk and (8) teachers to act as transformative intellectuals, promoting ideology critique.

Phnita Kulsirisawad's paper titled 'The Study of the Use of Journal Writing Activity in a Basic Writing Class to Enhance Writing Fluency and the Students' Perceptions of Journal Writing' discusses the advantages of journal writing. The author is of the opinion that we need make the best use of journal writing to prioritize confidence building and fluency over accuracy. Excessive emphasis on correctness may de-motivate and demoralize learners. The paper makes a case for the use of journal writing tasks help second/foreign language learners overcome their fear, nervousness and inhibitions. In other words, the author is of the opinion that journal writing

activity can change students' perceptions and understanding of the role of journal writing in the development of writing skills.

Z. N. Patil's paper titled 'The Role of Context in Comprehension' is the result of a workshop he conducted. He demonstrates how physical, psychological and verbal contexts facilitate our understanding of a text and help us to guess the meanings of unfamiliar words. He goes on to illustrate how context helps us to attribute meanings to no-sense or non-sense words. Context is all pervading. Without context it is difficult to arrive at appropriate interpretations. Patil cites an interesting example to prove his point that context can help us to lend meanings to non-sense words. His 'zrestra' example is similar to the following example from Moore (1969, p. 171):

"I have a *fleep* with me nearly every day. This *fleep* goes with me everywhere, and I consider it an indispensible part of my life. In appearance it offers an attractive contrast: one part is bright and shiny, the other quietly dull. My *fleep* outlasts the other parts of my wardrobe, and I can often wear it for several years. Being unobtrusive, it seldom goes out of style. Some people like a stretchy *fleep* but I prefer the traditional kind. The leather of my *fleep* is soft and supple so that it gives with every movement of a part of my body. This *fleep* is very important to my well-being, for without it my trousers would come down. So every morning I buckle it around my waist and step forth to meet the world with a feeling of confidence."

In the beginning, do we know what a fleep is? Not in the beginning. But we soon do as we meet the word in a series of contexts that narrow the meaning step by step and make it specific. The contexts in this short paragraph enable us to infer that 'fleep' means 'belt'.

Wasinee Tipsorn's paper and Watanna Suksiripakonchai's paper are about spoken English. Wasinee Tipsorn's paper titled 'The Use of Fillers in American and British Spoken English in Films' discusses the use of fillers in conversational interactions. The paper is based on an analysis of some American and British movies over three centuries. It discusses the various roles and functions that fillers perform in spoken interactions. The paper is a useful addition to the existing literature on features of spoken discourse. The differences between spoken and written discourses are well known. The vocabulary and grammar of spoken language are simpler than those of written language. Spoken discourse is characterized by incomplete sentences, back-channel responses, immediate feedback, rephrasing, repetition, and so on. The present paper focuses on the forms and functions of fillers in conversations.

Watthana Suksiripakonchai's paper titled 'Analysis of International Civil Aviation Organization Language Proficiency Rating Scale (Pronunciation Category)' and its Implications for the Teaching of Aviation English in Thailand' deals with aviation English with a special focus on intelligibility. In the past, people held a one-sided view of intelligibility. In their view, the onus of being intelligible was with the non-native speaker. However, gradually, with the acceptance and recognition of the legitimate place of non-native varieties of English, the one-sided perspective was replaced by a reciprocal view of intelligibility. Now it is believed that being intelligible is a joint responsibility of the native and the non-native speakers. It is a common pursuit for communication. What Watthana Suksiripakonchai has tried to do in his paper is to advocate comfortable international intelligibility instead of absolute intelligibility.

Z. N. Patil's paper titled 'Continuous and Comprehensive Assessment'. He makes a strong case for formative evaluation of learners' performance. This is how he describes formative assessment. Formative assessment subordinates testing to teaching and learning. It introduces internal assessment and **e**mpowers schools and teachers**.** It discourages viewing success and failure on the basis of a single examination**,** discourages rote learning and mechanical memorization**,** and competitive tests**.** It minimizes formal tests**,** minimizes subjectivity and maximizes tests that assess all-round progress**.** A formative test replaces marks by grades**.** It adopts social constructivist approach**,** goes beyond the text book and relates classroom with life outside**.** It starts with the belief that there may be multiple correct answers and hence encourages non-conformity, respects diversity**.** It recognizes different learning rates, styles, and strategies and different types of intelligence**.** It offers regular and frequent feedback**,** reveals several strengths and weaknesses, and assesses several things over a period, judges on the basis of several performances and offers ample time to identify, classify, notify, rectify and codify problems/errors and most importantly, it co-ordinates teaching and learning with testing.

Jirawoot Sararit, Saiwaroon Chumpavan, and Nitaya Suksaeresup's paper tilted, "Collocation and English Language Learning deals with the importance of collocation instruction in Thailand. It also explores the significance of collocation towards English language learning in English as a foreign language (EFL) contexts. Trends of research on collocations from both overseas and Thailand have been reviewed. The authors of this paper suggest effective methods of teaching collocation to EFL classrooms.

Low-High Order Cognitive Questions in the Book Series Titled, “Projects: Play & Learn” for Elementary School Levels 2 and 5 ” by Thanatkon Damrongkhongchai and Sugunya Ruangjaroon is the last paper in this proceedings. The researchers of this study adopted Anderson and Krathwols’ Taxonomy to investigate whether or not the questions in the book could promote low-high order cognitive thinking skills of the students. It was found that low level cognitive questions were mostly found in Book 2 and Book 5, and it was contradict to what would be expected.

Professor Roger Nunn, the Chief Executive Officer of ESBB and other members of ESBB group and Dr. Saiwaroon Chumpavan, Chairperson of the Department of Western Languages, hope that this little booklet containing nine articles and an introduction that places these articles in proper perspective will be useful to teachers teaching English at different levels.

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Factors Affecting English Language Learning in Thai Classrooms

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Abstract

The purpose of this research was threefold: (a) to investigate the attitudes of native Thai teachers of English towards factors that may affect the process of learning the English language in Thailand, (b) to find out which factors most affect the process of learning the English language in order that relevant organizations may conceptualize and implement appropriate ways to facilitate the learning of English, and (c) to examine whether teacher's age and respective experience make any attitudinal difference towards the teaching of English.

The participants comprised 157 Thai teachers of English (39 male teachers and 118 female teachers) currently teaching the sixth-grade students in public elementary schools in Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya, Thailand. The participants ranged from aged 23 to aged 59 years. As we know, elementary schooling is considered the foundation of the whole educational system, and yet the level of Thai students' achievement is amongst the lowest in Asia.

Having collected the data, descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) and ANOVA were utilized to analyze the participants' attitudes towards various factors. The results of this research revealed that there were five major affecting factors: (a) students' individual characteristics, (b) the interference of deeply ingrained characteristics of the Thai language (pronunciation and grammar), (c) the environmental setting, (d) the curriculum, and (e) the competence and teaching techniques of the teachers.

When answering questions relating to students' individual characteristics, the participants' opinions greatly varied. The remaining four factors; however, showed more coherent patterns of response suggesting an overall belief that these were indeed significant in their effects on the learning of the English language in Thailand. It was widely believed that the age of English teachers would have some effect on their attitudes. It was also found that the respective age of the respondents themselves seemed to affect how they viewed issues of teachers' competence and techniques; but in spite of this, there was significant agreement on the idea of teachers being the most relevant factor in the ongoing development of English language teaching in Thailand.

Key words: attitudes, factors, student characteristics, interference, environment, curriculum, teacher competence, techniques

English has played a significant role in Thailand in various contexts for more than a hundred years as a mode of international communication. Officially, English has been being taught to students from grade one onwards in elementary schools since 1996 (Ministry of Education, 2008). This is considered a crucial change in English education in Thailand. Although English has long been related to educational system in Thailand in a variety of ways in developing its functions and usage, there have also been plenty of complaints regarding dissatisfaction in terms of students' achievement and teachers' competence in English and the teaching techniques they use (Chaibunruang, 1999; Wiriyachitra, 2001).

Objectives of the Research

There are three objectives of this research: (a) to investigate the attitudes of native Thai teachers of English towards factors that may affect the learning of the English language in Thailand, (b) to find out which factors most affect the success of the learning of English in order that relevant organizations may conceptualize and adopt appropriate ways to improve the process of the learning of English, and (c) to examine whether teachers' age and experience make any attitudinal difference towards the teaching of the English language.

Significance of the Research

The findings of this research would enhance English teachers' awareness towards factors affecting English language learning in Thai classrooms. The findings would be reported to Office of the Basic Education Commission (OBEC), Ministry of Education for more studies and for organizing effective teacher training programs in accordance with the teachers' needs and requirements.

Research Questions

This research aims at answering the following research questions:

1. What are factors affecting the learning of the English language in Thailand? (Pilot Study)
2. What are teachers' attitudes towards factors affecting the learning of English in Thai classrooms?
3. Which factor affects most the quantity and quality of the learning of the English language in Thailand?
4. Is there any significant correlation between teachers' age and English language teaching experience on the one hand and their attitudes towards factors affecting English language learning in Thai contexts?

Method

Pilot study.

The Pilot Study aimed at discovering factors that affect English language learning in Thai classrooms. The participants in the Pilot Study consisted of two groups as follows:

1. Ten Thai teachers of English completing an open-ended questionnaire about English language teaching in Thailand.
2. Two English teachers, one British and one Thai, being interviewed and tape-recorded about English language teaching.

The results obtained from this Pilot Study showed that there are five major factors that teachers think affect English language learning in Thailand. The five factors comprise a) students' individual characteristics, (b) the interference of deeply ingrained characteristics of the Thai language (pronunciation and grammar), (c) the environmental setting, (d) the curriculum, and (e) the competence of teachers and the teaching techniques used by them.

Main study.

The Main Study aimed at examining English teachers' attitudes towards five affecting factors deriving from the Pilot Study. In this Main Study, the participants were 157 Thai teachers of English, consisting of 39 male teachers and 118 female teachers ranging from 23 to 59 years of age and currently teaching grade six students in different public elementary schools in Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya province, Thailand.

A questionnaire, containing 33 question items adapted from 5-scale-Likert, was employed as a research instrument to collect data. The data collection process was completed within one month and the data were analyzed and tabulated using Mean, Standard Deviation, One Way ANOVA, and Post Hoc; Multiple Comparison Test.

Results

1. The results revealed that there were five major affecting factors obtained from the Pilot Study namely, factors related to a) students' individual characteristics, (b) the interference of deeply ingrained characteristics of the Thai language (pronunciation and grammar), (c) the environmental setting, (d) the curriculum, and (e) the competence of teachers and the teaching techniques used by them.
2. The participants' attitudes revealed uncertainty as to whether students' individual characteristics have any impact on English language teaching in Thai classrooms or not. The participants agreed that the other four factors affect English language teaching to a great extent.
3. The participants unanimously agreed that teacher's competence and teaching techniques employed by teachers greatly affects the quantity and quality of the learning of the English language in Thai classrooms.
4. Lastly, the result also revealed that the age of the teacher made some attitudinal difference in English language teaching. The findings revealed that the group of younger teachers and the group of older teachers differently viewed the competence of the teacher and the teaching techniques employed by the teachers. In this regard, the findings showed the younger

group teachers' readiness for change for professional development. On the contrary, the older group of teachers needs to be replaced by younger teachers specializing in English.

Implications

Implication for Office of the Basic Education Commission (OBEC), Ministry of Education.

1. Do more studies and research on each affecting factor, including teachers' needs and requirements.

2. Emphasize in-service teacher training programs organized for elementary school English education because it is the foundation of higher levels. While doing so, we need to organize separate teacher training programs for younger teachers and for senior teachers because each group needs different treatment as follows:

The young group.

Majority of younger teachers are eager to gain more knowledge, change their attitudes and hone their skills. They would like to gain more experience in classroom management, methodology of teaching English to young learners, and strategies of helping them overcome their shyness, nervousness, inhibitions and reticence in English classes.

The senior group.

The teacher training program meant for senior teachers should focus on motivation for their professional development and promotion. Thus, OBEC needs to promote professional development for senior teachers to gain expertise in the teaching of English because they have already gained more experience in teaching compared to the younger group.

Implications for Thai teachers of English.

Thai teachers of English need to be aware of all factors affecting their classroom teaching. Additionally, they should upgrade their English competence and teaching techniques through various training programs or graduate programs concerning English language teaching or teaching English as foreign language.

Remaining Issue

The only remaining issue for further research is analysis of the needs of teachers according to school types, especially teachers working for small-size schools, which is a majority. That is because many of the teachers from those small-size schools do not possess adequate educational and professional qualifications for taking up teaching assignments. Hence, it is worth researching into their needs in order to find the most appropriate way to develop them according to their needs.

Conclusion

In Thailand, there are five major factors that affect English language teaching namely, a) students' individual characteristics, (b) the interference of deeply ingrained characteristics of the Thai language (pronunciation and grammar), (c) the environmental setting, (d) the curriculum, and (e) teachers' competence and their teaching techniques. According the research findings, the factor related to the competence of teachers and the teaching techniques used by them greatly affects the success of the teaching and learning of the English language in Thai classrooms. The findings also revealed that young teachers are more willing to adopt newer approaches, methods and techniques; on the other hand, older teachers need to undergo training programs and perhaps need to be replaced by teachers who specialize in English.

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Unleashing the Innate Capacities through Critical Thinking

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Abstract

The essential insight of the communicative approach to language teaching in any culture ought to be independent learning. However, learner independence does not always mean the allocation and completion of tasks and activities individually. It does not mean the teacher abdicating from the whole scene. It also does not mean leaving the students destitute in the name of learner autonomy and asking them to discover everything by themselves. Rather, it is related to promoting independent and critical thinking among the learners and enabling them to do the learning activities with greater responsibility. By implication the learners' creative and reflective energy need to be activated properly. Teaching/learning should also aim at raising the learners from the status of language consumers to that of language producers. That is to say, it is unfair to stick to the weak version of communicative approach which focuses mainly on the receptive skills of listening and reading. If the learners are to become proficient in the productive skills of both speaking and writing, they need to unleash their intellectual energies.

This requires tasks and activities that demand not merely acquisition of knowledge, grammar rules and phonetics in this case, but tasks and activities that also promote the intellectual development of the learners. By implication, there is a need to incorporate activities that involve all the lower order thinking skills and the higher order thinking skills mentioned in Bloom's taxonomy.

This presentation is an attempt to highlight the need to make the learners independent and creative users of the language by promoting critical thinking. It will discuss what actually critical thinking and independent learning are, how critical thinking promotes independent learning, some possible tasks on critical thinking and how critical thinking can lead to social awareness and change. It will also practically demonstrate some such activities.

Thinking is one of the innate capacities of man. Even in societies that do not foster thinking, it has survived and flourished effectively mainly because thinking is different from thinking aloud. The advent of democracy witnessed a U-turn in this as all truly democratic

societies promoted thinking, especially critical thinking. In a system where the opposition is considered indispensible, it is quite natural that thinking finds its own place. It reflects in education which in turn leads to the challenging and overthrowing of one-time glorified methods and methodologies. The paradigm shift from teacher-centered lecture method to learner-centered approach and the promotion of communicative skills is only one among them.

However, communicative approach has attracted criticism and has become an anathema to many English language teaching (ELT) practitioners on the ground that it often does not take into consideration the culture of the learners. Yet another criticism leveled against the communicative approach to language teaching is that it does not promote the intellectual capacities of the learners. This happens particularly in systems that follow what Holliday (1994) calls the weak or the BANA British, Australian and North American) version of ELT that overemphasizes listening and speaking at the cost of the other skills.

As it is rightly argued, the essential insight of the communicative language teaching in any culture ought to be independent or autonomous learning. However, learner independence does not always mean the allocation and completion of tasks and activities individually by the learners themselves. It does not mean the teacher disappears from the scene. It also does not mean leaving the students destitute in the name of learner autonomy and asking them to discover everything by themselves. Rather, it is related to promoting independent and critical thinking among the learners and enabling them to do the learning activities with greater responsibility. By implication the learners' creative and reflective energies need to be activated properly.

Teaching/learning should also aim at raising the learners from the status of language consumers to that of language producers. That is to say, it is unfair to stick to the weak version of communicative approach which focuses mainly on the receptive skills of listening and reading. If the learners are to become proficient in the productive skills of both speaking and writing, they need to unleash their intellectual energies. Moreover, listening and reading, though traditionally labeled as receptive skills, are not merely receptive. It is for the listener or the reader to delve deep and come out with his/her meaning by applying all the analytical and creative skills.

This requires tasks and activities that demand not merely acquisition of knowledge, grammar rules and phonetics in this case, but tasks and activities that also promote the intellectual development of the learners. By implication, there is a need to incorporate activities that involve

all the lower order thinking skills and the higher order thinking skills mentioned in Bloom's taxonomy.

This paper is an attempt to highlight the need to make the learners independent and creative users of the language by promoting critical thinking. It will discuss what actually critical thinking and independent learning is, and how critical thinking promotes independent learning. In addition, the paper will suggest some possible tasks on critical thinking and how critical thinking can lead to social awareness and change.

Key words: critical thinking, innate capacities

What is Critical Thinking?

Thinking is a mental reaction to a situation that one encounters and is one of the innate capacities of every human being. That is the reason why man is defined as a rational animal. However, as reflected in George Bernard Shaw's comment that has made a record by thinking once in a week, thinking does not happen on a daily basis with most people not to talk of critical thinking. Critical thinking, as the name suggests, is a different way of looking at things as it involves both lateral and divergent thinking. From a mere linear way of looking at things, it looks at all the aspects of an issue and analyzes and evaluates them culminating in the creation of something new. To put it in another way, critical thinking implies the ability to process information critically in order to form an opinion without mindlessly accepting other's opinions as truth (Bains, 2014) and even questioning and challenging the age-old and established truths and beliefs. Dictionary.com defines critical thinking as "the mental process of actively and skillfully conceptualizing, applying, synthesizing, and evaluating information to reach an answer or a conclusion". As it is implicit, the various stages in the process of reaching a conclusion are what matters in critical thinking. As one approaches a concept or an issue analytically and critically, his/her opinions can vary from those of the others.

Thus, the core of critical thinking lies in thinking differently. As Joad (1931) points out, whatever humanity has achieved and whatever developments have happened in the world are the results of thinking differently. If all the people had thought like their predecessors, the world would always have remained the same and we would not have been any different from the Stone Age man. For instance, if James Watt had not been inspired to different thoughts at the sight of steam lifting the lid of a tea kettle or if he had not employed his lateral thinking skills appropriately, there would have been no steam engine. In fact, all the achievements man has made are the results of thinking differently. Conformity, as Emerson (1936, p. 2) puts it, is for the feeble minds. To remain a mere thinker or still worse the parrot of other men's thinking is to become the victim of the society. Such victims are produced only in a degenerate state.

Characteristics of a Critical Thinker

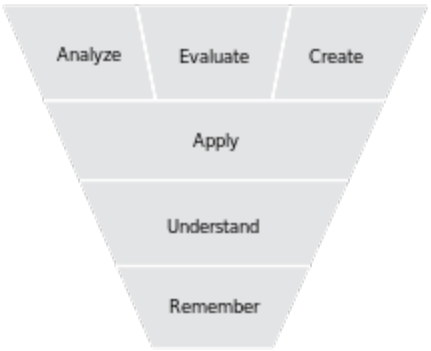
All traditional societies and their educational systems promote convergent thinking as they wish to perpetuate their established systems and conventions. However, critical thinkers are seldom satisfied with such presumed truths transmitted to them. They refuse to be mere 'yes' men gulping down willingly all that they are fed with. This ability to analyze before accepting or

rejecting anything is one of the main characteristics of a critical thinker. He /she should not be a rebel for the sake of rebelling. Flexibility and open mindedness are qualities that distinguish critical thinkers from the intellectually obstinate. They are not iconoclasts for the fun of breaking and demolishing. Critical thinkers are flexible enough to keep aside their own beliefs and embrace novel ones if required. The only prerequisites for them are analysis and evaluation. They are honest with themselves as they need to quench and satisfy only their own intellectual cravings. In short, as Lucartney (2014) suggests, logical communication, flexibility, inquisitiveness, being honest with one's own self, the ability to analyze and evaluate, open mindedness, striving for understanding and a desire to be well-informed are the major characteristics of a critical thinker.

