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Thai L1 Use by Thai Teachers in Upper Secondary EFL Classrooms

การใช้ภาษาไทยโดยครูไทยในชั้นเรียนภาษาอังกฤษเป็นภาษาต่างประเทศระดับมัธยมปลาย

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Abstract

This study aimed 1) to study the purposes, quantity, and frequency of Thai L1 use by Thai EFL teachers in the EFL classroom, and 2) to compare the purposes, quantity, and frequency of Thai L1 use by Thai EFL teachers in EFL classrooms of the three programs. The population consisted of all the 81 English teachers and 7,731 students from seven extra-large government secondary schools under The Secondary Educational Service Area Office 16, covering Satun and Songkla Provinces. Subjects comprised 68 Thai teachers teaching English to upper secondary students, and 364 students studying in Science-Math, English-Math, and English-Chinese Programs. The Krejcie and Morgan sampling technique, and the quota sampling technique were employed to specify the number of students' participants from each school. A questionnaire and semi-structured interview were employed in data collection. It was found that the teachers (95.51%) used Thai language in EFL classrooms at the *frequent* level ($\bar{X}$= 3.51, S.D. = 0.63). The first three purposes found to be used most frequently were: explaining English grammar ($\bar{X}$=4.03, S.D. = 0.87), lessening anxiety ($\bar{X}$=3.62, S.D. = 0.79), providing schematic knowledge ($\bar{X}$=3.62, S.D. = 0.65), respectively. It was also found that the amount of Thai L1 used with students of the three programs was significantly different ($F=12.74$, $p<0.01$).

Keywords: First language (L1), Thai language use, Thai EFL teachers, EFL classrooms

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บทคัดย่อ

การวิจัยครั้งนี้มีวัตถุประสงค์ 1) เพื่อศึกษาจุดประสงค์ ปริมาณ และความถี่ของการใช้ภาษาไทยโดยครูไทยในชั้นเรียนภาษาอังกฤษเป็นภาษาต่างประเทศ และ 2) เพื่อเปรียบเทียบจุดประสงค์ ปริมาณ และความถี่ของการใช้ภาษาไทยโดยครูไทยในชั้นเรียนภาษาอังกฤษเป็นภาษาต่างประเทศกับนักเรียน 3 แผนการเรียน ประชากรประกอบด้วยครูสอนภาษาอังกฤษทั้งหมด 81 คนและนักเรียนทั้งหมด 7,731 คน จากโรงเรียนมัธยมของรัฐขนาดใหญ่พิเศษ จำนวน 7 โรงเรียน สังกัดสำนักงานเขตพื้นที่การศึกษามัธยมศึกษาเขต16 ซึ่งครอบคลุมจังหวัดสตูลและสงขลา กลุ่มตัวอย่างประกอบด้วยครูไทยที่สอนภาษาอังกฤษในระดับมัธยมปลาย จำนวน 68 คน และนักเรียนจำนวน 364 คนที่ศึกษาแผนการเรียนวิทย์-คณิต อังกฤษ-คณิต และอังกฤษ-จีน ใช้เทคนิคของตารางเคร์ซี่และมอร์แกนและการสุ่มตัวอย่างแบบโควตากำหนดสัดส่วนกลุ่มตัวอย่างนักเรียนจากแต่ละโรงเรียน ใช้แบบสอบถามและการสัมภาษณ์แบบกึ่งโครงสร้างในการเก็บข้อมูล ผลการวิจัยพบว่า ครู (ร้อยละ 95.51) มีปริมาณการใช้ภาษาไทยในชั้นเรียนภาษาอังกฤษอยู่ในระดับ*บ่อย* ($\bar{X}$= 3.51, S.D. = 0.63) จุดประสงค์ที่ใช้ภาษาไทยบ่อยที่สุดสามลำดับแรกคือ เพื่ออธิบายไวยากรณ์ภาษาอังกฤษ ($\bar{X}$= 4.03, S.D. = 0.87), เพื่อลดความวิตกกังวล ($\bar{X}$=3.62, S.D. = 0.79) และเพื่อเชื่อมโยงความรู้ ($\bar{X}$=3.62, S.D. = 0.65) ตามลำดับ นอกจากนี้พบว่ามีปริมาณการใช้ภาษาไทยกับนักเรียน3แผนการเรียนแตกต่างอย่างมีนัยสำคัญทางสถิติ (F=12.74, p<0.01)

คำสำคัญ: ภาษาที่หนึ่ง การใช้ภาษาไทย ครูไทยที่สอนภาษาอังกฤษ ชั้นเรียนภาษาอังกฤษเป็นภาษาต่างประเทศ