Bloom's Taxonomy

The most debated and quoted work on the incorporation of critical thinking into education is that of Benjamin Bloom. Though it is widely known as Bloom's work, it is based on many of the papers presented from 1949 to 1953 in America for the development of educational curriculum and the reframing of educational objectives. In the first volume of the taxonomy titled 'Handbook 1: Cognitive' published in 1956, Bloom talks about the different aspects of critical thinking to be given a due place in the curriculum. He divides them into lower order thinking skills (LOTS) and higher order thinking skills (HOTS). Presented in the shape of an inverted pyramid, his taxonomy places the lower order thinking skills of knowledge, comprehension, and application at the base and the higher order thinking skills of analyzing, synthesizing and evaluating at the top end. Bloom's taxonomy was later modified by Anderson in 2000 with the addition of 'creativity' to the HOTS. However, as Alan (2005, p. 5) rightly observes, it is to be noted that all the levels of critical thinking are important. There is a need to work at all levels as one builds on the other.

The following diagram, which is Anderson's modified version of critical thinking, illustrates the ordering of critical thinking objectives intended to be incorporated into the learning objectives.



As can be seen, it starts with remembering, understanding and applying before moving to the higher order thinking skills of analyzing, evaluating and creating. As said earlier, all these stages are equally important because they are all interdependent. For instance, to analyze something one needs to remember it. Remembering refers to retention and recalling of things learned such as names, dates, facts, definitions, theories, etc. Unless we move from mere recalling to real understanding, they are of no use to the learner. Put another way, the learner should be able to manifest his /her understanding of what he/she has learned by explaining, restating, translating, discussing, comparing, contrasting and relating them to similar fields of knowledge. Further, he/she should also be able to apply them when and where it is necessary. It is only common knowledge that unless one knows the use, a tool is of no use. The learner should exhibit his/her ability to apply her/his knowledge to solve problems, to illustrate ideas and concepts, examine and classify properly and also complete tasks that demand the application of her/his knowledge. When it comes to the higher order thinking skill of analysis, the learner is expected to identify the parts that make the whole, examine and identify causes, realize the roles played by the various parts and also to categorize them on various bases. Having analyzed the worth of something, the learner should be in a position to evaluate and recommend it for the purpose it is suitable for. S/he should also be in a position to justify his/her recommendation and rate and prioritize whatever he/she has learned. It is this skill of evaluating that empowers the learner to place everything in their right place and to acknowledge them for whatever they are good at. Finally at the culminating point, the learner should contribute to the world by creating, planning, composing, designing, constructing, imagining and thereby making his/her own contributions to the world of knowledge from which s/he has had enough.

How Does Critical Thinking Help Students?

Having discussed the various aspects that go into critical thinking, let's now have a look at how learners benefit directly from critical thinking. Whether it is a literature course or a language course, learners have to write academic essays. In literature courses learners are often asked to write critical appreciations of poems. Many students find it a hard nut to crack because they fail to analyze the poem clearly and to look at it from various perspectives. Critical thinking prepares learners to go out of fixed frames and to make their meanings in what they read. If a learner is not in a position to read between the lines and to link the text to various aspects of human life such as psychology, sociology, philosophy, politics, religious concepts, economic factors, etc. he/she may end up only with the word meanings of the text. This failure to penetrate into the layers of meaning that are to be discovered by the reader is primarily because the learner or the reader is not adept at critically approaching a text. For example, an image used in a poem, however powerful it may be, may not invoke the intended meaning or emotion in the reader if he/she cannot find what it actually stands for. However, a student of literature who is trained in critical thinking will be able to identify the local images and the global images used in a text and interpret them from his/ her point of view. Yet another important factor required for proper enjoyment of literature is the ability to make causal and temporal connections. This helps the learner/reader to establish links between the various events in the whole plot without which the story cannot fully reveal itself to the reader. When one fails to chain the events either causally or temporally, the whole story will be full of loose threads and hence meaningless to the reader. Again, if a student is to depict a character well, he /she needs to analyze that particular character, identify the forces that work or worked behind the molding of the character, evaluate the worth of his/her behavior in various contexts, see if his/her behavior follows a pattern or is haphazard (as in the case of King Lear's madness when one analyzes whether there is a rhythm in his madness or not) and perhaps even predict how that particular character will behave in a given situation. A mind trained in critical thinking will find identifying, analyzing, evaluating and predicting viable if not easy.

Critical thinking also plays a vital role when it comes to project work and academic writing. Every kind of academic writing involves proper analysis, evaluation, organization of ideas and creation in the form of a particular genre of writing. For example, if a learner is attempting a description of a graph or a diagram, questions often asked in International English

Language Testing Scheme (IELTS), he or she has to identify the major trends to be described, the similarities or differences in the trends of the line graphs, decide which ideas can be grouped together, evaluate well and ignore or reject minor trends. While doing projects and assignments of various types, learners have to extract and describe different points of view, recognize key points and arguments, evaluate and synthesize information from different sources, form opinions and arguments based on evidence, organize information so that they can express the intended ideas with cohesion and coherence and finally come out with the piece of writing (Lucartney, 2014). By implication, in order to produce a piece of academic writing, the learner has to be competent not only linguistically but also in critical thinking.

"How prone to doubt, how cautious are the wise", says Alexander Pope. In a world of propaganda and bias, a reader has to be both cautious and doubtful. S/he should know that all that is written is not or need not be true. In order to get at the truth of a text, the reader has to be able to distinguish facts from opinions and identify bias and propaganda. This certainly demands critical thinking. It means a reader has to analyze a text to see if what is written or stated in the text is a proven fact or merely a personal opinion of the writer. In case of an opinion, he/she has to see if it is well supported with examples, quotations or expert opinions that are accurate, sufficient, representative and relevant. In the absence of such a textual analysis, the reader can easily be carried away by the biases of the writer. Again, it is quite possible that a writer might try to win over the readers by using emotionally charged language or references to things that emotionally affect the reader. As Kirzner and Mandell (2007, p. 71) rightly observe, writers may show a tendency to influence readers by using emotionally charged language, by highlighting or hiding certain facts, downplaying others' point of view or even by using flawed logic. Such attempts to mislead the reader can at times be deliberate or can be the inadequacy of the writer's pen. Whatever the case may be, critical thinking makes the reader cautious of swallowing all that comes to him without critically analyzing and evaluating the worth of the words that meet his /her eyes and in turn helps him/her to make appropriate and correct choices. All universities expect their students to become independent learners who can not only pursue knowledge on their own but also produce it. They are expected to be skilled, knowledgeable, articulate and enterprising who, through their challenging learning experiences, are able to contribute effectively to the changing world in which they live and work. And, the learning

experiences cannot be challenging if all that students do is to mug up things or reduce themselves to servile imitation or repetition of books and teachers.

The benefits of critical thinking do not end at the university level. Rather, it is an ongoing process that supports learners throughout. As Hughes (2014, p. 7) points out "In addition to university success, students who enter a profession such as management will probably be using their foreign language skills and their critical thinking skills when it comes to, for example, assessing the ideas in a report or presenting an argument in order to convince an audience. Increasingly, the skills associated with critical thinking can be linked to business and career success". Thus, if one is to make effective and valuable contribution to the community, critical thinking is inevitable.

Critical Thinking from Pedagogical Perspective

To what extent critical thinking can be taught and whether it is something that can be taught at all are debatable questions. An oft-raised question is whether there was no critical thinking before it was incorporated into educational systems and curriculums. Despite the relevance of these questions, the fact is that opportunities to think critically do foster the thinking potentialities as they are intellectual exercises leading to mental development. By implication, there can be no dispute on encouraging learners to actively interact applying their cognitive abilities and critical faculties (Veettil and Bader, 2009, p. 188). As Alan (2005, p. 1) rightly observes "many teachers are seeking to change their practices to support reading and writing for critical thinking. They want to challenge their students not just to memorize, but to question, examine, create, solve, interpret and debate the material in their courses. Such teaching is now widely recognized as best practice". Education, as envisaged by eminent thinkers such as Vivekananda and Gandhi, should lead to fullness of life by bringing out the innate potentialities in every human being. Thus, Gandhi thought of an educational system that would cater to the development of the head, heart and hand. He wanted humanitarian intellectuals who could actively contribute to themselves and also to the community they live in. Mere intellectuals with no sympathy for their fellow beings would be useless, and in the same way sympathy accompanied by inaction would be futile. As Fisher (2005, p. 8) points out, "The most important resources any society has are the intellectual resources of its people. A successful society will be a thinking society in which the capacities for lifelong learning of its citizens are most fully realized". A thinking society certainly means a society that can raise questions, think critically

and differently and make considerable contributions to the society. Thus it is the responsibility of every teacher to frame and incorporate activities and tasks that demand critical thinking of his/her teaching.

Should there be separate materials for teaching critical thinking? The answer is no. Critical thinking can be incorporated into any teaching material as it requires only a fine-tuning and adjusting of the approaches to teaching. For example, the age-old topics like 'my school', 'my hobbies', 'a film you have seen', 'smoking', etc. , which are repellent to many learners can be adapted on the lines of critical thinking. Questions such as what can schools teach that nature cannot? Why should there be hobbies? Do movies influence or corrupt our culture? How do movies promote violence? Why should not women smoke? Why should not women drive? are questions that are sure to encourage critical thinking. Problematizing situations provokes and inspires learners to come up with their original ideas instead of reproducing facts and figures from memory. Memorization gives way to critical thinking and the higher order skill of creativity.

From the pedagogical perspective, there are several activities that can be incorporated into classroom teaching to facilitate and promote critical thinking. Some such activities include identifying facts and opinions, analyzing the source of information, expanding ideas with examples and reasons, putting one and the same idea in different contexts, comparing and contrasting two news reports on the same event, identifying straw man's arguments, debating on crisis stories, discourse analysis, identifying causal and temporal connections, fostering conceptual understanding, asking and answering thinking questions, separating facts from opinions, recognizing intent, attitude and tone, recognizing bias and propaganda techniques, interpreting stories in terms of points of view, time and tone, critical analysis and interpretation of poems, etc.

Let us consider the following task:

Read the following dialogue from Vikram Seth's *Suitable Boy* and discuss the identities, ideologies, dominance, role relationships and social practices presented therein.

Mrs. Mehra, during her previous visit to a friend, was told she should be careful about her young marriageable daughter, Lata, as she was seen walking hand in hand with a young boy on the bank of the river the previous evening. The dialogue under examination is Mrs Mehra's interrogation of her daughter.

Mrs Mehra:	Who is he? Come here. Come here at once.
Lata:	Just a friend
Mrs Mehra:	Just a friend! A friend! And friends are for holding hands with? Is this what I brought you up for…
Lata:	Who told you? Hema'sTaiji?
Mrs Mehra:	Hema'sTaiji? Hema'sTaaji? Is she in this too?...she lets those girls run around all over the place with flowers in their hair in the evening. Who told me? The wretched girl asks me who told me. It's the talk of the town, everyone knows about it. Everyone thought you were a good girl with good reputation-and now it is too late. Too late.
Lata:	Ma, you always say Malti is such a nice girl. And she has friends like that- you know that everyone knows that.
Mrs Mehra:	Be quiet! Don't answer me back! I'll give you two tight slaps. Roaming around shamelessly near the dhobi-ghat and having a gala time.
Lata:	but Malti-
Mrs Mehra:	Malti! Malti! I am talking about you, not about Malti…Do you want to be like her? And lying to your mother? I'll never let you go for a walk again. You will stay in this house, do you hear? Do you hear?
Lata:	Yes, Ma…..
Mrs Mehra:	What's his name?
Lata:	Kabir
Mrs Mehra :	Kabir what?... He has a name, doesn't he? Who is he? Kabir Lal, Kabir Mehra? –or what? Are you waiting for tea to get cold? Or have you forgotten?
Lata:	Kabirdurrani…
Mrs Mehra:	Is he a Parsi? A Muslim?...What did I do in my past life that I have brought this upon my beloved daughter? (pp. 181-82)

As Thakur (2008) suggests, a consideration of the following questions will help learners in doing the task. (1) Who initiates and controls turn taking and turn allocation? (2) What about the word

count and who talks the most in the dialogue? (3) How do the mother and the daughter differ in their thinking? (4) How does the mother interpret the present situation in which the daughter is? (5) What reason does she allege to it? (6) What about the tone of the speakers and what does it imply?

It should be borne in mind that the task is not simply to answer these questions; rather they are only to be taken as clues that will take the learner to the identification of issues mentioned in the rubrics. For example learners are to discover identities such as family identities, social identities, job identities, religious identities, gender identities, national identities, etc. They should also look into ideologies, dominance, role relationships and social practices presented in the text. As can be seen evidently, there is a shift from mere understanding and remembering to the higher order thinking skills of analyzing and creating and making new inferences. Learners are encouraged to read between the lines and to take their thoughts to the world outside the classrooms. Thus it also promotes social awareness and helps to mold opinions that will have their implications for nation building. As a follow-up activity, students can be asked to write a paragraph on some social practices that exist in their society and then debate on them.

Conclusion

It is to be noted that critical thinking goes against conformity and thus is bound to be challenged by propagators of conformity and tradition. The greatest advantage of critical thinking is that it promotes learner's independence and social skills in addition to linguistic skills. Above all, it awakens them from inside, makes them producers of knowledge and puts them on a never ending road to learning. However, the creation of such lessons is not that easy. The teacher has a great role to play in creating conducive atmosphere that leads to the promotion of critical thinking. There are social and political hindrances to critical thinking and a teacher needs to tackle such issues in a subtle way. It is his/her role to take the learners beyond puzzles and riddles to issues that directly affect the learner and his/her community. The teacher's attitude is of great importance. An authoritarian and dictatorial teacher cannot enhance critical thinking. As William Blake righty puts it "How can a bird that is born for joy sit in a cage and sing?"

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A Study of the Use of Journal Writing Activity in a Basic Writing Class to Enhance Writing Fluency and the Students' Perceptions of Journal Writing

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Abstract

The ability to write in English is highly valued in both academic and in certain professional contexts (Crystal, 2004). Despite its significance, a large number of Thai students at the tertiary level consider English writing a challenging, difficult, and arduous task. This proposed research study will be designed to address the limitations of earlier research on writing fluency development. It aims to examine the efficacy of journal writing on student writing fluency in Thai educational context as well as exploring the viewpoints of the student writers who have experienced the journal writing activity during the semester. The results of this study will be useful in designing pedagogic practices for English as a foreign language (EFL) classrooms in the future.

Keywords: Journal writing, English as a foreign language (EFL)

The ability to write in English is highly valued in both academic and in certain professional contexts (Crystal, 2004). Despite its significance, a large number of Thai students at the tertiary level consider writing in English a challenging, difficult, and arduous task (Chatranonth, 2008). As stated by several researchers, writing itself is a complex process (Hughes, 1996; Myles, 2002; O'Donnell, 1974; Preston & Gardner, 1976) and it is a difficult skill for students to learn and develop, particularly in EFL contexts (Kim & Kim,2005; Shen, 2007).

Besides the challenging nature of writing in English for EFL students, one factor that contributes to learning difficulty for Thai student writers is the prevalence of test-driven English learning culture. Such pedagogic practice is not new. It exists in many other parts of Asia such as Korea and Japan (Kim & Margolis, 2000; Sakui, 2004; Song, 2007). According to one explanation offered by Chullawatchanatana & Srimavin (2005), English language teaching in Thai context is mainly associated with vocabulary learning and reading skills and it is viewed as a subject to study for examinations rather than learning for real language use, e.g. using English to complete a task. In addition, Yan (2005) highlights that in many L2 writing classes, the only reason offered to students in terms of practicing writing is to pass examinations or to get a good grade. This focus reduces writing to the production of a composition which is then exchanged for a grade from the teacher. Writing becomes a de-contextualized and artificial skill, giving students no real sense of purpose or perspective of a target audience. As such, Thai students' major goal in learning English becomes their grade in the exam and to achieve high scores in English in the National Entrance Examination (Chullawatchanatana & Srimavin, 2005).
Since English writing has no place in examination, it is often regarded by the students at the pre-tertiary level, as unworthy of their time and effort (Nunan, 2005). This suggests that the test-oriented focus may be directing students towards certain aspects of learning English and giving little attention to writing. Apart from the test-driven nature of Thai pedagogic culture, Thep-Ackrapong's (2005) explains that Thai students underperform on English writing because writing is not feasible in a big class. This is supported by Hayes (1997) who elaborates that large class sizes mean that Thai students have limited opportunity to practice writing in high school because it becomes very difficult for teachers to create meaningful writing opportunities for students. Hence, when the students enter university and are assigned a writing task, they often feel anxious and claim that they do not know what to write or they do not know how to start. As

supported by the study by Chatranonth (2008), first year university students seem to struggle to a high degree when the teacher asks them to write because they are considered novice writers. They seem to sit frozen gripping their pens even when the teacher informs them to put off concerns about 'correctness'. Such a phenomenon is not a good sign. According to Liao and Wong (2006), when university students lack the ability to write fluently in English, they would not stand a chance to compete at an international level.

Debates on what should be the primary concern of writing classes between quantity (fluency) and quality (accuracy) show how important an issue it has been among scholars and educators. Nevertheless, it is surprising that during the past three decades, research in second language writing focuses extensively on writing accuracy. A significantly large number of L2 writing studies focuses on the issue of writing accuracy or how to treat students' grammatical errors, but not on how to promote writing fluency (Evans, Hartshorn, Cox, & Martin de Jel, 2014; McMartin-Miller, 2014; Chatranonth, 2008; Bitchener, Young, & Cameron, 2005; Hyland, 2003; Burgess & Etherington, 2002; Ferris & Roberts, 2001; Chandler, 2000; Polio, Fleck, & Leder, 1998; Schultz, 1996; Hendrickson, 1980).

According to Peyton (2000), it is necessary that teachers help students to develop writing fluency through meaningful composition activities. Students should learn to produce longer and elaborated texts on a topic and let their ideas flow without worrying about correctness (Allen, 2003). As Matsuda (2003) emphasizes, writing is not linear but recursive, i.e., revising and editing are always parts of the writing process. Teachers should facilitate the learning process by giving students ample opportunities to freely express their opinions and ideas to empower them to gain ownership of their own writing (Alexander,2001).

Free writing or journal writing activities have been shown to play a role in enhancing students' English writing fluency, particularly in young children since the students are required to write more and without apprehension (Liao & Wong, 2006). However, Hwang (2010) and Liao & Wong (2006) agree that little attention has been given to the impact of journal writing on EFL university students. Most studies have been conducted in L1 context (Fox & Suhor, 1986; Reynold; 1984; Lannin, 2007). In addition, little research has been conducted to investigate the students' views on the use of journal writing activity, especially in Thai educational context. Thus this research is designed to address the limitations of earlier research on writing fluency development.

Research Objectives

This study seeks to examine the use of journal writing activity in building up writing fluency of students enrolling a basic writing course and how the students experience and perceive the journal writing activity during the semester. There will be 36 SWU students (18 students per section) who will participate in this study. The students will be first year English majored students who enroll for the Basic English course (EN 131) which is the first writing course offered for students at the undergraduate level. The students will be divided into two groups. The first group (18 students) will be an experimental group which will be assigned weekly journal writing assignments. The second group or the control group (18 groups) will not be given such tasks. The study employs quantitative analysis of students' pre-writing and post-writing tests in order to determine their writing fluency rate. With regard to the pretest, the students will be asked to write an essay on three different topics; 1) *My family*, 2) *How to have a good health*, 3) *Is it necessary that Thai university students wear uniforms?* With regard to the post-test, the students will be asked to write an essay on three different topics; 1) *My best friend at Ongkarak campus*, 2) *How to get a good grade*, 3) *Should parents decide for teenagers?* The number of words in each essay in the pre-test and post-test of each student will be calculated for mean scores. Then the averaged scores of the pre-test and post-test will be statistically compared via matched pair T-test. The total of 108 essays will be rated by 3 raters; the researcher, a Thai lecturer, and a lecturer who is a native speaker of English. This study also uses qualitative analysis of student questionnaires and follow-up interviews of the experimental group regarding their experiences and perceptions of the use of journal writing activity in the classroom during the 16 week period. The questionnaire is written in Thai to ensure that every student has clear understanding of each question. Each participant will be notified about the confidentiality and anonymity of their responses. With regard to the follow-up interviews, its purpose is not only to complement the data in the questionnaires, but more importantly, it is designed to obtain more information about the students' learning experiences as well as their views about the learning of the English language.

Scope of the Study

To develop students' writing competency, it is necessary that teachers focus not only on accuracy, but also on fluency (Hudelson, 1989). As stated earlier, a myriad of studies on second language writing focus on grammatical accuracy and ways to treat grammatical errors. Little has

been done on building up students' writing fluency. According to Graham, Harris and Larsen (2001), poor writers gradually develop into better writers when they are prompted to write often because fluency is considered essential for beginning or novice writers. In the literature, one teaching technique that has been stated as effective in developing writing fluency is 'journal writing'. However, studies on the effficacy of journal writing have been conducted largely in L2 context and particularly with young learners.

No studies have been conducted in Thai context, particularly at a tertiary level where English is regarded as a foreign language. In this study, the researcher will investigate the impact of weekly journal writing on 36 first-year university students who take a basic writing course in English. During the semester, the students will be assigned to write a weekly journal on any topic they wish. The teacher will read and comment on the content and write a response to each student. Neither grades nor feedback on grammatical correctness is given. The fundamental concept of journal writing activity is simply to let words flow onto the paper without having to be stressed about spelling, punctuations, and grammatical errors (Allen, 2003). To measure the students' level of writing fluency, they will be asked to do a pre-test and post-test, free-writing tasks on assigned topics. Then the pre and post tests will be compared and statistically analyzed. Furthermore, the researcher will explore the students' experiences and perceptions of the journal writing activity. This is will be done through questionnaires and interviews. This part of the study will be used as additional resource in interpreting the students' writing performance in the first part of the study.

Related Literature

According to MacGowan-Gilhooly (1991), when fluency is placed before accuracy in a writing class, an increase in students' confidence is highly noticeable among the affective consequences. Moreover, teachers are able to observe a decrease in students' fear of writing, especially among novice student writers. The students themselves can also notice their increased confidence due to the improved fluency in their writing (Hwang, 2010). Eventually, such phenomenon will help them generate and develop more thoughts and ideas as compared to before when grammatical accuracy is a priority.

Casanave (2004) is another researcher studying L2 writing fluency. She indicates that focusing on writing fluency helps students explore more in their writing without worrying about grammatical correctness or pressure from writing classes, such as mechanical errors or grades. In

her 1995 study which focuses on the benefit of using journal writing activities in college-level classes, she argues that students seem to try out more in expressing their thoughts and ideas in the 'risk-free environment'. Vanett and Jurich (1990) also arrive at similar findings related to students' change in approach to writing activities when they are in an environment where making mistakes is not a primary concern. According to Casanave (2004), writing fluency is related to "writers' ability to produce a lot of language without excessive hesitations, blocks, and interruptions" (p. 67). Erazmus (1960) and Briere (1966) state that writing teachers should not emphasize accuracy alone. In contrast, they should realize the need for English learners to write a lot and regularly. Considering that it is quantity and not quality that is crucial. They claim that the greater the frequency, the greater the improvement because one learns to write by writing. Their studies reveal that when the emphasis is on writing regularly rather than on error correction, students write more and with fewer errors. Journal writing activity has been used as a supportive teaching technique in helping students learn to write more and produce longer texts. Journal writing is a writing piece between an individual student and a teacher. It is considered a student-centered curriculum in which students choose their own topics and write about them (Peyton, 2000). Teachers do not grade or evaluate the students' work. Instead, they respond as a genuine reader (Peyton & Reed, 1990). The focus is not on form and correctness, and overt error correction. Teachers usually correct by showing them a good model so that they can compare it with their own work. For example, if a learner writes, "Yesterday class go library look at picture books..," the teacher might respond with "Yesterday our class went to the library to look at picture books for parents to read with their children." This particular teaching technique is directly related to fluency. DeSalvo (1990) describes this phenomenon as 'Flow Theory'. Hudelson (1989) indicates that giving English learners an opportunity to write on a regular basis on a topic of their choice is significant for them to start developing as writers and to start expressing themselves exploring the written forms of the English language. She also stresses the importance of encouraging them to guess, to write, and to take risks and make mistakes as they learn from them. Furthermore, this pedagogic technique helps build up trust and rapport between the teacher and the students as the students feel comfortable letting out their ideas and emotions and not having to worry about getting their work perfect for grades (Alexander, 2001).

Another advantage of journal writing has been proposed by Holmes and Moulton (1995) who state that journal writing activity helps reduce students' writing apprehension and foster the

students' writing confidence. Many researchers also confirm the benefits of this teaching technique. Hsu (2006) conducted a study about the effects of journal writing of high school students in Taiwan. The study revealed that students' apprehension significantly decreased and they showed improvement in their writing proficiency. In the studies conducted by Trites (2001) and Lucas (1990), the researchers found that journal writing develops students' writing motivation, especially among poor student writers.

According to Liao and Wong (2006), the study of the efficacy of journal writing in the EFL classroom is rather limited and very few studies have investigated journal writing from students' viewpoints. Therefore, this study seeks to do both, i.e., examining the efficacy of journal writing on student writing fluency as well as exploring the viewpoints of the student writers who have experienced the journal writing activity during the semester.

This study will use questionnaires and follow-up interviews in finding out how the students think of the journal writing activity. As mentioned by Lai and Waltman (2008), questionnaires and interviews are frequently used together as they are important means of obtaining direct responses from participants regarding their understanding, beliefs, and attitudes in learning (Harris & Brown, 2010). Since this study focuses specifically on Thai tertiary educational context, it offers insights not only for the SLA research community but also for Thai EFL teachers and policy makers. This is consistent with the current movement towards the 'post-method era' (Kumaravadivelu, 2003) which highlights the need to develop and understand teaching strategies as they are used in their local contexts. Moreover, not only do the results of this research add to a growing body of research which investigates student writing fluency development, but it also offers some suggestions which can be useful in designing pedagogic practices for the EFL writing classroom in the future.

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The Role of Context in Comprehension

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Abstract

The workshop is a judicious blend of theory and practice, with a major thrust on activities. The presenters of this workshop have two focuses. First, they attempt to demonstrate how physical, psychological and linguistic context plays a significant role in encoding and decoding messages. *The first part of the workshop explains* the nature and types of context: physical context (which refers to activities, the place where these activities happen and the time when these activities happen), psychological context (which refers to experiences, moods and emotions), and linguistic context (which is further divided into backward pointing, forward pointing and outward pointing context).

The second part of the workshop illustrates how context plays a pivotal role in communication. The presenters use two conversations in which the conversational interlocutors talk about something unspecified referring to it as 'it'. The workshop participants will be asked to read these short conversations and guess what the conversational partners are talking about. The presenters expect the workshop participants to come up with several conjectures all of which will be legitimate in the absence of clearly discernible contexts. Then the presenters intend to use a short text which contains the no-sense word 'zreastra' and ask the participants to read the text and guess the meaning of this no-sense word using the gradually unfolding context. In addition, the presenters intend to illustrate how aspects of the culture of the speaker/writer and that of the listener/reader influence message encoding and meaning making. The workshop presenters will demonstrate how a context can be interpreted differently across cultural boundaries.

Key words: psychological and linguist context, encoding and decoding messages

Language is a key to communication. It works as an instrument in the communication process. Therefore, language skills are essential for any communication to be successful. Language skills include receptive skills and productive skills. Listening and reading are receptive skills, while speaking and writing are productive skills.

When authors write books or speakers deliver speeches, they use language creatively. This process requires an author or a speaker to employ their productive skills. The language produced is then delivered to readers or listeners in the form of a book or a talk. The author and the speaker are called 'creators' or 'senders' of messages which they encode in language.

When a reader reads a story or a listener listens to a speech, they receive messages expressed in novel ways. So, the reader or the listener is called a 'receiver' of messages dressed in language. The receiver then processes this language. This processing helps him/her to understand the meaning of what is being said or what is being left unsaid by the sender. The receiver uses his/her interpretive skills to understand the 'said' or even the 'unsaid' messages.

There are many situations in which we use our receptive skills specifically for reading purposes. Reading a story, a newspaper article or a script of a play are some ordinary examples. Similarly, there are many situations in which we employ our receptive skill of listening. Listening to news on television, to a debate or a speech delivered by a celebrity are instances of exercise of the receptive skill of listening.

The four language skills are important. Therefore, when we learn a new language, we must develop all the four skills. Usually, most learners begin learning a new language with the help of receptive skills and gradually start practicing their productive skills. Remember, extensive practice of receptive skills leads to improvement of productive skills. In short, the linguistic inputs that we receive through listening are stored in our minds for later use. This language is essentially utilized at a later point in time to produce new messages expressed in novel combinations of language elements. This reiterates the fact that one must first be a good listener or reader before one becomes a good speaker or writer. That is why they say that a good writer must be a good reader first and a good speaker must be a good listener first.

No doubt, speaking and writing skills are important. However, we cannot ignore the importance of reading and listening skills. The better you receive 'new language', store it and process it appropriately, the better you 'create' new language. Needless to add, the better you

create your language, the easier it is for you to convey it to your addressees. This helps them to interpret it easily and effectively. This facilitates successful communication.

When a speaker or writer says something about people, places, objects, processes, events, situations, etc., s/he creates a specific context. The context may be explicit or implicit. Subsequently, listeners and readers reconstruct a context from what they hear or read. This process is called 'reconstruction of context'. It depends on many factors. Therefore, many times it is convoluted and complex. If the sender fails to provide clear, complete and comprehensible contextual information in his/her message, the message can have multiple meanings. In such situations the receiver often misunderstands the message or interprets the message in a way that leads to a mismatch between speaker's/writer's intention and listener's/reader's interpretation.

There are different types of context: physical context, psychological context, and linguistic context. *Physical context* relates to the activities that we perform. It illustrates the activities that are performed, the place where and the time when those activities are performed. As example, the sentence "I read a book." offers information about the activity performed. However, the place and time information is missing from this sentence. On the other hand, the sentence "I read a book in the library every afternoon" has clearer contextual information. It instructs us about the activity performed (reading a book), the place where it is performed (the library), and the time when it is performed (every afternoon).

Psychological context relates to our past experiences, moods and emotions. All of us have both pleasant and unpleasant experiences. These experiences influence the way we reconstruct the context presented to us. As the saying goes, if you have been bitten by a snake, you would be frightened by the feeling of a rope touching your legs the next time. On one hand, our unpleasant experiences prepare us to avoid going through the same experiences again. But, sometimes it rather unnecessarily influences the way we interpret a situation in a more negative manner. The opposite of this is true as well.

Linguistic context or *verbal context* is demonstrated with the language that accompanies a specific piece of text. It includes the words, sentences, expressions, and other language clues. Verbal context facilitates the way we understand a specific text.

There are three types of linguistic context- forward pointing context, backward pointing context, and outward pointing context. In *backward pointing reference***,** the contextual information is already provided to the receiver. The receiver merely has to recall the contextual

information when the reference is stated. A simple example of this is when we wrap up the narration of our story with a statement "This is our story". The sentence "This is our story" has a backward pointing reference to the story we have just narrated.

In *forward pointing reference* the context information is yet to be shared with the receiver. The sender keeps the receiver 'on hold' till the context information is provided. This "hold" can be intentional, for example to create a dramatic effect in a play. An example of this is when we begin with a statement "This is our story" and follow it by the narration of the story. The sentence "This is our story" has a forward pointing reference. Since the story is still not being told, listeners are being asked to be on "hold" till the story is completed.

In *outward pointing reference*, the contextual information is not within the text but outside of it. The sender assumes that the knowledge of the context is already with the receivers. So, there is no need to share it again. An example of this type is a 'Two Minute News' programme on television news channel. The news reader announces "Sachin Tendulkar has hit another ton!" Here, the news channel assumes that viewers already have the context to this news and so there is no need to share it again. Therefore, the news is not surrounded by explicitly stated context. Even with that, most of the viewers can easily understand what this headline means. However, imagine an American businessman who is on a short visit to India watching the same TV channel. He does not have background context. So, he will surely have difficulty understanding what this news headline means. Therefore, he must gather background context to understand the news. Only then can he understand the news. He may even have to get help from others to fully understand the news.

Contextual information is an essential element of listening comprehension as well. If the context information is not clearly provided the listening becomes ambiguous. So, quite often the conversation is difficult to follow. We would like to share one of our experiences during our stay abroad. This was when we attended our Japanese friend's wedding. While we were having a talk with our other friends, we overheard a conversation. It was between two Japanese women. This was what we heard:

Yukiko San: Did you like it?

Shida San: Yes, of course. I enjoyed it a lot.

Yukiko San: Would you like to go for it again?

Shida San: Well, let me think about it.

What do you think *Yukiko San and Shida San* were talking about? Your guess is as correct or incorrect as ours. They may possibly be discussing any of the following things:

1. An adventure ride
2. A vacation trip
3. A movie
4. An evening walk
5. A ballet dance

On another occasion, we heard the following stretch of conversation between Mrs. Joshi and Mrs. Pathak. Let us give you some background information. We were waiting for the lift on the tenth floor of a building in Mumbai. When the lift door opened and we entered the lift, we saw two women and heard them talking about something. We had no clue as to what they were talking about. We believe they had begun talking right on the first floor, perhaps even before they entered the lift. When we entered the lift on the tenth floor, this was what we heard:

Mrs. Joshi: How did it go?
Mrs. Pathak : Not too bad, but I am glad it's over.
Mrs. Joshi: Was it the last one?
Mrs. Pathak: Yes, for the time being.

What do you think Mrs. Joshi *and* Mrs. Pathak were talking about? Were they talking about a delivery, extraction of a tooth, an interview, an examination or something else? Is the context clear to you? Will there be only one correct interpretation in the absence of a context? If not, why?

Contextual information or shared knowledge plays a crucial role in comprehension. During listening and reading, we regularly encounter unfamiliar words. But, how many of us rush to a dictionary every time we meet an unfamiliar word and how often*?* The obvious answer is – not all of us and certainly not every time. Even though comprehension is a difficult process, we do not always refer to the dictionary for all unfamiliar words**.** Overdependence on a dictionary slows down comprehension. An easier and convenient alternative is use of contextual information. We must make use of words, expressions and sentences surrounding a particular

unknown word. These cues help us to guess the meaning of that unknown word. Quite often the guesses we make are accurate enough to understand the central idea.

Let us look at the following paragraph and try to figure out the meaning of a no-sense word repeatedly used in it. We will look at the paragraph one sentence at a time to arrive at the meaning of this no-sense word:

We see many international travellers buying ***zreastras*** from Duty Free shops inside departure and arrival terminals at airports. They buy ***zreastras*** for themselves or as gifts for their friends and acquaintances. In the past, ***zreastras*** were available in attractive and luring packets. These days, ***zreastras*** are available in packets, which bear horrifying pictures, because World Health Organization and governments have made it mandatory for ***zreastra*** manufacturers to have such terrifying pictures on ***zreastra*** cartons. Millions of people across the world are addicted to ***zreastras*** though they know ***zreastra*** consumption is injurious to health. However, because ***zreastra*** packets bear a statutory warning that ***zreastra*** smoking is injurious to health, that it causes cancer, especially lung cancer, it is a good sign that the number of smokers is decreasing.

The first sentence does not give us any clue to the meaning of the non-sense word 'zreastra'. However, as we proceed, the word begins to reveal its meaning little by little. Towards the end of the paragraph, we can successfully figure out the precise contextual meaning of the word.

Thus the role of context is vital in listening and reading comprehension. As intelligent and experienced listeners and readers, we listen to words and read words; we also listen and read between words and beyond words. In doing this, context facilitates the process of interpretation.

The Use of Fillers in American and British Spoken English in Films

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Abstract

In spontaneous conversation, speakers do not have enough time to plan their speech, so they sometimes produce "fillers", such as um, uh, so, well, you know, I mean, and you know what, to show certain purposes in conversation. This issue led to the purpose of the present study which was to investigate the functions of fillers used in American and British spoken English. As Thai people do not speak English in their everyday life, the researcher selected five American and five British films as samples for the study. The researcher employed Brinton's model (1996) to analyze the functions of fillers in contexts. Also, a qualitative content analysis was carried out to describe the data. The results revealed that Americans and British people used fillers for similar purposes or functions. Based on Brinton's model, the researcher found all functions of fillers used in both American and British spoken English. Besides, fillers could perform either a single specific function or a variety of functions depending on contexts in which they occurred. However, the forms of fillers used in two varieties of English were found to be slightly different in use. Although 24 fillers were found in both varieties of English, 17 forms of fillers were found only in American spoken English and six forms of fillers were found only in British spoken English.
Key words: spontaneous conversation, fillers, functions, American and British spoken English, qualitative content analysis

In real time interactions, speakers have to formulate utterances spontaneously; therefore, they face many problems such as absence of speech planning (Clark & Fox Tree, 2002) and accidental speech errors (MacGregor, 2008). These problems lead to the use of *fillers*—words or sounds filling a gap in conversations (Oxford Dictionaries Online, 2013). Although fillers have no propositional meaning in utterances (Brown, 1977; Brinton, 1996; Lee, 2004; Müller, 2005; Fraundorf& Watson, 2008), they have their own functions. For instance, speakers often use fillers to buy time for planning speech and organizing their thoughts (Chaudron& Richards, 1986; Watanabe, Den, Hirose, Miwa &Minematsu, 2006; O. S. Kim, 2007), as well as to indicate the beginning or the end of utterances or turns (Frăţilă, 2010). Most fillers frequently heard in conversations are *and*, *so*, *well*, *oh*, *um*, *uh*, *you know*, *I mean*, and so on.

Significance of the Study

The present study was a significant endeavor in the direction of understanding of the functions of fillers used in spoken English. Many speakers have often produced fillers in their interactions, but sometimes those fillers confused the listener in the sense of the interpretation of meaning in contexts; therefore, the findings were beneficial to both native and non-native speakers of English in that the use of fillers would help listeners notice the purpose and messages conveyed by them correctly. Perhaps, some fillers would be advantageous for speakers to produce natural speech in real time conversations.

Purposes of the Study

This study focused on investigating the functions of fillers used in American and British spoken English. The researcher also aimed at comparing those functions among two styles of English in order to look for similarities and differences. However, both styles of English referred only to spoken English used in the USA and the UK.

Research Questions

1. Based on Brinton's model of fillers' functions, what are the functions of fillers used in American spoken English?
2. Based on Brinton's model of fillers' functions, what are the functions of fillers used in British spoken English?
3. Based on Brinton's model of fillers' functions, are there any similarities and differences in the functions of fillers used in American and British spoken English?

Limitations of the Study

As most Thai people do not speak English in their everyday life, this restricts the opportunity to collect actual data—that is, real life language for the analysis. For this reason, the researcher relied on secondary sources of data which came from films. Another limitation was discovered while analyzing the data—that is, the scenes in which the conversations were done via phone. The researcher found that some speakers talked over phone, but the audience could not hear the speaker at the other end. In other words, the researcher heard only one side of the telephone conversation through the main character's speech in that scene.

Literature Review

Definitions and characteristics of fillers.

These conversational gap fillers have been given various names such as *fillers* (Watanabe et al., 2006; MacGregor, 2008; Frăţilă, 2010), *pause fillers* (Brown & Yule, 1983; J. Kim, 2007), *filled pauses* (Rose, 1998), *verbal fillers* (Brown, 1977; Stenström, as cited in Thornbury& Slade, 2006), *conversational fillers* (J. Kim, 2004; Wajnryb, 1987), *discourse markers* (Chaudron& Richards, 1986; Jucker&Ziv, 1998), and *pragmatic markers* (Brinton, 1996). In the present study, the researcher has used the word *fillers* throughout the study.