Introduction

For decades, approaches in teaching English have been developed for English as a second language (ESL) or for the English as a foreign language (EFL) classroom. A monolingual approach is an initial approach that incites learners to use English as the sole medium for communication. A principle of the approach derives from the notion of first language acquisition in children whose native language is acquired from experiences and situations surrounding them. To learn a second language more effectively, teachers hence should create monolingual learning settings which provide experiences of the target language as much as possible (Krashen, 1982). Using only English to communicate in classrooms for every purpose can meet learners' needs of communication (Littlewood, 1981, as cited in Cook, 2001). According to Krashen (1985), who introduced five hypotheses of second language acquisition and supporting monolingual approaches, the comprehensible input from foreigner talk, teacher talk and interlanguage talk was a key factor of success in learning the target language. Consequently, avoiding the native language of learners and providing native teachers of the target language in the classroom can establish the highest quality of language learning (Phillipson, 1992). The reason for prohibiting the mother language in the classroom (Odlin,

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1989) was its interference, which adversely affected second language learning, for example, L1 negative transfer.

In contrast to the first approach, a bilingual approach allows learners and teachers to use the mother language and target language as resources in the classroom. Linguists agree that the mother language is inevitably involved in second language or foreign language learning in various aspects, for example, psychology, behaviorism and sociology (Atkinson, 1987; Cook, 2001; Macaro, 2001). According to Bialystok (1990, as cited in Purinthrapibal, 2010) learning a foreign language using one's native language refers to adapting linguistic elements of the native language, of which learners have mastery, to the second language learning process. Some researchers (Cook, 2001; Macaro, 2001; Turnbull, 2001) have indicated that using the mother language as a medium in second language classrooms can promote learning and facilitate classroom management. In addition, according to Cook (2001), the use of L1 teachers gives them advantages to interact with students and to manage classrooms. For students, the use of L1 plays a role as a scaffolding strategy from their native language to the second language.

Thus, studies have been made on the use of L1 in ESL and EFL classrooms and on its amount, frequency, purposes and attitudes. Duff & Polio (1990), investigating L1 (English) use in French language classrooms by university lecturers in California, found that the amount of L1 use was in a wide range of up to 90%. Likewise, De La Campa & Nassaji (2009) conducted a comparison on frequency and intention of L1 use in the ESL classroom between a twenty-year-experienced teacher and a two-semester-experienced teacher in a German university. The study employed tape recording method in listening and speaking classes, and semi-structured interviews. They found a high frequency of German use by both teachers. However, the less experienced teacher used L1 (13.2%) more often than the other one (9.3%). They also reported five purposes for which L1 was frequently used, namely translation (32.2%), giving instructions (12.7%), giving opinions (11.8%), code switching (9.9%), and for general announcements (7.2%). The purposes for using L1 depended on factors such as attitudes, characteristics of learners or English subjects. Teachers mainly used L1 for teaching purposes. Kieu (2010) studied the attitudes of university teachers in Ho Chi Minh, Vietnam, using questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. The findings indicated that most of the teachers suggested that the use of L1 should be adapted to specific contexts, such as, using L1 to explain grammar points for students in elementary school, and to clarify a subject matter that was primarily given in English for students in secondary school.

In Thailand, there have been studies on L1 use in the EFL classroom. In 2001, Vanichakorn examined Thai L1 use in an EFL classroom for undergraduate engineering students of King Mongkut's University of Technology, Thonburi, Bangkok. It was found that students' abilities and attitudes significantly affected their learning of English. It was also found in the study that the use of the teachers' use of native language was helpful to the students when they encountered difficult learning units or subject matters irrelevant to their background knowledge or interest. Moreover, Thongwichit (2013) studied the students' perceptions towards L1 use and purpose of L1 use in the EFL classroom. The participants were 323 university students from different fields at a government university in Southern Thailand. The questionnaires correlated with semi-structured interviews, and the observations were employed as an instrument. It was found that the students revealed positive attitudes towards L1 use in the EFL classroom. They perceived Thai L1 as a facilitating tool: for translation, giving instructions, giving word meanings and checking comprehension. However, students realized the limitations of the English language input they were given, so the findings suggested that teachers had to appraise the appropriateness of native language use in terms of frequency.