In linguistics, filler is defined as "a word or sound filling a pause in an utterance or conversation" such as *er*, *well*, and *you know* (Oxford Dictionaries Online, 2013). Also, fillers seem to occur throughout utterances as hesitation, especially before content words in spontaneous speech (Maclay& Osgood, as cited in Clark & Tree Fox, 2002). In Maclay and Osgood's study (as cited in Clark & Tree Fox, 2002), fillers are labeled as *dis-fluencies*. Fillers are also used to hold the floor in conversations and prevent interlocutors from breaking in. Besides, fillers, especially *uh* and *um*, are claimed as signals that are used to hold the floor.

Similarly, Rose (1998) has investigated the use of fillers in the field of the communicative value in spontaneous speech. She has defined fillers as hesitation markers in spontaneous speech. While other researchers have claimed that the use of fillers might lead to speech dis-fluencies, she has argued that the fillers do not result from lack of fluency, but occur as useful devices. For instance, fillers are sometimes used to support and enhance communication.

Interestingly, some researchers have classified fillers into two types, but there are different terms to name them. For example, Kim (2007), and Maclay and Osgood (as cited in Kim, 2007) have classified fillers as "unlexicalized fillers" (e.g., *uh*, *um*) and "lexicalized

fillers" (e.g., *well*, *you know*). Brown (1977) also has distinguished fillers into two types, but she calls them "verbal fillers" (e.g., *well*, *of course*) and "hesitation noises" (e.g., *er*).

Brinton (1996) is another researcher to study fillers. She uses the term *pragmatic markers* instead of *fillers*. In her study she compiles and investigates thirty-four markers in the area of grammaticalization and discourse functions, in which she observes that pragmatic markers can occur either inside or outside the syntactic structure. Additionally, the term *pragmatic markers* seems to be one of the several terms referring to empty expressions in oral discourse. Table 1 shows Brinton's (1996) inventory of pragmatic markers gathered from several previous studies.

Table 1: Inventory of pragmatic markers in Brinton's (1996) study:

Ah	*If*	*right/all right/ that's right*
Actually	*I mean/ think*	*So*
after all	*Just*	*Say*
Almost	*Like*	*sort of/ kind of*
And	*mind you*	*Then*
and {stuff, things} like that	*moreover*	*Therefore*
Anyway	*now*	*uh huh*
Basically	*oh*	*Well*
Because	*o.k.*	*yes/no*
But	*Or*	*you know (y'know)*
go 'say'	*really*	*you see*

Based on Brinton's (1996) study, Jucker and Ziv (1998) summarize Brinton's (1996) basic characteristics of pragmatic markers. (see Table 2)

Table 2: Jucker and Ziv's (1998) basic characteristics of pragmatic markers based on Brinton's (1996) study:

Phonological and lexical features
a) They are short and phonologically reduced.
b) They form a separate tone group.
c) They are marginal forms and hence difficult to place within a traditional word class.
Syntactic features
d) They are restricted to sentence-initial position.
e) They occur outside the syntactic structure or they are only loosely attached with it.
f) They are optional.
Semantic feature
g) They have little or no propositional meaning.
Functional feature
h) They are multifunctional, operating on several linguistic levels simultaneously.
Sociolinguistic and stylistic features
i) They are a feature of oral rather than written discourse and are associated with informality.
j) They appear with high frequency.
k) They are stylistically stigmatized.
l) They are gender specific and more typical of women's speech.

Functions of Fillers

Fillers play an important role in discourse as they provide a comfortable conversational atmosphere by signaling the speaker's cognitive aspects such as initiation of a new turn and holding of the floor (Kim, 2007). Similarly, Harmer (2001) has revealed that fillers are utilized for several purposes such as buying time, introducing a turn, and highlighting the beginning or the end of an utterance.

In the present study, the functions of fillers used as the framework of analysis have been adopted from Brinton's (1996) study. In her study, she classifies fillers into two main functions: *textual* and *interpersonal*. Textual function refers to the way a speaker uses them to organize an utterance and to relate the language to be to the context. Textual function is

divided into seven sub-functions from (a) to (g) as listed below under table 3. The second function is *interpersonal* function, which refers to the nature of social exchanges between speakers and hearers. Interpersonal function includes two sub-functions (h) and (i) as listed under table 3 below. Table 3 shows the list of Brinton's textual and interpersonal functions.

Table 3: Brinton's (1996) textual and interpersonal functions

Textual function	Interpersonal function
(a) To initiate discourse; to claim the hearer's attention, and to close a discourse. (b) To help the speaker to obtain or relinquish the floor. (c) To serve as fillers or a delaying tactic used to sustain discourse or hold the floor. (d) To mark a boundary in discourse, that is, to indicate a new topic, a partial shift in topic (correction, elaboration, specification, expansion), or resumption of an earlier topic (after an interruption). (e) To indicate either new information or old information. (f) To mark "sequential dependence", to constrain the relevance of one clause to the preceding clause by making explicit the conversational implications relating the two clauses, or to indicate by means of conventional implications how an utterance matches co-operative principles of a conversation. (g) To repair one's own or others' discourse.	(h) Subjectively, to express a response or a reaction to the preceding discourse, or to express attitude towards the following discourse, including "back-channel" signals of understanding and continued attention uttered while another speaker is having his or her turn, and perhaps to express hedging showing the speaker's tentativeness. (i) Interpersonally, to affect cooperation, sharing, or intimacy between speaker and hearer, to confirm shared assumptions, to check or express understanding, to request information, to express deference, or to save face.

Briefly, the textual function includes the need (a) to initiate and close discourse, (b) to switch the turn, (c) to hold the floor, (d) to change the topic, (e) to denote the information, (f) to constrain the relevance of adjoining utterances, and (g) to repair mistakes.

As for the interpersonal function, it includes the need (h) to express reaction, and (i) to affect cooperation, sharing, or intimacy between speaker and hearer.

Related Studies

There have been a few studies investigating the functions of fillers based on the contexts these fillers appear in. The following are some studies:

Clark and Tree Fox (2002) use the term "fillers" to name *uh* and *um* found in spontaneous speaking. They state, "speakers produce *uh* and *um* in much the same way they do other words" (Clark & Tree Fox, 2002, p. 107), that is, speakers choose a message, insert *uh* and *um* in that message, and produce them as a speech. By collecting evidence from previous studies, Clark and Tree Fox (2002) discovered that *uh* and *um* are used to signal the beginning of a delayed speech. In other words, speakers use them to imply their purposes, such as "I want to keep the floor", "I want to give up the floor", "I'm uncertain about what I want to say", or "I'm hunting for the next word" (Clark & Tree Fox, 2002, p. 104). Also, *uh* and *um* are used when the speaker talks about or is confronted with high-level decisions such as formal or informal use, polite or impolite words, and adult or baby talk.

Frăţilă (2010) conducted a study that emphasizes the functional role of fillers in communication. Frăţilă (2010) investigates the functions of fillers by collecting ten interviews by Larry King, the famous CNN journalist. She discovers three main specific functions of fillers. The first function is that fillers are used as discourse markers. This function is divided into six sub-functions: "to encourage the speaker to speak on", "to change the topic", "to introduce a sub-topic or switch to a different topic", "to make a new start", "to give the floor to the listener", and "to confirm the interlocutor's opinion". As for the second function, fillers are used as interactional signals. The second main function includes sub-functions such as "to introduce the speaker's belief in his or her own opinion", "to get the interlocutor's attention", and "to show the speaker's hesitation". The last function is that fillers are used to show emotional attitudes such as the speaker's surprise, disagreement, or annoyance. Depending on the context, moreover, Frăţilă (2010) suggests that the same fillers may perform several other functions.

Methodology

Research design.

As far as limitations of the study are concerned, the researcher collected the data from British and American English films. Therefore, the researcher employed a qualitative content analysis to arrive at the findings that were gathered from those films. As the content analysis

often concerned complex descriptions which could not be represented in numerical data, the data in this study were described by wordings. Furthermore, this approach was an unobtrusive means of analyzing interactions, so the conversation would not be interrupted by the observer.

Data Collection

Sources of film selection.

Based on the sequence of the key word's occurrence on search engines, the researcher selected two websites, *Box Office Mojo* and *IMDb* among others to be the source of film selection. When people search for the keyword "box office", Box Office Mojo always appears as the first website and/or on the first page. Like Box Office Mojo, if people search for the film titles in any search engines, this website always shows as the first website and/or on the first page. In this study, the researcher selected lists of American and British films from *Box Office Mojo*, and confirmed the details of those films from *IMDb*.

Film selection procedures.

The researcher intended to seek appropriate films by using multistage sampling. The film selection was divided into four procedures. First, the researcher selected lists showing 100 highest-grossing American and British films from *Box Office Mojo*. Next, the researcher selected American and British films based on the origin of American and British stories. Seventy nine American films were left in the list of the USA box office and fourteen British films were left in the list of the UK box office. Then, American and British films were selected following the genres of films. To avoid any confounding variable, the researcher selected drama films to be the genre of the source of data. However, there were a very small number of pure drama films in both lists. In order to get enough samples, films that were a combination of drama and other genres, except for fantasy and musical films, were selected. The reason for not including fantasy and musical films as samples was that some of those films often use unusual language or embed songs to convey meanings which are not authentic or genuine. Finally, twenty two American films were left in the list of the USA box office and five British films were left in the list of the UK box office. Then the researcher selected only five American films from the list of the USA box office by using purposive sampling. At this stage, the researcher selected these five films according to the sequence of highest grossing films in order to equal the number of American and British films. Ultimately, the samples in this study included five American and five British films.

Source of data.

The samples included five American films—*Lincoln*, *Django Unchained*, *Argo*, *Magic Mike* and *Flight,* and five British films—*The Woman in Black*, *The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel*, *The Iron Lady*, *Salmon Fishing in Yemen*, and *Shame*. Based on dramatic themes, all films were selected from the 2012 box office of the USA and UK by multistage sampling.

Research Tools

In this study, the researcher used official English subtitles from the master DVDs, the model of Brinton's (1996) fillers' functions, and Myself as tools for analyzing the sources of data.

English subtitles from the master DVDs.

As Thai people use English as a foreign language; we cannot ensure whether what we hear is correct. Therefore, the researcher extracted English subtitles from the master DVDs in order to prevent mistakes stemming from misunderstanding in listening.

The Model of Brinton's (1996) fillers' functions.

Following the purpose of the study, the researcher utilized the model of Brinton's (1996) fillers' functions as a framework for analysis because it is popular and has been cited in several studies (Castro, 2009; Jucker&Ziv, 1998; Lee, 2004; Müller, 2005; Kim, 2007).

The researcher.

The researcher used Myself as one of the tools for this analysis. Based on the context, the researcher observed the functions of fillers and categorized them according to Brinton's (1996) model.

Sampling Procedure

The first step was to extract English subtitles from the master DVDs. Then, the researcher studied the extracted subtitles. Finally, fillers were arranged into groups based on Brinton's model.

Data analysis.

Process of analysis. The researcher analyzed the functions of fillers based on Brinton's model from films in order to answer the first and the second research questions. Then the functions and forms of fillers were listed and counted for their frequency of occurrence. To ensure the accuracy and reliability of data analysis, the researcher asked a linguist, a lecturer in western languages at a university to check if the analysis was accurate. Finally, the analysis was double checked by the researcher's adviser before conclusions were

drawn, and the possibility of the use of fillers' functions in different contexts was verified. To answer the last research question, the researcher compared the functions of fillers found in five American and five British films. At this stage, the researcher also searched for the highest frequency of fillers' functions used in American and British films.

The validation of the analysis.

1. The researcher analyzed the functions of fillers used in American and British films. Based on Brinton's model, the researcher identified the functions of fillers in each context.
2. The researcher asked a linguist, a lecturer in western languages at a university to check if the analysis was accurate. In this process, the linguist checked the researcher's data analysis, and gave suggestions to the researcher.
3. The data analyzed by the researcher and the suggestions from the linguist were double checked by the researcher's adviser in order to confirm the validity of data.
4. The valid data were utilized and filled out in the table of data analysis.

Results

Question 1: Based on the model of Brinton's fillers' functions, what are the functions of fillers used in American spoken English?

The results revealed that all fillers could be categorized in nine sub-functions based on Brinton's model. Also, forty one forms of fillers were found nine hundred eighty seven times throughout five American films. These fillers consisted of *Uh*, *Anyway*, *Aw*, *Well*, *Mm-hmm*, *I mean*, *Hmm*, *And*, *Oh*, *All Right*, *Mmm*, *Ah*, *You know*, *Uh-huh*, *Look*, *You see*, *Yeah*, *Um*, *So*, *Okay*, *Hm-hm*, *Oh, well*, *Eh*, *Yes*, *Say*, *Huh*, *Hmm-hmm*, *Oh, yes*, *Y'all know*, *Oh, yeah*, *Mm-hm*, *Right*, *See*, *Hm*, *Mm-mm*, *Like*, *Oh, no*, *Mm*, *Just*, *Yep*, and *You know* and *what I'm saying*.

Question 2: Based on the model of Brinton's fillers' functions, what are functions of fillers used in British spoken English?

Like American films, all fillers found in British films could be categorized in nine sub-functions based on Brinton's model. Thirty forms of fillers were found a total of seven hundred fifty times. They consisted of *Oh*, *And*, *Okay*, *So*, *Well*, *You know*, *Ah*, *All right*, *Yes*, *Yeah*, *Um*, *Anyway*, *Uh*, *Right*, *Of course*, *I mean*, *Look*, *Mmm*, *See*, *Huh*, *But*, *Hmm*, *You see*, *No*, *Oh, yes*, *Eh*, *Alright*, *You know what*, *Erm*, and *Oh, yeah*..

Question 3: Based on the model of Brinton's fillers' functions, are there any similarities and differences in the functions of fillers used in American and British spoken English?

From five American and five British films , it is clear that all fillers could be classified in Brinton's nine sub-functions: (a) to initiate and close interaction; (b) to switch the turn; (c) to hold the floor; (d) to change the topic; (e) to denote the information; (f) to constrain the relevance of adjoining utterances; (g) to repair mistakes; (h) to express a reaction; (i) to affect cooperation, sharing, or intimacy between speaker and hearer. However, twenty four forms of fillers were found in both American and British spoken English, but seventeen forms of fillers were found only in American spoken English and six were found only in British spoken English.

Extra Findings

The researcher discovered an extra finding regarding the functions of fillers used in different time periods. The researcher intended to propose the broad use of fillers by dividing their use from ten English films into three periods including the 19th century (1801-1900), 20th century (1901-2000), and 21st century (2001-2015). Among those different time periods, the researcher found that fillers were used the most frequently in the 21th century or in the present time period. Moreover, twelve forms of fillers—*Uh*, *Well*, *All right*, *And*, *Oh*, *Ah*, *You know*, *Look*, *Yeah*, *So*, *Okay*, and *Oh, yeah*—were found in three time periods. Nevertheless, only eight forms of fillers including *Aw*, *Mm-hmm*, *Uh-huh*, *Hm-hm*, *Oh, well*, *Say*, *Hmm-hmm*, and *Y'all know* were found only in 19th century, and fourteen forms of fillers including *Hm*, *Mm-mm*, *Like*, *Oh, no*, *Mm*, *Just*, *Yep*, *No*, *Of course*, *But*, *Alright*, *Erm*, *You know what*, and *You know what I mean* were found only in 21st century. Moreover, there were ten forms of fillers—*Anyway*, *I mean*, *Hmm*, *Mmm*, *You see*, *Um*, *Eh*, *Yes*, *Huh*, *Oh, yes*—found in both 19th and 21st centuries, and three forms of fillers—*Mm-hm*, *Right*, and *See*—found in both 20th and 21st centuries.

Conclusion

The researcher found seven findings from the investigation:

1. All fillers used in American and British spoken English could be categorized following the model of Brinton's fillers' functions—that is, (a) to initiate and close discourse; (b) to switch the turn; (c) to hold the floor; (d) to shift the topic; (e) to denote either the information; (f) to constrain the relevance of adjoining utterances; (g) to repair mistakes; (h) to express the reaction, and (i) to affect cooperation, sharing, or intimacy between a speaker and a hearer.
2. The researcher did not find any new function used apart from those nine sub-functions of Brinton's model in the present study.

3. A filler could perform one specific function and multiple functions depending on contexts in which it occurred.

4. Some similar forms of fillers functioned differently in American and British spoken English.

5. Forty seven forms of fillers were found in ten English-language films.

6. Only 24 forms of fillers were found in both American and British spoken English.

7. Seventeen forms of fillers were found only in American spoken English, and six forms of fillers were found only in British spoken English.

Discussion

Functions of fillers.

The results reveal that the functions of fillers used in American and British spoken English are similar. Americans and British speakers use fillers to express their purposes to the interlocutors. In previous studies, many researchers stated that fillers were used to hold the floor (Brown, 1977; Chaudron& Richards, 1986; Frăţilă, 2010; Harmer, 2001; Hirschman, 1994 cited in Baalen, 2001; Maclay& Osgood, 1959 cited in Clark & Tree Fox, 2002; Watanabe et al., 2006; Kim, 2007), to signal the beginning or the end of utterances (Frăţilă, 2010; Harmer, 2001; Lee, 2004; Kim, 2007), to take the turn from the interlocutor (Koczogh&Furkó, 2011; Lee, 2004), and to shift the topic (Frăţilă, 2010; Lee, 2004). Similar to those studies, the researcher found all those functions used in both American and British spoken English. However, fillers perform a specific function or multifunction depending on contexts.

This study observes that the function “to express a reaction” is used most frequently in both varieties of English. It implies that speakers frequently use fillers as a backchannel or feedback to express a reaction to interlocutors’ preceding utterance or attitude. In other words, fillers are often used to show the interlocutor's attention. Besides, speakers do not use them to answer questions but rather to ensure that listeners are still listening.

In addition, the function “to repair mistakes” is the least frequently used in both varieties of English. Nevertheless, it does not mean that speakers rarely make a mistake in their interactions. This may be a result of the films’ adherence to rigidly written or fabricated scripts.

Forms of fillers

Even though fillers’ functions were not different, the forms of fillers used in each context were quite different. The researcher found that some similar forms of fillers

functioned differently when they appeared in American and British films. For example, both American and British speakers use *Oh, yes* but with different functions in contexts. Americans use it to express the function "to shift the topic", while British speakers use it to perform the functions "to constrain the relevance of adjoining utterances" and "to express a reaction".

By gathering the use of fillers from five American and five English films, the researcher found that more fillers are used in American spoken English rather than in British spoken English. However, this finding could not indicate that Americans like using fillers in their interaction more than the British do. The use of fillers might concern several factors such as high level decisions (Clark & Tree Fox, 2002) or the speaker's purpose (Frăţilă, 2010).

In the present study, the researcher discovered similarities in the use of fillers between the previous studies and the present study. For instance, Cappelli (2009) and Clark and Tree Fox (2002) suggested that fillers, especially *uh*, *um*, *uhm*, *er*, *erm*, are used to delay the conversation. Like their studies, the researcher found that American and British speakers use *uh* and *um* to delay the conversation. Particularly, Americans use this form of fillers as a signal to hold the floor for several times.

Also, the researcher discovered that *I mean* has multiple functions in certain contexts. As Brinton (2003) and Koczogh and Furkó (2011) state *I mean* is used to edit a mistake in a preceding utterance, to prevent misunderstanding, and sometimes to clarify or explain the preceding utterance. The researcher agrees with them. The researcher found that *I mean* is often used to clarify the preceding utterance in both American and British spoken English.

Additionally, Lee (2004) proposes that *so* and *well* perform multiple functions such as shifting the topic, interrupting an idea, and introducing a topic. Similar to her study, the researcher found those multiple functions of fillers used in contexts.

As for the differences in the use of fillers recorded by previous studies and the present study, Lenk(1998) states that the ratio of using *anyway* is higher in American conversations than in British conversations, and it is found as signaling the end of topic in both American English and British English. On contrary, the researcher found that *Anyway* is found mostly as signaling a shift in the topic, and more in British spoken English than in American spoken English.

Moreover, Biber et al. (1999 cited in Müller, 2005) observe that *Well* is rarely used in British English, and *You know* is frequently used in American English. However, the

researcher discovered that both *Well* and *You know* are more frequently used in British spoken English than in American spoken English.

Extra discussion

The researcher found that fillers are used more in the present time period than in the past period. After dividing the use of fillers from ten English-films into three time periods including the 19th century, 20th century, and 21st century, the researcher found that the forms of fillers were slightly different. It is worth noting that eight forms of fillers were used only in the 19th century and fourteen forms of fillers are used only in the 21st century, but none of the fillers forms were used only in the 20th century. Nevertheless, the functions of fillers were not different. Based on Brinton's model, all functions are found in three time periods.

As for the use of fillers in American and British spoken English, Riel (2011) suggests that British speakers are known to be polite and courteous. When they are upset, they have a great deal of control over emotions. Contrarily, Americans often use direct and harsh words to the interlocutors in public. However, this may not be true. Müller (2005) maintains that many factors may influence the use of fillers and their frequency. She divides these factors into two main categories: non-linguistic factors and linguistic factors. Non-linguistic factors include gender, age, and social class, and ethnicity, relationship between the participants, their roles, and formal versus informal contexts. Linguistic factors consist of native versus non-native speakers, acquisition of English in formal and informal contexts, use of English in formal and informal contexts, abroad versus not abroad, and British versus American influence.

Suggestions for further study

1. The researcher did not have an opportunity to examine the use of fillers' functions in actual use.
2. A researcher working in a native English-speaking environment can take up an investigation into functions of fillers in actual life. Another researcher can do a comparative analysis of the fillers used in movies and those used in real life.
3. A variety of other sources of data should be examined such as *blogs*, *facebook* and other social media in order to compare different uses of fillers.
4. Another researcher can compare the use of fillers used in different time periods, that is to say, diachronically.

5. As the researcher found that Americans and British speakers use fillers in the present more than the past time, the researcher recommends that further studies should address this issue. Indeed, the samples of the present study may not be enough for the analysis of illers used in different time periods. If further studies can collect data from more films, the results of the study may be different.

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Analysis of International Civil Aviation Organization Language Proficiency Rating Scale (Pronunciation Category) and its Implications for the Teaching of Aviation English in Thailand

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Abstract

This analytical paper examines issues of interpretation of the ICAO language proficiency rating scale of pronunciation category. It analyses concepts related to the study of phonology with focus on pronunciation. In essence, the ICAO rating scale contains linguistic terms such as dialect, accent, intelligibility, first language, and interference. These terms are associated with the role of English as a lingua franca. The paper suggests that there needs to be a set policy to determine the nature, approach, methodology, direction and purpose of training in aviation English in Thailand.

Key words: English as a lingua franca, pronunciation, intelligibility, native and non-native speakers of English

Radiotelephony communication or voice-only communication plays a vital role in communication among pilots and air traffic controllers. In general, aviation English phraseology is used as the benchmark in radiotelephony communication for pilots and air traffic controllers conducting operations both in international and domestic airspaces. However, on certain occasions, aviation English phraseology does not suffice, particularly under emergencies or abnormal situations. There has been an increasing awareness of aviation related incidents/accidents caused by communication failures on the part of pilots and air traffic controllers (International Civil Aviation Organization, 2004). In the United States, the Federal Aviation Administration conducted a study of communication problems by differentiating between pilots flying American registered aircraft and foreign registered aircraft, and found that language proficiency was a factor contributing to communication problems faced by pilots (Prinzo and Thomson, 2009). As a result, the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) passed a new regulation requiring all pilots and air traffic controllers who wish to perform their duties in the international airspace to meet the ICAO language proficiency level 4.

In Thailand, it has been a requirement since 2010. Pilots and air traffic controllers must obtain the ICAO specified language proficiency level 4, and they must also have it endorsed in their licenses before they can be legally allowed to operate in the international airspace according to the Thai law (Suksiripakonchai, 2013a). Currently, the Civil Aviation Training Centre in Thailand hosts the testing centre as approved by the Department of Civil Aviation of Thailand (DCA) (Suksiripakonchai, 2012), and as of 2013 Thai Airways Public Company Limited became the second approved operator of a testing centre in Thailand. To assess the proficiency level of the test-takers in Thailand, Article 3 of the Department of Civil Aviation Regulation on Language Proficiency for Aeronautical Communication of Holders of Personnel Licenses (No. 3) B. E. 2553 states that accredited ICAO language proficiency raters are to adhere to the ICAO language proficiency rating scale and the Holistic Descriptors found in Annex 1 to the Chicago Convention.

ICAO Language Proficiency Requirements

ICAO language proficiency rating scale

The ICAO language proficiency rating scale is found in Annex 1 to the Chicago Convention as well as Chapter 4 of the Manual on the Implementation of ICAO Language Proficiency Requirements. According to the rating scale, there are six language categories which are used to assess proficiency levels of pilots and air traffic controllers. These categories include pronunciation, structure, vocabulary, fluency, comprehension, and

interactions. There are also six levels of proficiency for each category namely, Level 1: Pre-elementary, Level 2: Elementary, Level 3: Pre-operational, Level 4: Operational, Level 5: Extended, and Level 6: Expert. The 6 levels of the pronunciation category are illustrated in Table 1 below:

Table 1: Pronunciation category of ICAO rating scale

Pronunciation: Assumes a dialect and/or accent intelligible to the aeronautical community	
Level 6 Expert	Pronunciation, stress, rhythm, and intonation, though possibly influenced by the first language or regional variation, almost never interfere with ease of understanding.
Level 5 Extended	Pronunciation, stress, rhythm, and intonation, though influenced by the first language or regional variation, rarely interfere with ease of understanding.
Level 4 Operational	Pronunciation, stress, rhythm, and intonation are influenced by the first language or regional variation but only sometimes interfere with ease of understanding.
Level 3 Pre-operational	Pronunciation, stress, rhythm, and intonation are influenced by the first language or regional variation and frequently interfere with ease of understanding.
Level 2 Elementary	Pronunciation, stress, rhythm, and intonation are heavily influenced by the first language or regional variation and usually interfere with ease of understanding.
Level 1 Pre-elementary	Performs at a level below the elementary level.

Pilots and air traffic controllers with the proficiency level below level 4 do not meet the ICAO language proficiency requirements to operate in the international airspace. The use of a rating scale to assess language proficiency of learners of English has been discussed both positively and negatively. For example, a rating scale is used to represent a test construct which should be based on a language theory (Knoch, 2007), any category included in the rating scale should also be based on relevant language theory (Knoch, 2009) or they should be relevant to the purpose of the test. Furthermore, descriptors used in the rating scale will appear more valid if they are empirically based (Ibid). However, a problem

occurs when a rating scale is not always developed on the basis of a theoretical framework. Fulcher (1996) states that most rating scales are often created based on experts' intuitive judgments regarding the nature of language development. In addition, Turner and Upshur (2002) report that rating scales often contain relative wording resulting in false profiles. An important question that needs to be raised here is: what type of method is applied to construct the ICAO rating scale? But even more important is how do raters interpret the ICAO rating scale? In addition, given the fact that different raters tend to have varying interpretations of the rating scale, to what extent does the rating scale establish an international standard? It is important that these questions are addressed comprehensively before any raters apply their assessment methods to ICAO language proficiency test-takers.

Holistic descriptors

The holistic descriptors for ICAO language proficiency requirements are found in Appendix 1 of Annex 10 to the Chicago Convention. The descriptors state proficient speakers shall "use a dialect or accent which is intelligible to the aeronautical community" (International Civil Aviation Organization, 2011: APP 1-1). The problem with the holistic descriptors is the vague expression 'use a dialect or accent which is intelligible'. This immediately creates a question as to what dialect or accent is considered intelligible and how intelligibility is measured.

Analysis and Problems of Interpreting the Rating Scale

Intelligibility

The term 'intelligibility' appears in the pronunciation category of the rating scale (see Figure 1). Such a term like this one requires a clear definition to guide raters as to how they should interpret it. Derwing and Munro (2005) claim that no universal agreement or consensus has been reached on the exact nature and degree of intelligibility. On the other hand, Kent (1992: 9) defines intelligibility as "the sine qua non of spoken English" in which mispronunciation of an utterance could adversely impact the intelligibility and quality of communication. Suksiripakonchai (2013b) proposes two types of intelligibility- oral or spoken intelligibility and auditory or listening intelligibility. For the purpose of ICAO proficiency requirements, the focus is on spoken or oral intelligibility and it should mean "the ability to produce speech sounds that are easy to understand to other speakers of English" (Ibid: 125).

The presence of the term "intelligibility" brings in various related issues with regard to pronunciation. This is because the most threatening factor affecting degrees of intelligibility is pronunciation (Jenkins, 2000). Since pronunciation is one of the main

categories in the ICAO rating scale, an obvious and essential inquiry that needs to be made here is the adoption of a pronunciation model to base against the rating scale when assessing performance of pilots and air traffic controllers. Clearly, the inevitable terms that are likely to cause a major problem for all involved in the ICAO rating assessment process are 'native speaker' and 'non-native speaker'. This dichotomous issue will be further discussed later in the article.

Accent and dialect

Also connected with pronunciation are accent and dialect. Accent refers to "a particular way of pronouncing a language" (Trask, 1997: 3), or differences in pronunciation of how people speak (Trudgill, 2000). Dialect is associated with "varieties distinguished from each other by differences of grammar and vocabulary" (Hughes and Trudgill, 1996: 9) on top of the phonological differences. As a result of the presence of accent and dialect in the ICAO rating scale, several more inquiries now have to be made in order to pursue better understanding of the rating scale and its interpretation. These include issues such as 'which accent?' and 'which dialect?' For the purpose of the aeronautical community, is Received Pronunciation or General American accent considered a standard accent? Can non-native accents be considered standards for the purpose of the ICAO language assessment? How about the issues regarding identity? Are native standards better than non-native ones? Who is to say which accent and dialect is recognized as standard? Most importantly, is this against the emerging concept of English as a lingua franca? It is vital that these questions are clear to all involved before the assessment process commences.

First language and interference

When discussing issues relating to a first language, the notion of native and non-native speakers is triggered. This is because it implies the idea of a second language. As far as speaking skill is concerned, the ultimate goal of the learner of English as a second language is normally to approximate the native accent as closely as possible (Timmins, 2002 as cited in O'Keefe et al., 2007). However, this is not always possible. Two phonological systems are never identical. Lado (1958) states that when a second language leaner tries to produce a speech sound the equivalent of which does not exist in the first language of the second language learner, a substitution of the speech sound based on the closest speech sound in the first language of the learner would then occur. This process is referred to as 'interference' (Weinreich, 1953). Some scholars such as Jenkins (2000), and Radwanska-William (2008) suggest that the dichotomy of native and non-native speakers of English is now futile. English no longer belongs to the inner circle nations. In fact, non-native speakers

have been found to possess the same level of proficiency as that of the so-called native speakers of English (Todd, 2006). It is pivotal to understand whether the ICAO rating scale promotes the native or non-native speaker pronunciation models; otherwise, it may not be possible to establish the concept of English as a lingua franca to support the interpretation of the ICAO rating scale.

Position in Thailand and the Next Step

As previously mentioned, it has been a requirement in Thailand since 2010 that all pilots and air traffic controllers must obtain at least level 4 language proficiency based on the ICAO rating scale in order to become legally eligible to operate in the international airspace. DCA Thailand (2010) published the results of 174 pilots who took the first round of the ICAO language proficiency test in 2010. The following chart tabulates the results:

Table 2: ICAO language proficiency results of Thai pilots in 2010

	Number of pilots	**Percentage**
Level 3	13	7.47
Level 4	**60**	**34.48**
Level 5	50	28.73
Level 6	51	29.31

According to Table 2, only 13 pilots in this round of testing did not pass level4 proficiency. This means that they are required to take the test until they obtain level4 proficiency. This may seem like a small percentage, but Thailand has more than 174 pilots and this figure does not include air traffic controllers. Hypothetically speaking and based on limited publicly available information, there could be a large number of pilots and air traffic controllers who do not pass the fourth level.

The Civil Aviation Training Centre of Thailand offers a course in ICAO language proficiency requirements. This course focuses on the administrative side of the test such as the interview process, and techniques. It does not cover any language training at all (Suksiripakonchai, 2012). This is a fundamental problem as raters in Thailand are a combination of personnel with and without English language qualifications. Those without English language qualifications are then left to interpret the ICAO rating scale based on their own judgment. Moreover, the raters who possess English language qualifications may not be fully familiar with the concept of English as a lingua franca and, even more important than

that, they may not be familiar with the notion of intelligibility. Therefore, what assurances do test-takers have in terms of the reliability of the assessment on the part of the raters?
It is imperative that appropriate measures need to be taken now to suit the context of ICAO rating in Thailand without jeopardizing the requirements set forth by the ICAO.

English as a Lingua Franca in Thailand and Thai Attitudes towards It

English as a lingua franca is a relatively new concept. However, it is an important concept that has been increasingly accepted among scholars (see Jenkins, 2000). Basically, it is crucial to understand that in a country like Thailand, particularly in the aviation arena, English is used as a lingua franca where majority speakers of English do not share the same native language. Therefore, the concept of native speakers of English in Thailand should no longer be subscribed to. Now that the English language belongs to all three circles, it is owned by its native speakers as well as its non-native speakers. The native speaker is no longer at the centre and the non-native speaker is no longer on the periphery. This fledging concept will not grow naturally on teachers; it has to be promoted through language policy at the national level. After all, Thailand is not required or forced to adopt any specific pronunciation model for the ICAO language proficiency requirements. At the ICAO Language Proficiency Requirements Seminar in Montreal in 2013, I conducted an informal interview with Nicole Barrette-Sabourin, Project Manager for ICAO Language Proficiency Requirements and she stated that the ICAO rating scale has been developed as a guide for the international aeronautical community to refer to when assessing ICAO language proficiency. However, how each country interprets the ICAO rating scale depends on its own standards. This means that every country that does not use English as their official language is free to adopt any pronunciation model that is appropriate in their social contexts.

It is Milroy and Milroy (1993: 6) state "the chief differences between standard and non-standard varieties are not in their being 'superior' or 'inferior' … but in the different level of social acceptability accorded to them". Attitudes play a significant role in pronunciation. Suksiripakonchai (2013c) conducted a study of Thai students' attitudes towards native and non-native speakers of English. The findings indicated that Thai students preferred native pronunciation models. However, the students did not completely dislike the non-native pronunciation models because it was easy for them to communicate with local people.

As a consequence, when rating a test-taker's performance according to the ICAO rating scale, it is important for raters to keep in mind that the rating scale (pronunciation category) should be interpreted on the basis of English as a lingua franca. The raters should

avoid applying biases towards non-native English pronunciation models including biases related to accents and dialects as they may cloud the raters' judgment. Intelligibility is the key in the ICAO rating scale. As long as the test-takers are able to produce utterances that are easy to understand regardless of pronunciation models, accents, and dialects, such utterances should be considered intelligible utterances for the purpose of the ICAO proficiency requirements.

Interpretation of Intelligibility

With regard to the intelligibility issue, it may be reasonable for ICAO raters to refer to intelligible utterances, which are appropriate to the Thai context. For example, future research may be needed in relation to English words other than aviation phraseology commonly found in radiotelephony communication. The research may look at pronunciation of English words articulated by Thai pilots and traffic controllers and test their degree of intelligibility. For instance, let us look at the word 'arrive'. In the Thai phonological system, the voiced labio-dental /v/ does not exist. The segmental phoneme in Thai that is closest to /v/ is the voiced labio-dental /f/. According to Suksiripakonchai (2014), Thai learners of English tend to substitute /v/ with /f/ and this substitution should not cause any misunderstand especially in a context. This could be utilized as a guide for raters to refer to when assessing ICAO language proficiency requirements for pilots and air traffic controllers.

Conclusion

ICAO language proficiency is the latest international requirement to assess language proficiency levels of pilots and air traffic controllers conducting operations in the international airspace. Thailand, as a contracting state to the Chicago Convention, has been implementing such requirement since 2010. However, the interpretation of the ICAO rating scale has not been clear in the Thai context. It contains linguistic jargon such as intelligibility, accent, dialect, and interference. These terms are associated with the concept of English as a lingua franca, which should be taken into account when raters conduct ICAO language proficiency assessments. This is because when the dichotomy of native and non-native speakers of English becomes part of the assessment process, various factors such as attitude and identity will have to be taken into consideration. It is important to remember, especially from a sociolinguistic perspective, that social contexts play an important role in modern English language teaching. Traditional prescriptive view of learning English pronunciation to approximate native speaker models may not be applicable any longer in a number of social contexts. This is particularly true in a nation where the identity factor is considered essential. When interpreting the ICAO rating scale, raters ought to take into account all these relevant

factors. This is a recommendation not only for those who have no English language backgrounds, but also for those who are in the field of English language teaching. In a country such as Thailand, it may be an advantage that the notion of English as a lingua franca is promoted at the national level due to long established attitude in the country that native speakers of English are superior and that prestige comes from being able to sound like native speakers of English. This could be included in an aviation English language training program or a general aviation English course at the tertiary level.

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Continuous and Comprehensive Assessment

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Abstract

This present plenary speech will be divided into four sections. The first section will discuss the distinction between summative and formative evaluation. It will also explain the nature and types formative assessment. The second part will talk about the purposes of continuous evaluation. The third part will consider the tools of continuous assessment. The fourth part of the presentation will provide a module of continuous and comprehensive assessment.

Summative assessment cannot be comprehensive as the time allotted for it is very short, usually three hours at the end of a semester or academic year. We cannot evaluate a learner's competence and performance within such a short time. Moreover, it offers us one time feedback, which has its limitations. Another drawback of summative assessment is that a problem detected in this type of assessment may be a false friend in the sense that it may not be a frequently occurring error or difficulty; it may just be an incidental slip of the brain, tongue or hand resulting from fatigue, distraction, boredom, nervousness and so on. On the other hand, a problem that is spotted time and again in formative assessment highlights its authenticity as a learning difficulty. In continuous assessment, several problems may surface through multiple mini-tests conducted formally as well as informally on a fairly regular basis.

Formative assessment is not a new practice. It has always been there without its present nomenclature. In the past, teachers used to keep a mental record of the strengths and weakness of their students. Moreover, this kind of informal continuous assessment was probably not made a systematic and purposive part of teaching programmes. In this context we can think of two types of formative evaluation. The first one is informal, unconscious, unplanned continuous assessment. The second one is formal, conscious and deliberate formative assessment. We can further divide these main types into comparison-driven/norm-referenced and ability-driven/criterion-referenced informal and formal formative assessment.

Continuous assessment takes place over a longer period of time such as a semester, an academic year or even a graduate programme. That is why it lends opportunities and scope for several types of learning difficulties to surface. As far as the learning of the English language is concerned, these problems can be problems in accuracy (wrong pronunciation, spelling, word choice, grammar, etc.) or problems associated with mastery of language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) and language components (pronunciation, vocabulary and grammar), and problems associated with appropriateness (mixing of registers, violation of principles of solidarity and power in speech acts, etc.). Formative evaluation enables teachers to map and systematize a pattern of difficulties and search for a method in the madness. They can then plan their subsequent lessons keeping in view the difficulties identified earlier. They can design exercises and tasks in such a way that problems noticed earlier are addressed again so as to overcome them.

We can use formative assessment for various purposes. We can assess the learners' mastery of language skills and language components. We can also evaluate their learning strategies (e.g., mnemonic tricks), learning styles (e.g., auditory, visual and kinaesthetic learning styles) and learning paces (e. g., slow and quick learners). We can identify their learning difficulties through recognition and production stages. We can classify, notify and codify learning problems in the form of learner profiles and diaries. We can keep these learning problems in view while producing teaching materials and rectify them over a period of time.

Key words: comprehensive assessment, assessment and evaluation

I would like to open my discussion of continuous and comprehensive assessment with some quotes from Postman and Weingartner (1969):

1. Declare a five year moratorium on the use of all textbooks. Since with two or three exceptions all textbooks are not only boring but based on the assumption that knowledge exists prior to, independent of, and altogether outside of the learner, they are either worthless or harmful. If it is impossible to function without textbooks, provide every student a notebook filled with blank pages, and have him compose his own text (p. 134).
2. Prohibit teachers from asking any questions they already know answers to. This proposal would not only force teachers to perceive learning from the learners' perspective, it would help them to learn how to ask questions that produce knowledge (p. 135).
3. Require all teachers to take a test prepared by students on what the students know. Only if a teacher passes this test should he be permitted to teach (p. 136).
4. Declare a moratorium on all tests and grades. This would remove from the hands of teachers their major weapon of coercion and would eliminate two of the major obstacles to their students' learning anything significant (p. 135).
5. There should be a general prohibition against the use of words such as "test" and "grade" (p. 137).
6. Eliminate all conventional tests and testing (p.146).

The first quotation is about textbooks not only because textbooks are worthless and harmful, but also because they are the basis of the whole traditional testing system. The rest of the quotations concern the business of testing and learner evaluation. Teachers are in a privileged position because they set test items, and they know answers. Moreover, they do not have to answer questions and hence they are in a safe and comfortable zone. Most of these predictable questions are abortive because they do not produce knowledge. That is why the authors suggest that teachers should ask learners those questions to which they do not have predetermined and rehearsed answers. A better idea would be to empower students to frame questions and ask teachers to answer those questions. A yet better proposal would be to declare a moratorium on tests and examinations, to eliminate tests and mechanisms of testing and even labels such as 'tests', 'grades', 'marks'.

Now we need to understand why Postman and Weingartner (1969) advanced such seemingly regressive and revolutionary proposals. Educationists such as Postman and Weingartner (1969), Freire (1972) and several others studied the sadistic nature, coercive mechanisms, sinister functions and harmful effects of testing systems. They noticed that the existing testing system, especially summative evaluation system, regiments, leads to conformity, promotes convergent thinking, destroys creativity, prevents divergent thinking, demotes non-conformity, emphasizes facts and information, and produces no significant knowledge.

Here I would like to quote two extracts from Patrick Pringle's *The Young Einstein* as included in Tickoo et al. (1981). The biographer describes the circumstances which led to Einstein's expulsion from a German school. Einstein was a genius and therefore a misfit in a traditional school system. The extracts show his unwillingness to tolerate the meaningless activities associated with education in such a system:

Extract One:

'In what year, Einstein', asked the history teacher, 'did the Prussians defeat the French at Waterloo?'

'I don't know, sir.'

'Why don't you know? You've been told it often enough.'

'I must have forgotten.'

"Did you ever try to learn?' asked Mr Braun.

"No, sir.' Albert replied with his usual unthinking honesty.

'Why not?'

'I can't see any point in learning facts. One can always look them up in a book.'

Mr Braun was speechless for a few moments.

'You amaze me, Einstein,' he said at last. 'Don't you realize that one can always look up most things in books? That applies to all the facts you learn at school.'

'Yes, sir.'

'Then I suppose you don't see any point in learning facts.'

'Frankly, sir, I don't,' said Albert.

'Then you don't believe in education at all.'

'Oh, yes, sir, I do. I don't think learning facts is education.'

'In that case', said the history teacher with heavy sarcasm, 'perhaps you will be so kind as to tell the class the Einstein theory of education.'

Albert flushed. 'I think it's not facts that matter, but ideas,' he said. 'I don't see the point in learning the dates of battles, or which of the armies killed more men. I'd be more interested in learning why those soldiers were trying to kill each other.'

'That's enough,' Mr Braun's eyes were cold and cruel. 'We don't want a lecture from you, Einstein. You will stay in for an extra period today; although I don't imagine it will do you much good. It won't do the school any good either. You are a disgrace. I don't know why you continue to come.'

'It's not my wish, sir', Albert pointed out.

'Then you are an ungrateful boy and ought to be ashamed of yourself. I suggest you ask your father to take you away.'

Extract Two:

'I'm sure you could learn enough to pass the exams, Albert, if you tried,' Elsa, his cousin said. 'I know lots of boys who are much more stupid than you are, who get though. They say you don't have to know anything-you don't have to understand what you're taught, just be able to repeat it in the exams.'

'That's the whole trouble,' said Albert. 'I'm not good at learning things by heart.'

'You don't need to be good at it. Anyone can learn like a parrot. You just don't try. And yet I always see you with a book under your arm,' added Elsa. 'What is that one you're reading?'

'A book on geology.'

'Geology? Rocks and things? Do you learn that?'

'No. We have hardly any science at school.'

'Then why are you studying it?'

'Because I like it. Is't that a good enough reason?'

'You're right, of course, Albert,' she said. 'But that won't help with your diploma.'

Einstein's responses to his history teacher and later to his cousin are evidence of the shortcomings of modern education which requires children to memorize facts and data instead of training them how to think critically and creatively. Einstein's history teacher wants him to

remember dates of important incidents in history because his examination will require him to recall facts and figures, rather than produce evidence of his creativity.

In this context, it is important to consider some small steps that governments and educational bodies have taken. For example, the documents produced by the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India (1949, 1952, 1986a, 1986b, and 2009), and those by National Council for Educational Research and Training in India (2000, 2003, and 2005) have frequently pointed out the shortcomings of the prevailing examination system, expressed the need to reform it, recorded their preference for grading system over marking system, made a case for integration of evaluation with the process of teaching and learning, and advocated the necessity of incorporating internal assessment and formative evaluation into the processes of teaching and testing. The last suggestion in the above sentence has a special significance in the context of continuous and comprehensive evaluation because internal assessment empowers the teacher and the institution to manage learner assessment at their level and formative evaluation enables them to make use of the information it yields to enhance learning. All these documents have voiced the concerns of various commissions and task forces. It is true that unfortunately the examination system puts the cart before the horse, that it is the engine that drives the process of teaching. Examination is given primary importance and teaching secondary. Hughes (1989: 4) rightly suggests that after all, teaching is the primary activity and when testing comes in conflict with it, then it is testing which should go.

However, testing or assessment does have its role to play in education. In fact, life is a process of assessment and evaluation. Assessment is an integral part of our everyday life. We assess products, people, professionals, practices, possibilities, predictions and so on and so forth. For example, before we buy vegetables and fruit, we inspect them carefully to see if they are fresh or stale. We assess people on the basis of what they do and what they say. Thus when we read or watch Shakespeare's *Othello,* we continuously assess what Iago, the villain says and does. When we watch a performance of *Othello,* we observe Iago's machinations and listen to what he says during his conversations with other characters and what he reveals in his soliloquies and actions and judge him as a villain. Assessment is at the root of our judgments of characters in plays and fiction. We evaluate our colleagues and our students evaluate us as teachers. Our opinions are a result of our assessment of people's behavior. Most describing words such as reliable, trustworthy, unscrupulous, beautiful, rich, naïve, treacherous, etc. are distilled essences

of our assessment of people. Proverbs and saying are rooted into our observation and continuous assessment of patterns of individual behavior and collective social practices.

Assessment is an essential part of education as well. In fact, right when we frame the curriculum we think of how we are going to assess a whole lot of things. Our curriculum needs to specify whether we will assess materials, methods, learning outcomes, students' performance, progress and achievement summatively or formatively. The whole system of marking, grading, and ranking is based on assessment. In many countries, examination results determine students' future. Percentage decides streaming of students into sciences and humanities. In India, in some competitive examinations such as Indian Administrative Service, Indian Foreign Service, Indian Forest Service, etc., rank, not pass and fail closes or opens the doors of opportunities.

Teachers not only teach but also set test and examination question papers and evaluate answers provided by students. Having graduated, we attend job interviews during which our attitude, communication skills, soft skills, leadership qualities, knowledge, etc., are assessed. Assessment is a specter that starts haunting learners right from the initial stage of schooling and keeps hounding them till the end of our professional life either informally or formally and officially or both. People have differing opinions about whether there should be summative or formative assessment, formal or informal evaluation or a combination of all these. In this paper we are going to advocate the adoption of formative or continuous and comprehensive assessment as a preferred choice for some valid reasons.

Frank (2012) lists the following roles of testing as a tool: to identify learners' needs, to document their progress, achievement and proficiency, to identify their strengths and weaknesses, to determine the success of planning and effectiveness of teaching. Norris (2012: 43) adds some more functions of testing such as evaluating students' global language proficiency, their mastery of curricular objectives, their grammatical knowledge, their language abilities at the end of the course, and the effectiveness of a particular lesson. Perez Basanta (2012: 37) records similar purposes of testing: to check how successful teaching has been, to know how well students are learning, and to guide a remedial program.

Assessment has always some purpose or the other. The usual aims of assessment are: to determine the success of our educational planning and teaching, to judge the effectiveness of our program, to identify learners' needs, to document their progress, their achievement, their

proficiency, to find out their strengths and weaknesses. Here let me draw your attention to the common mistake that teachers as evaluators make. They think that the only aim of assessment is to spot learners' weaknesses. I am reminded of an episode from the Indian epic *The Mahabharat*. The event has a moral for evaluators and assessors. This event concerns two major characters in the epic. Duryodhan is a villainous character and Yudhishthir is a noble character. Naturally, people love and praise Yudhishthir but hate and condemn Duryodhan. Duryodhan approaches Lord Krishna and asks him why people love Yudhishthir but hate him. Lord Krishna asks Duryodhan to move around in his kingdom and find one good person and get back to him after some days. In the meanwhile, Lord Krishna calls Yudhishthir and asks him to tour his kingdom and find one bad person in his kingdom and return to him after a few days. Duryodhan and Ydhishthir travel though their kingdoms and come back to Lord Krishna after a week. Krishna asks Duryodhan, "Did you find a good person in your state?" The prince says, "Unfortunately, there isn't even one good person in my kingdom." He adds, "All my subjects are scoundrels." Krishna gives him a sarcastic smile when he hears this response. Then he turns to Yudhishthir and asks him, "Did you find a bad person from your kingdom, Yudhishthir?" Yudhishthir replies, "My Mentor, everyone in my state is extremely noble and is your own image." These two princes epitomize two types of evaluators- those who see only strengths and those who see only weaknesses. I would like to note at this point that Duryodhan and Yudhishthir both meet people in their states and assess them as either bad or good only on the basis of single interactions. So, in a sense they both practice summative assessment.

Assessment is usually thought in terms of summative or formative assessment. Bloom, et al. (1971) give us a detailed account of the summative and formative approaches to evaluation of student learning.

In my opinion, summative assessment is like an arranged marriage. A boy and a girl meet for the first time. They ask each other a few questions and decide to get married or not to get married. Their decision is based on one meeting and one interview. They do not know what their strengths and weaknesses are; they know little about their personalities. Summative assessment is not much different than an arranged marriage. A boy and a girl cannot understand their temperament, attitude, aptitude, and their cognitive, affective, intrapersonal, interpersonal, and interactional abilities and capacities, their likes and dislikes in one single meeting. Similarly, an evaluator cannot assess the competence and performance of a learner on the basis of a test or

examination administered over a few hours. Moreover, due to time constraints, a summative test cannot be comprehensive. We cannot test the various abilities, capacities, skills, attitudes, aptitude, perceptions and understanding of a learner through a single, one-time examination. Further, a summative test cannot assess all aspects of a content subject or skill subject. There is little time for the evaluator to offer feedback as the learner is promoted to the next class on the basis of his/her single performance. This is rather unfair. Let me cite an example from cricket. A batsman may be bowled on the very first ball of the first over of a match. If we drop him from the cricket series, it would be unfair and unjust. We need to allow him to play a few more matches and assess him on the basis of his batting performance over a period of time. Sachin Tendulkar of India or Sanath Jayasurya of Sri Lanka may lose their respective wicket without a decent personal score, but then we cannot draw conclusions about their batting abilities so quickly and abruptly. We need to be patient and need to give them time to prove their mettle. The same principle of patience applies to academic testing.

Summative assessment may not reveal all or most of the strengths and weaknesses of a learner. For most problems and strengths to surface, we need to administer several tests over long enough periods. Summative assessment may bring to light some learning problems, and these learning problems may not be genuine ones; they may be false friends or deceptive problems. Summative assessment does not allow examiners enough time to identify, classify, notify, rectify and codify learning problems or errors.

Let me cite a literary example of summative assessment. Shakespeare's King Lear has three daughters- Goneril, Regan and Cordelia. One day he decides to know how much his daughters love him, and so he calls his daughters to narrate the intensity of their love for him. Goneril and Regan talk about their love hyperbolically. Cordelia, the youngest daughter, who genuinely loves him, is unable to express her love in words. The foolish king fails to listen between the lines and beyond the lines, fails to understand the hidden agenda of the elder daughters and divides the kingdom between the first two daughters and leaves nothing for Cordelia who cares for and loves him. The king has seen his daughters grow and mature; he should know their dispositions, their temperaments, and their motives. But he bases his evaluation of their characters on a single event and that is the root cause of the whole tragedy. Formative assessment is like a love marriage. A boy and girl get enough time to understand each other. They observe each other react and respond to various situations and problems and can

understand their attitudes, aptitudes, likes and dislikes, and their personality types. Let me offer an example of formative assessment from literature. There is a Ukranian folktale called *A Greedy Old Woman and the Lime Tree.* One day a man goes to a forest to get some firewood. He finds a lime tree and is about to chop it down with an axe, but the lime tree speaks in a human voice and requests the old man not to cut it down and promises to do a good turn to him some day. Frightened and surprised, the old man returns home to tell his wife about the speaking tree. The old woman asks her old man to go back to the forest and ask the lime tree to give them a horse and a cart. The lime tree satisfies their demand. The woman now wants a new house and some livestock and fowl and sends her husband back to the forest and the tree fulfils their second demand. But the woman is too greedy to be satisfied and so sends the old man to get some money. The tree gives them lots of stacks of bills and coins. The woman's greed has no end. She admonishes her husband to get back to the forest again and ask for some policemen and soldiers so that people are afraid of them. The lime tree gives them what they want. The woman's greed is unstoppable. Now she wants people to slog for her. The lime tree has tested the woman six consecutive times. The tree has assessed her formatively and has found her to be very greedy. As a result, the woman not only does not get people to slave for her, but she loses whatever she has received earlier from the tree-- the horse and a cart, the new house, the stacks of money, livestock and fowl, and the soldiers and policemen. The lime tree fails the woman not on the basis of one demand, but six demands. The tree gives the woman opportunities to control her greed, but she does not stop and hence fails (loses everything).

Summative assessment has its strengths, but it has some weakness too. In this context, we need to remember that testers make mistakes while framing or administering tests. Henning (2012) lists twenty testing mistakes that teachers make, and groups them into four categories: general examination characteristics, test item characteristics, test validity concerns, and administrative and scoring issues. To this we can add a fifth characteristic-summative or product approach to testing.

Formative assessment subordinates testing to teaching and learning. It introduces internal assessment and empowers schools and teachers**.** It discourages viewing success and failure on the basis of a single examination**,** discourages rote learning and mechanical memorization**,** and competitive tests**.** It minimizes formal tests**,** minimizes subjectivity and maximizes tests that assess all-round progress**.** A formative test replaces marks by grades**.** It adopts social

constructivist approach**,** goes beyond the textbook and relates classroom with life outside**.** It starts with the belief that there may be multiple correct answers and hence encourages non-conformity, respects diversity**.** It recognizes different learning rates, styles, and strategies and different types of intelligence**.** It offers regular and frequent feedback**,** reveals several strengths and weaknesses, and assesses several things over a period, judges on the basis of several performances and offers ample time to identify, classify, notify, rectify and codify problems/errors and most importantly, it co-ordinates teaching and learning with testing.

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Collocation and English Language Learning

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Abstract

Collocation plays a crucial role in language learning, especially in countries where English is taught as a foreign language (EFL). This is because the way words are combined in collocations is the basis of all language use. Lacking collocational knowledge prevents learners from expressing their ideas precisely and concisely. Collocation is also a key to language fluency and can improve learners' English 'naturalness.' Due to its significance, it is essential that English language teaching (ELT) consider teaching collocation as a priority in EFL language classrooms.

Despite the significance and importance of collocation, collocation instruction in Thailand has been neglected or ignored completely, and very little research has dealt with teaching collocation to EFL Thai learners. Thai English teachers mainly focus on teaching students to learn formal grammar in developing their language skills, and very few of them encourage their students to learn collocations from textbooks. Likewise, a number of research studies on collocation in Thailand rely heavily on the investigation of collocational violations and attempt to give only a handful of plausible explanations to students' collocational errors. Many teachers and researchers have not yet employed collocation instructions to any great extent.

Based on previous studies, this documentary research will focus on exploring the significance of collocation towards English language learning in EFL contexts, reviewing trends of research on collocations from both overseas and Thailand, and suggesting effective methods of teaching collocation to EFL classrooms.

Key words: collocation, English language teaching, English language learning

There is a famous quote by Wilkins (1972) about language learning, "Without grammar, little can be conveyed; without vocabulary, nothing can be conveyed" (p. 111). The quote underlines the importance of vocabulary learning in order to achieve successful communication at any level. However, learning a word is complicated since it involves forms, meanings, and uses.

Nation (2001) proposed that in learning English vocabulary, nine aspects should be taken into consideration. Those nine aspects are spoken language, written language, word parts, form and meaning, concept and referents, associations, grammatical functions, collocations, and constraints on use. Among the aforementioned aspects, collocation is considered to be one of the major difficulties that foreign learners of English encounter (Nation, 2001). Lacking collocation precludes learners from expressing their ideas precisely and concisely, and as a result their language will sound "awkward" or "very intermediate" (Hill, 2000). Moreover, learners will probably encounter difficulties in receiving and producing language (Nesselhauf, 2005). In order to overcome such problems, experts in the field of collocation have recommended that collocations be given a higher priority in teaching in order to promote greater collocational awareness.

Collocation is defined by Firth as "the company words keep—their relationships with other words" (as cited in Hill, 2000, p. 48). It refers to a set or group of words that are naturally combined and closely related to each other such as the word "food" that collocates with "fast" as in fast food, not quick food (Nation, 2001; O'Dell & McCarthy, 2008). The term "collocation" is also used to refer to patterns of combinability of words such as V+N and Adj+N. These patterns of words are mentioned together (Hill, 2000).

Collocation plays a specially crucial role in English language learning and especially when English is taught as a foreign language (EFL). This is because the way words are combined in collocations is the basis of all language use. Collocation is also a key to language fluency since it enables learners to respond better in conversation for instance (Hill, 2000). In addition, collocation helps develop learners' English naturalness and confidence in using the language and enhances their use of their existing vocabulary (Hsu, 2010; Radhi, 2013). Moreover, Woolard (2000) emphasized this beneficial element of collocation by suggesting that "learning more vocabulary is not just learning new words, it is often learning familiar words in new combinations" (p. 31). In other words, learners have to be able to extend the connection of words they already know. For example, whilst understanding the meaning of the single word "situation," learning collocation will give them the ability to understand and use word combinations such as accept the situation, analyze the situation,

make the best of the situation, awkward situation, critical situation and desperate situation. Collocational knowledge gives further language skill benefits to learners since they will possess a variety of ready-made word chunks to understand or use when conversing in the language (Nesselhauf, 2005). Having such knowledge will provide opportunities for learners to be able to be the "owner" of an effective and fluent English language ability (Conzett, 2000; Hill, 2000; Hsu, 2010; Lewis, 2000; Nesselhauf, 2005; Singleton, 2000; Woolard, 2000).

Despite the significance and importance of collocation, collocation instruction in Thailand has traditionally been neglected or ignored completely. The most obvious reason for this neglect is its inherent complexity, due partly to the significant number of patterns and exceptions of English collocation which is instinctively mastered by native speakers. These patterns and exceptions can be extremely confusing to non-native teachers of English in Thailand.

Most of these teachers lack knowledge and therefore confidence and respond defensively about teaching and indeed using collocations themselves. In practice they avoid and pay little attention to teaching collocation. Instead, they teach their students what they are reasonably confident about —grammar to the detriment of everything else, especially listening and speaking. Thai teachers of English are notorious for focusing almost solely on teaching students to learn formal grammar in the vain hope of developing their English language skills. Only a small minority of teachers encourage their students to learn collocations other than the few seen in the school textbooks. The result is that the average student gains limited knowledge and constantly commits collocational errors if they do try to use them. In most cases, they have no knowledge of them.

Therefore, the solution is obvious and clear, but difficult to implement without improved commitment, knowledge and confidence by Thai teachers in using collocations. It is only by this means that students will develop greater usage and knowledge of collocations in the English language (Mongkolchai, 2008).

Although it is quite clear and generally accepted that the lack of collocational knowledge can affect the ability to use language (Hsu, 2007; Lewis, 2000), research studies on collocation in Thailand mostly rely on the investigation of collocational violations and attempt to give only a handful of plausible explanations to explain students' collocational errors. However, most teachers and researchers have still not yet employed collocation instructions to any great extent. Therefore, the aim of this research is to explore the significance of collocations towards language learning in EFL contexts, review trends of

research on collocation from both overseas and Thailand, and suggest effective methods and activities of teaching collocations on EFL classrooms.

What is Collocation?

Definitions of collocations have been given by several influential linguists. The term "collocation" came from the Latin root, collocare, meaning to set in order or to arrange (Kimmes 2004; Martynska, 2004). Woolard (2000) mentions that there are a large numbers of overlapping definitions of collocations, many of which focus on the "co-occurrence" of words. In general, collocation can be defined as a combination of two or more words that are used together in a language.

Hill (2000) cited Firth's definition of collocation as "the company words keep—their relationships with other words." To Hill, collocations refer to words that are combined in predictable ways such as get lost (to become lost or lose one's way), foot the bill (to pay the bill for everyone), and have lunch (to eat the second meal of the day). Thus, collocations are words that are predictably used together with their partners.

Likewise, Nation (2001) explains his definition of collocations that shares the focus with Firth's and Hill's definitions. Nation defines collocations as a group of words that frequently appear together with other words such as the verb 'take' which can be used with the nouns "a chance" and "medicine" as in take a chance (to risk something in order to achieve something else) and take medicine (to take a pill for health recovery).

In addition to Firth's, Hill's and Nation's definitions of collocations, Sinclair (1991) defines collocation as items that occur together or have stronger chances of being mentioned together. In other words, collocations naturally occur together with their partners in a predictable way. Referring to collocations, Sinclair gives some examples of collocations such as break rules (to offend rules), hold a funeral (to set the funeral), make an attempt (to try to achieve something), and have a try (to attempt to do something).

Benson (1985) indicates that collocation refers to a group of words occurring repeatedly and recurring in the language. He defines the study of collocation as "the study of key-words, pivotal words, leading words, by presenting them in the company they usually keep" (p.380). In other words, collocations are used in everyday language—groups of words that can be predictably, naturally used with their partners. Some examples are crucially important (extremely important) and completely destroy (to destroy something totally).

Other linguists have also defined collocations as chunks of words that can be predictably combined together. Singleton (2000) defines collocations as words that are put together in the language with a variety of their lexical partners. He gives some examples

such as nice body (the body that is well-built), nice manner (good manners), key hole (the hole in which we put the key), and paintbrush (a brush used for painting). To Singleton, collocations also include fixed expressions and compounds because of their lexical partnerships such as once in a blue moon (very seldom), the other side of the coin (a different and opposite viewpoint to a situation), to put two and two together (to reach a correct conclusion), and to throw in the towel (to surrender or give in).

Put simply, it can be concluded that collocations are sets or groups of words that are naturally used together. The chance of combinability of words and their lexical partnership can be predicted. Collocations are used in everyday language, including fixed expressions and compounds.

The Importance of Collocation in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) Classrooms

Collocations are important to EFL learners for several important reasons. Firstly, collocational knowledge has an effect on individuals' communicative competence (Hsu, 2010; Nesselhauf, 2005). In other words, such knowledge can sharpen communicative competence; that is, collocations help learners communicate precisely and concisely. For example, instead of using the longer sentence to express complicated ideas such as "This book is a new book which is very similar to the old one but improved and up-to-date," learners can replace their awkward and long sentence with a precise and concise one as "This book is a revised edition" (Lewis, 2000, p. 16). In this case learners who are familiar with the collocation "revised edition" will effectively communicate in a precise and concise way. In practice collocations make thinking and verbal expressions of that thinking easier, learners can avoid grammatical errors and lack of clarity from having to produce long sentences in trying to state the same meaning. It can be reasonably concluded that the more collocations they know, the more effective their communication will become.

Since knowledge of collocation is associated with language skills, knowing a variety of collocations can help learners become proficient in using English. Such knowledge can help learners improve both receptive skills (listening and reading) and productive skills (speaking and writing). Therefore, possessing a number of collocations will allow them not only to access to what they listen and read, but also to produce their language competently (Farrokh, 2012; Radhi, 2013).

Besides, collocations are the key to fluent English. According to Hill (2000), native speakers of English learn to use and are familiar with collocations at an early age, this is obviously not the case with respect to non-native learners. It is often collocational knowledge that distinguishes the difference between native and non-native users. Thus, non-

native English learners have a necessary task to learn collocations in order to obtain a truly competent English language ability. It is a requirement, not an option.

In addition, collocation knowledge helps learners improve the way they use their existing vocabulary. Boonyasaquan (2005) mentioned that learning an isolated word is not sufficient and is liable to cause communication problems. For example, EFL learners in general may know the word "depend," but are unable to use it correctly. They may use "depend to/in" instead of "depend on," the correct form. Similarly with the word "effect," learners do not know its lexical partners such as side effect, positive effect, long-term effect, have an effect, and the effect on (Lewis, 2000). Consequently, learners who are exposed to collocations are able to produce more varieties of correct English than those who are not.

Most importantly, in EFL countries, learners' first language (L1) and their target language (L2)—English— might be different in important respects, such as words and expressions (Fan, 2008; Nation, 2001). In other words, what learners know in their L1 is not always applicable in L2. If learners unconsciously transfer their L1 collocations to create the L2 counterparts, they are prone to committing negative transfer. This results in the production of a number of errors (Boonyasaquan, 2005). For example, the Thai expression "บนท้องฟ้า" is literally translated into "on the sky," which is unacceptable in English. Instead, "in the sky" should be used. This is a further important example of where collocation instruction in Thailand must be focused in order for students to avoid such common negative transfer and produce more competent English.

To conclude, all of the above reasons and examples surely demonstrate why the proper teaching of collocations is extremely important to efficient language learning and will engender the following benefits: a) shape communicative competence, b) improve language skills, c) foster language fluency and naturalness, d) improve knowledge of already known words, and e) help avoid negative transfer.

Research Studies Related to Collocation Instruction

Overseas research.

Many EFL countries have instigated research which has identified the benefits of collocation instruction to learners. Some of the research is briefly presented below.

Hsu (2007) investigated the correlation between lexical collocation and the online writing English majors and non-English majors in a Taiwanese college, using a web-based writing program. A significant correlation between knowledge of lexical collocations and online writing scores was found. Hsu concluded that collocational knowledge was an indicator for students' writing scores, and Taiwanese EFL students in both groups still had

insufficient collocational knowledge. He further suggested that collocational knowledge pedagogically benefit EFL students because such knowledge helps students write their English more effectively.

Hsu (2010) also investigated the effect of collocation on reading comprehension and vocabulary retention, using direct collocation instruction. Hsu found that lexical collocation instruction improved students' learning of vocabulary more than their reading comprehension and that collocations instructions promoted students' performance on vocabulary retention. Thus, collocation instruction could be beneficial to students. He suggested, however, that EFL teachers should consider using collocation-focused pre-activities before presenting reading passages to help students comprehend better.

Juknevičienė (2008) analyzed collocations in daily life with high-frequency verbs in two groups of learners: EFL Lithuanian and native learners. The high-frequency verbs used in this study included have, do, make, take, and give. The findings of the study showed that Lithuanian learners underused high-frequency verb collocations, showing that collocation instruction should be provided to improve students' use of the English language.

Abedi & Mobaraki (2014) examined the effectiveness of teaching grammatical collocations to Iranian undergraduate computer-engineering students to understand English for Specific Purpose (ESP) texts. The findings showed that grammatical collocation instruction had significant effect on understanding ESP texts. The collocational knowledge is, indeed, significant to students' English abilities.

Local research.

In spite of the significance of collocation, research on collocation instruction in Thailand has been strangely neglected. The vast majority of the related research has dealt with the investigation of collocational errors. Examples of research in Thailand are as follows.

Boonyasaquan (2005) and Suksearesup (2009) analyzed collocational violations in translation from Thai (L1) to English (L2) of undergraduate students. Their findings indicated that students' collocational violations resulted from negative transfer from L1 to L2 collocations, misinterpretation of L1 texts, translation strategies, literal translation, and ultimately the lack of collocational knowledge. Their studies also showed that only a few students used correct collocational patterns and most of them avoided using collocations. The researchers advised that collocation be taught to minimize Thai EFL learners' collocational errors and improve their English abilities.

Mongkolchai (2008) studied university students' ability in using English collocations. Her findings showed that Thai university students encountered collocational problems. Those problems came from unawareness of collocation, negative transfer from L1 to L2, limited knowledge of collocations, and improper strategies on vocabulary training. She recommended that collocations should be taught in the early stages because students at that stage were capable of remembering and internalizing them, and that teachers should employ collocations as a part of their teaching method and present collocations in contexts.

Lerdejdecha (2008) investigated the effect of teaching collocation to eighth graders in improving their writing skills. Her findings showed that participants improved their writing after collocation instruction. She concluded that collocation instruction should be used to improve students' writing ability.

All of the research studies suggest that research on collocation instruction in enhancing English abilities needs further detailed work, especially in Thailand.

Suggestions for Incorporating Collocations into Language Classrooms

Methods of collocation teaching.

It is well-recognized that collocational knowledge is one of the crucial factors in English proficiency (Hsu, 2010). In other words, possessing a large quantity of knowledge of collocation enables learners to become proficient in English since such knowledge differentiates between native speakers and non-native speakers or high-level proficient learners and low-level proficient learners (Conzett, 2000; Hill, 2000; Woolard, 2000). Using incorrect collocations not only affects the understanding of a message but also has the further negative effect of producing unnatural and awkward English. Thus detailed and informed collocation instruction should be promoted and exercised in order to significantly improve the opportunities for learners to reach a proficient level of English.

Several researchers have suggested a number of methods and activities for collocation instruction. They have identified three key elements for the teaching of collocation: a) the necessity of raising collocational awareness among teachers and learners, b) the importance in the selection of collocations to teach at all levels, and c) the systematic categorization of collocations for learners (Radhi, 2013). However, teachers especially must first be convinced of the benefits of collocation and then be given training and motivated to take up collocation learning with enthusiasm.

Effective methods of collocation instruction are briefly addressed below.

Keeping the chunk.

One golden rule in teaching collocations is to avoid breaking collocations into individual words. Lewis (2000) strongly recommended that the 'chunk' be kept whole. The reason for not breaking the chunk is that word chunks are important to acquisition (Hill, 2000). Breaking the chunk will not only adversely affect proper understanding, but also obstruct students' learning process.

Collecting and making them more precise.

Another way to teach collocation is to openly discuss the language students produce with the intention of making it more precise (Lewis, 2000). Teachers are required to discuss with their students their work and give them feedback for improvement. This is not something which many Thai teachers would not be comfortable with at present, because it would highlight their inadequacies in the English language. For example, one student might say or write, "I don't like to make an exam." Teacher's response should be, "You don't like to take an exam?" The student will eventually acquire the connection between "an exam" with "take." Doing so will encourage students to produce their language with precision and confidence.

Making students aware of collocation and teaching them.

A different strategy to help students reduce collocational errors is to make them aware of collocations and their benefits and to teach them individual collocations (Hill, 2000; Lewis, 2000). Many students are unable to use English well because they do not know what collocations are and how they can be used (Supanfai, 2009). Thus, teachers are responsible for helping them realize the concept of collocations and teaching them some individual collocations. Woolard (2000) and Juknevičienė (2008) suggested that collocations of the verbs do, make, take, and get should be taught to students at their early stage of learning. This can be done at the beginning of each class with a short lesson. (Farrokh, 2012).

Exploring collocations instead of explaining.

Instead of explaining how collocations are combined, teachers should focus on exploring more collocations to their students. Hill (2000) emphasized that exploring collocation is far helpful than any explanation. That is, teachers should teach their students to acquire some more possible combinations of words and their examples. The key to this is to help students familiarize with as many collocations as possible (Conzett, 2000).

Brainstorming.

Another key to collocational success is to have them learn by brainstorming. Teachers could do this by introducing a noun as a central idea (Lewis, 2000). Doing this, teachers will allow their students to retrieve what they have already learned and extend it to greater understanding. For example, when students are required to write an essay, teachers can guide them in essay preparation. The noun "school" can be given as a central idea to the students, and they might learn collocations of the given word such as drop out of school, leave school, go to school, public school, and so on. After such brainstorming, students will learn and be able to write the essay on the given topic more easily and effectively.

Practicing and recording collocations.

To help students achieve collocational success, teachers should consider having them practice and record collocations they have encountered. Woolard (2000) claimed that practice can make them competent to use correct collocations, and as a result students will be able to use them automatically. Teachers can have students store their collocations in notebooks by categorizing collocations according to grammatical patterns such as Adj+N and N+V; keywords such as do, make, take, and get; or topics such as holidays, work and travel (Hill, 2000; Lewis, 2000; Nation, 2001; Woolard, 2000).

Making use of collocation dictionaries.

Since collocation competence naturally and instinctively exists in native users of English, Thai EFL teachers are required to make use of dictionaries—English-English collocation dictionary (Farrokh, 2012; O'Dell & McCarthy, 2008; Woolard, 2000). These dictionaries will provide students with numerous examples of collocations, with specific examples in various contexts. Guidance and training from teachers in the use of such dictionaries are particularly important to students and strongly needed so as to help them attain collocational success.

Activities and Materials for Teaching Collocations.

Several researchers have proposed activities and materials suitable for teaching collocation (Duan & Qin, 2012; Fan, 2008; Farrokh, 2012; Hill, Lewis, & Lewis, 2000). Examples of them are briefly displayed below.

Collocation finding in the text.

A basic activity of collocation instruction should be to encourage students to find collocations in a text. Texts used for teaching could be a reading passage, a speech, or an advertisement. The reason why texts are essential to teaching collocation is that within a text,

the use of collocations are in context. Duan & Quin (2012) stated that context is essential for collocation learning. When students are trained to find collocations in texts, they will be able to more accurately use them.

Collocation exercises.

This activity for teaching collocation is by using pre planned design collocation exercises. The simplest exercises should be to ask students to fill in the gap, match collocations, select the odd, or find missing words (Witkowska-Stadnik, 2014). Teachers can begin with easy but confusing collocations such as "do" and "make." They can also make use of synonyms such as the adjectives "fast" and "quick" or the adverbs "very, highly, absolutely, truly, greatly, and deeply." Teachers can use the antonyms such as "strong tea" and "weak tea."

Teacher-made and media-assisted materials.

Several researchers have proposed that a teacher-made supplementary material used with normal activities such as in-class reading passages can be beneficial to students' collocation learning. This activity will allow students to be aware of collocations in reading and absorb collocations in passages. Besides, media can also be used to promote students' language skills (Tunnites, 2009). Examples of media include nursery rhymes, songs and lyrics, movies, comics, advertisements on the Internet, or even quotes from famous people.

Conclusion

Collocations play a pivotal role in the English language learning because collocational knowledge is associated with precise and concise ideas. Possessing such knowledge cannot only sharpen communicative competence, but also improve learners' English language abilities—both productive and receptive skills. The knowledge of collocation will also provide language fluency and help strengthen the way learners use their existing English vocabulary. Last but not least, collocational knowledge can prevent errors resulting from negative transfer. A number of researchers, particularly in some of the countries where English is taught as a foreign language, recently have devoted to the study of the effectiveness of collocation instruction. However, research on collocation instruction in Thailand has not been the focus. Effective methods to incorporate collocation instruction in language classrooms can vary from keeping the chunk of words and teaching them to selecting proper activities and materials for language learners.

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Low-High Order Cognitive Questions in the Book Series Titled, "Projects: Play & Learn" for Elementary School Levels 2 and 5

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Abstract

Questioning in the classroom is claimed to be one of the strategies that promotes low-high order cognitive thinking skills. In this study, the researchers adopt Anderson and Krathwol's Taxonomy (2001) to determine whether the book series titled "Projects: Play & Learn" for Elementary School Levels 2 and 5 promote low-high order cognitive thinking skills. The results revealed that Book 2 mostly contained low level cognitive questions (74%), while high level cognitive questions accounted for only 21%. Book 5 had a total of 74.68% low level cognitive questions, while 24.68% were found to be high level cognitive questions. Both books were found to run contradictory to what would be expected, as there are more low level cognitive questions than high level cognitive questions.

Keywords: low-high cognitive thinking skills, elementary school level

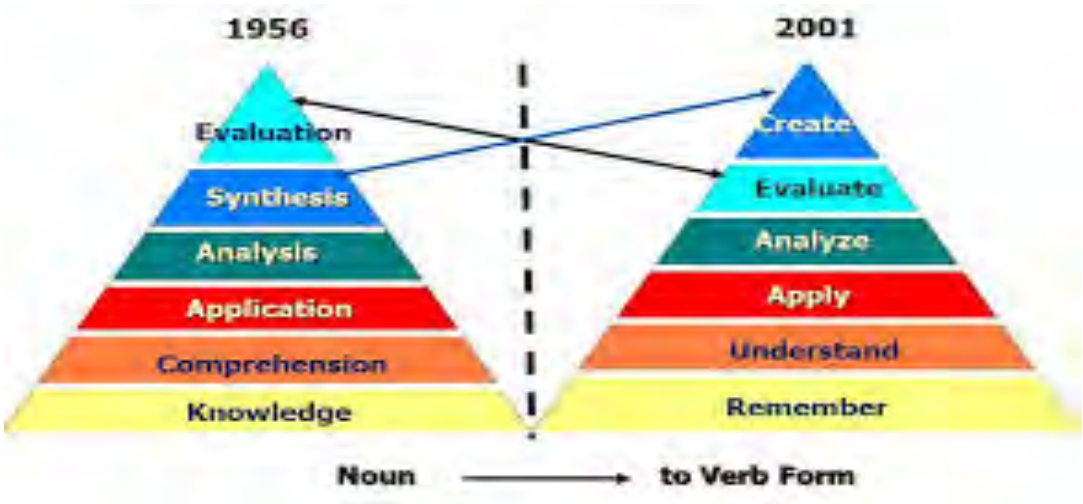
Thai education is often claimed to have problems in promoting students' analytical thinking skills. This raises the issues of what is going wrong in the Thai education system and the cause: the teacher, teaching-learning strategies, teaching methodologies, school policies, or even the country's policy on education. If we carefully look at the Basic Education Core Curriculum B.E. 2551 (A.D. 2008), it reveals that thinking skills are a core aspect which our national curriculum emphasizes on in order to train its citizens to be able to think critically and analytically. Questioning in the classroom has become a key factor that can actually help foster and promote students' thinking ability. Questioning is one of the teaching and learning strategies that teachers can implement in the class if they are aware of which types of questions can lead students to think. Piyarat Kantap (2545) states that English language teaching methods in Thailand tend to focus on the input of content in class more than stimulating thinking. Tissana Kaemmanee (2540) who is a Thai renowned educator, argues that Thai students are unable to think critically because in Thailand, English instructors only teach using lecture-based techniques and put more emphasis on the explanation of new words without contexts and spend most of the class time on grammatical structures. Also, memorization still plays a big part in teaching and learning languages. Teachers do not give explanations when it comes to English classes which does not cultivate high level thinking. As a result, it is not surprising that a compulsory part of the English teaching curriculum in Thailand has no success in promoting critical and creative thinking (Bureau of Educational Testing, 2552). One way to help solve this problem is textbooks. Textbooks can be a great lifesaver when they contain proper activities, questions, and instructions which help support teachers in developing students to reflect more on their thoughts (Tissana Kaemmane, 2540, 2555). For these reasons, the researchers were motivated to conduct the following research study with the hope that the results will have an impact on Thai education. We selected the Book Series Titled "Projects: Play & Learn" for Elementary School Level 2 and 5 designed by the Ministry of education. The Taxonomy of Anderson and Krathwohl (2001) was adopted to analyze whether these book series contain low-high order cognitive questions. After that, we distributed a survey to all teachers in Thailand who had hands-on experience using the book series. Our survey focuses on not only teachers' perception of low-high order cognitive questions and whether or not they are aware of them but also if they actually utilize and foster high order intellectual capacities of students in their classrooms.

Literature Review

In the program specifications, The Basic Education Core Curriculum B.E. 2551 makes explicit the intended outcomes that students in level 2 must achieve in their low-high order thinking skills such as grouping skills, gathering all information to use, categorizing skills and comparing skills. Students at level 5, on the other hand, must demonstrate high order thinking skills such as linking skills, questioning skills, summarizing skills, exploring information skills, reasoning skills, acquiring meaning skills and referencing skills. All teachers must ensure that these expected learning outcome are achieved and demonstrated. Bloom was the first one who devised a cognitive taxonomy of thinking (1956). He classified the cognitive domain into 6 levels. The following represents the characteristics of quality learning which are 1) Knowledge 2) Understanding 3) Apply 4) Analyze 5) Synthesize and 6) Evaluate.

Later, Anderson and Krathwohl (2001) Bloom's protégés revised Bloom's Taxanomy by switching the order from the ability to synthesize known as level 5 in Bloom's taxonomy to the ability to create. Wilson (2006) also explains that the ability to synthesize is an integral part of the ability to create, shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Bloom's Revised Taxonomy



Source : Wilson, L.O. (2006)

To Bloom's Taxonomy ı classroom ci Anderson & Krathwohl's tely put the idea into action verbs that can behaviorally measured as shown in Table 1

Table: 1 Alul (2000)'s Verbs Determining Each Level of Thinking Skills

Knowledge	Comprehension	Application	Analysis	Synthesis	Evaluation
Cite	Add	Acquire	Analyze	Abstract	Appraise
Count	Approximate	Adapt	Audit	Animate	Assess
Define	Associate	Allocate	Blueprint	Arrange	Choose
Describe	Change	Alphabetize	Breakdown	Assemble	Conclude
Distinguish	Characterize	Apply	Categorize	Budget	Consider
Enumerate	Clarify	Ascertain	Characterized	Categorize	Counsel
Identify	Comment	Assign	Confirm	Code	Criticize
Index	Convert	Attain	Correlate	Combine	Critique
Indicate	Defend	Avoid	Debate	Compile	Defend
Inquire	Describe	Backup	Deduce	Compose	Evaluate
Label	Detail	Calculate	Describe	Conduct	Grade
List	Discuss	Capture	Detect	Cope	Hire
Match	Distinguish	Change	Diagnose	Correspond	Judge
Meet	Elaborate	Choose	Diagram	Create	Justify
Memorize	Example	Complete	Discriminate	Cultivate	Measure
Name	Express	Construct	Dissect	Design	Predict
Outline	Extend	Customize	Distinguish	Develop	prescribe
Point	Extrapolate	Derive	Document	Devise	Rank
Quote	Factor	Diminish	Ensure	Dictate	Rate
Read	Give examples	Discover	Experiment	Enhance	Recommend
Recall	Infer	Employ	Explore	Facilitate	Release
Recite	Interact	Exercise	Figure out	Format	Revise
Recognize	Interpolate	Explore	File	Formulate	Score
Record	Locate	Figure	Group	Generate	Select
Relate	Observe	Graph	Identify	Handle	Summarize
Repeat	Paraphrase	Handle	Infer	Hypothesize	Support
Reproduce	Report	Interconvert	Inspect	Import	Validate
Review	Restate	Manipulate	interrupt	Improve	Value
Select	Review	Modify	Inventory	Incorporate	Verify
State	Subtract	Operate	Lay out	Integrate	weigh

Knowledge	Comprehension	Application	Analysis	Synthesis	Evaluation
Study	Tell	Personalize	Manage	Interface	
Trace	Translate	Plot	Maximize	Invent	
	Visualize	Practice	Minimize	Join	
		Price	Optimize	Lecture	
		Process	Order	Model	
		Project	Outline	Modify	
		Protect	Point out	Outline	
		Provide	Prioritize	Plan	
		Sequence	Proofread	Program	
		Show	Put into lists	Rearrange	
		Simulate	Query	Refer	
		Sketch	Question	Recognize	
		Solve	Select	Revise	
		Subscribe	Separate	Rewrite	
		Transcribe	Size up	Solve	
		Transfer	Subdivide	Specify	
		Utilize	Train		

The researchers follow Alul (2000) in analyzing the Book Series Title "Projects: Play & Learn" for Elementary School Levels 2 and 5, to see whether their questions incorporated these low-high order thinking skills because they have a profound effect on fostering students' thinking skills. In table 2, you will see that there are some verbs which occur twice in two different levels. This must be taken into account when we analyze the book.

Table 2: The Characteristic of Principle Word to Connect with Questioning Catetory (Word in Different Level)

Knowledge	Comprehension	Application	Analysis	Synthesis	Evaluation
Describe	Compare	Classify	Classify	Explain	Compare
Distinguish	Compute	Compute	Compare	Generalize	Contrast
Identify	Contrast	Demonstrate	Contrast	Organize	Determine
Relate	Demonstrate	Determine	Differentiate	Prepare	Estimate
Review	Describe	Examine	Examine	Reconstruct	Explain
Tabulate	Differentiate	Generalize	Explain	Relate	Interpret
Write	Distinguish	Illustrate	Identify	Summarize	Test
Draw	Estimate	Investigate	Illustrate	Write	Use
	Explain	Organize	Infer	Produce	
	Generalize	Prepare	Investigate		
	Illustrate	Reconstruct	Relate		
	Infer	Relate	Summarize		
	Interpret	Tabulate	Test		
	Review	Use	Transform		
	Summarize	Draw			
	Transform	Produce			

IUPI Center for Teaching and Learning. (2002) has further provided questions according to Anderson and Krathwohl (2001). The example of his instructions and questions are shown below.

1. Remember (Knowledge)
   Verbs for Objectives: choose, describe, define, identify, label, list, locate, match
   Model Questions: Who? Where? Which one? What? How? How much?
   Instructional Strategies: Memorizing, Highlighting,
2. Understand (Comprehension)
   Verbs for Objectives: classify, defend, demonstrate, explain, match, select, show
   Model Questions: Give an example, what are they saying? Show in a table
   Instructional Strategies: Summarize, paraphrase, key example
3. Apply (Application)

Verbs for Objectives: apply, choose, judge, prepare, produce, show, use, explain

Model Questions: Choose the best statements that apply. Tell what would happen

Instructional Strategies: Modeling, a routine practice, simulations

4. Analyze (Analysis)

Verbs for Objectives: analyze, categorize, compare, infer, point out, survey

Model Questions: what is the function of, what assumptions, what conclusion

Instructional Strategies: Model of thinking, Challenging assumptions, debates

5. Evaluate (Evaluation)

Verbs for Objectives: Appraise, judge, criticize, defend, compare

Model Questions: which is more important, Find the errors

Instructional Strategies: Decision-making situation, debates

6. Create (Synthesis)

Verbs for Objectives: combine, compose, create, design, formulate, make

Model Questions: How would you test? Solve the following. State a rule

Instructional Strategies: Modeling, Challenging assumptions, Design

Method

Research design.

The design of this research was content analysis and used the students' Books Series Titled "Projects: Play & Learn" for Elementary School Levels 2 and 5 to analyze the data.

The instruments used in research and data analysis.

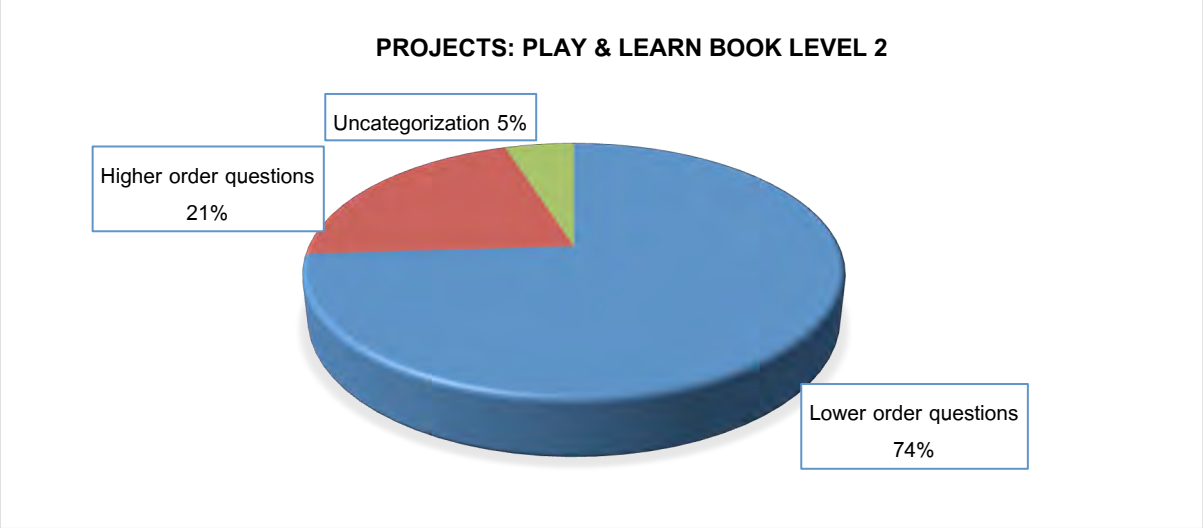
Assuming the Cognitive Taxonomy of Anderson and Krathwohl (2001), we used the the action verbs and questions designed by Alul (2000) in analyzing all the questions which appeared in the students' Books Series Titled "Projects: Play & Learn" for Elementary School Levels 2 and 5. Then we categorized all the questions into low-high order cognitive thinking skills. We encountered some problems in analyzing the data. Here are examples of how we analyzed the data. When the textbook used the instruction verb, "Write other groups' survey totals", Alul (2000) put the action verb "write" into 2 categories, which are knowledge and synthesis. Knowledge is classified as low order thinking skill while, synthesis is a high order thinking skill. This raises the questions of whether and how we should classify this instruction verb. What we did was look at occurrence of the verb in the context and found that "write" here does not promote any creative thinking skills in students, thus it was counted as low order.

Likewise, with “Use sticker in your activity book”, Alul (2000) classified “use” into 2 categories, application as a low order thinking skill and evaluation as a high order thinking skill. “Use” here can be considered a low order thinking skill because students are simply being asked to apply a sticker to a page. After, we calculated the percentage and compared how many low and high order thinking verbs were found in the textbooks. Finally, we distributed a survey to all teachers who use these textbooks in their classrooms. In the survey, we asked whether the teachers were aware of questions. For instance, building on the concepts of low-high order cognitive questions, the survey includes the following questions: 1) I think wh-questions beginning with "who", "when", and "where" enable students to stimulate their thinking skills. 2) I often use the instructions like "compare, design, write” to my students when assigning tasks. We further asked whether teachers spend time using those questions in their classrooms, particularly the high order thinking skills.

Results and Discussion

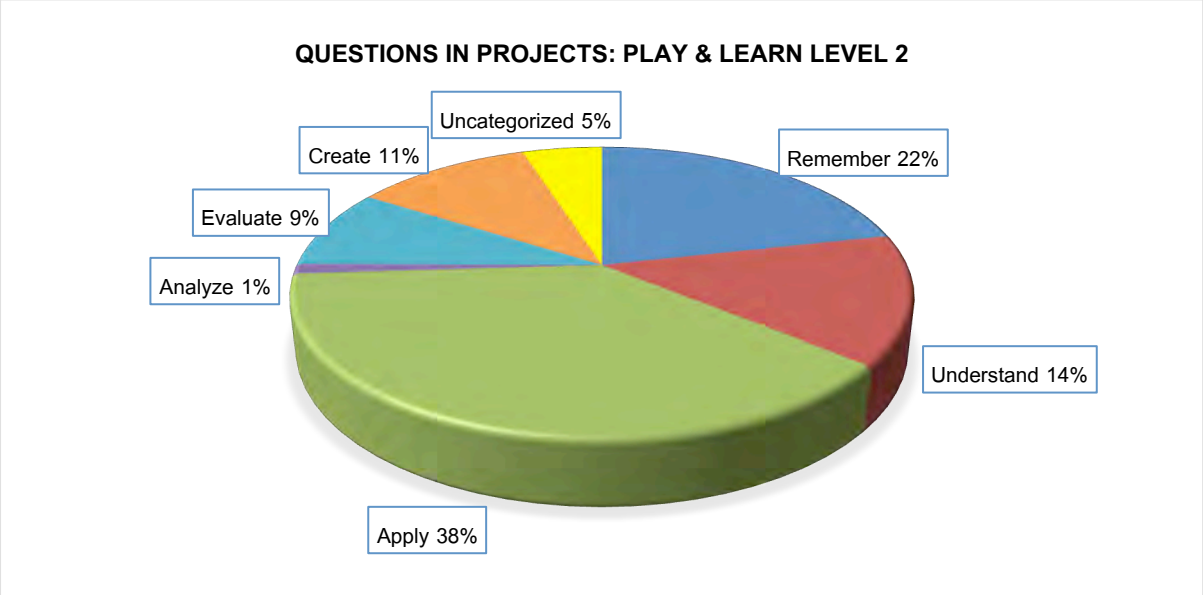
The finding of the analysis of the low and high cognitive questions in the book series titled “Projects: Play & Learn” for Elementary School Levels 2 and 5 are as follows:

Figure 2: The overall of Cognitive Questions in the Book Series Titled “Projects: Play & Learn” for Elementary School Levels 2



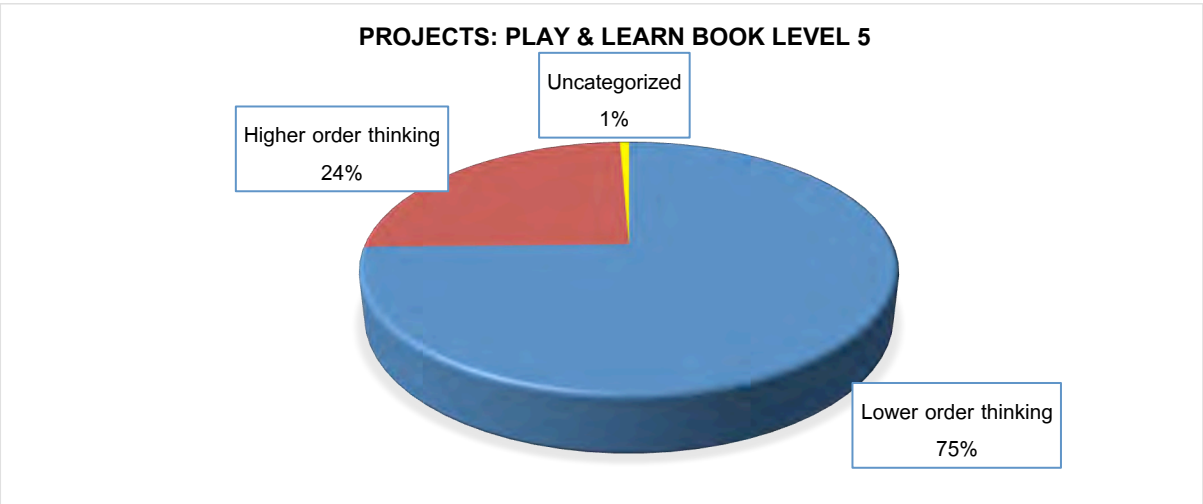
The above table reveals that the Book Series Titled “Projects: Play & Learn” for Elementary School Levels 2 contained 181 questions, 74% of which are at a low-order cognitive thinking skills, and only 21% were found to be high-order cognitive thinking skills. Five percent was uncategorized.

Figure 3: Table Indicates the Level of Cognitive Questions in the Book Series Titled "Projects: Play & learn" for Elementary School level 2



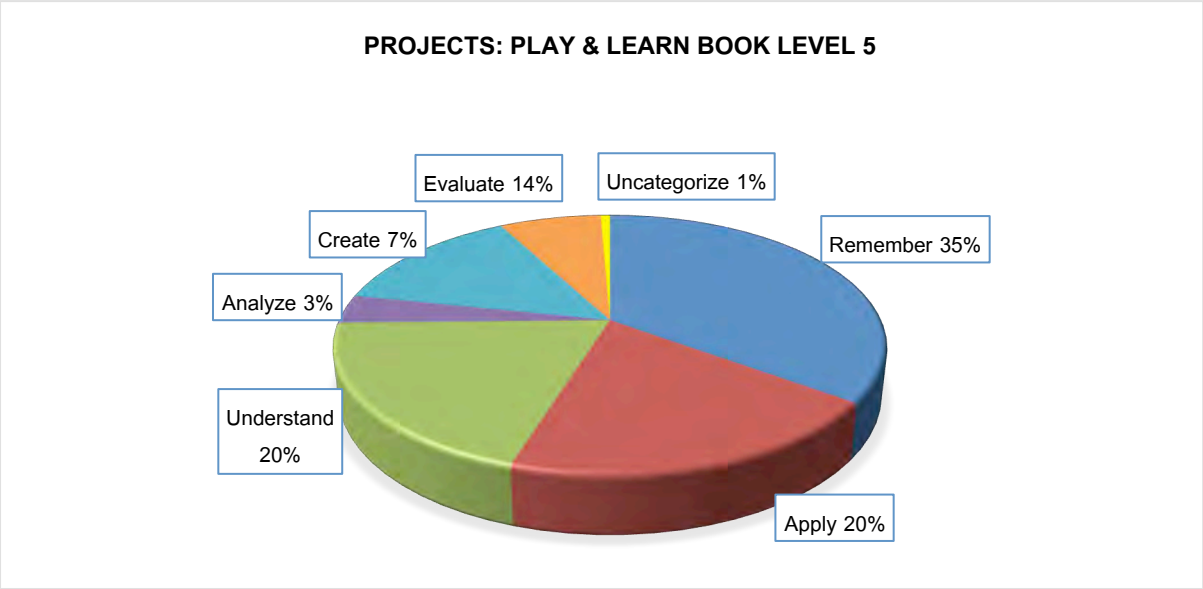
The above table shows that out of 181 questions, 22% tested students' memory, while 14% questioned students' comprehension, 38% asked students to apply what they have learned, and only 1% asked students to display analytical thinking skills. Additionally, 9% asked students to evaluate as part of an activity, while 11% demanded students to be creative. Five percent was labeled as uncategorized.

Figure 4: Table Indicates the Number of Low and High Order Cognitive Questions in the Book Series Titled "Projects: Play &learn" for Elementary School level 5



The above table reveals that out of 308 questions, 74.68% is at a low-order cognitive thinking skills. Only 24.68% of the questions were high-order cognitive thinking skills, and 0.64% is uncategorized.

Figure 5: Table Indicates the Level of Cognitive Questions in the Book Series Titled "Projects: Play & learn" for Elementary School level 5



The above table shows that out of 308 questions, 35%, tested students' memory, 20% questioned students' comprehension, 20% asked students to apply what they have learned, and only 3% asked students to display analytical thinking skills. Additionally, 14% asked students to evaluate as part of an activity, while 7% demanded students to be creative. One percent was uncategorized.

Conclusion and Further Study

The study found that the Book Series Titled "Projects: Play & Learn" for Elementary School Levels 2 contained low-order cognitive questions with a total of 74%, while 21% were found to be high-order cognitive questions, 5% were classified as uncategorized. Among 181 questions, 22% tested students' memory, 14% questioned students' comprehension, 38% asked students to apply what they have learned, and only 1% asked students to display analytical thinking skills. Additionally, 9% asked students to evaluate as part of an activity, while 11% demanded students to be creative, and Five percent was labeled as uncategorized. Book level 5 used a total of 74.68% low order cognitive thinking questions, while 24.68% were high order cognitive thinking questions and 0.64% were uncategorized. Out of 308 questions, 35% were memory-oriented, 20% were comprehension

based, 20% were application based, and 3% were analytical-based. Moreover, 14% asked students to evaluate as part of an activity, while 7% demanded students to be creative, and 1% were uncategorized.

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