The two studies were conducted at university level. In other words, there was a lack of research focusing on L1 use by teachers and upper secondary students in the EFL classroom in the Thai context. According to the EF English Proficiency Index[1], Thai learners' proficiency in 2014 was in the forty-eighth position in the English proficiency of learners out of over 60 countries ranked. This was unexpected, because the students had received English instruction for 12 years, from elementary to secondary levels. Most importantly, upper secondary students needed to get ready for entrance examinations to university. As teachers played various roles in the classroom, particularly in disseminating knowledge and providing language skills, creating more intimate learning activities and settings, they took full responsibility to enhance learners' positive attitudes and promote learners' communication skills in various situations. To this end, researchers should realize their roles in English classroom management, especially when it comes to the issue of native language use. The present study, therefore, aimed to investigate the use of Thai L1 in the EFL classroom, focusing on the purposes, amount, and frequency of L1 use. It also aimed to investigate the use of L1 in classrooms of the three different programs. The study is expected to provide pedagogical

[1] The EF English Proficiency Index (EF EPI) is a report which attempts to rank countries by the average level of English skills amongst adults.

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scenarios for teachers to improve language teaching management that will be most beneficial for learners.

Objectives: The present study aimed to

1. study the purposes, quantity, and frequency of Thai L1 use by Thai EFL teachers in the EFL classroom.

2. compare the purposes, quantity, and frequency of Thai L1 use by Thai EFL teachers in EFL classrooms of three programs.

Delimitations

Population

This present study was involved with teachers and students ofextra-large government secondary schools under The Secondary Educational Service Area Office 16, covering Satun and Songkla provinces. However, no extra-large school was found in Satun province. That is, seven target schools were all located in Songkla province, namely Mahavajiravudh Changwatsongkhla School, Woranari Chaloem Songkla School, Navamindarajudis Taksin School,Hatyaiwittayalai School 1 and 2, Hatyaiwittayalaisomboonkulkanya School, and Hatyairaprachasun School. The teacher population consisted of 81 Thai native speakers teaching EFL to upper secondary students, and the student population consisted of 7,731 students from Science-Math, English-Math, and Chinese-English programs at the seven schools stated above

Participants

Participants comprised teachers and students. The teacher participants consisted of all the 81 Thai English teachers teaching in the seven extra-large schools stated above. However, 68 out of 81 (5 male and 63 females) responded the questionnaires. Most of them had 26-30 years EFL teaching experience. 57 teachers (84%) were bachelor degree holders and the rest had a master's degree in English language-related fields. Nonetheless, they had limited opportunity to use English outside the classroom or abroad, and only nine teachers had taken TOEFL and TOEIC tests.

Regarding student participants, the 364 students (74 males and 290 females) were selected from the population of 7,731 students using the Krejcie & Morgan sampling technique. Then, because the number of students in the seven schools varied, the quota sampling technique was employed to specify the number of students participants from each

school, leading to unequal numbers of student participants from each school (totaling 364), as shown in table 1.

Table 1: Participants of the study (364 students)

Name of school	Teacher		Student	
	Population	Sample size	Population	Sample size
1. Mahavajiravudh Changwatsongkhla School	15	15	1187	56
2. Woranari Chaloem Songkla School	16	15	1142	54
3. Navamindarajudis Taksin School	10	7	805	38
4. Hatyaiwittayalai School 1	20	12	1462	69
5. Hatyaiwittayalai School 2	5	5	942	44
6. Hatyaiwittayalaisomboonkulkanya School	9	8	1178	55
7. Hatyairaprachasun School	6	6	1015	48
รวม	**81**	**68**	**7731**	**364**

They were studying in 3 programs: Science-Math, English-Math, and Chinese-English. The students spoke Thai as the native language and attended English classes for about 3-5 periods a week. Their average grade point in English subjects was B or 3, interpreted as 'good' in the school record.

Scope

The present study embraced only the purposes, amount, and frequency of Thai language use by Thai EFL teachers in the English classroom, including a comparison of L1 use in the EFL classroom of the three different learning programs, Science-Math, English-Math, and English-Chinese in one area of a province in Thailand.

Duration

Data collection - through questionnaires and semi-structured interviews, was carried out in the first semester of 2014, starting from August 1 up to September 30.

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Research Methodology

The present study aimed to examine the Thai language use of Thai EFL Teachers in the EFL classroom.

Method

A mixed research design quantitative research by collecting data from the questionnaire, and qualitative research by conducting semi-structured interviews was employed in the data collection analysis.

Research Instrument

Two types of instrument were used in the data collection: questionnaire and semi-structured interviews

1. *Questionnaire:* Two questionnaires using the five-point Likert scale were employed to collect data.

The first questionnaires, aimed to investigate the teachers' use of Thai language in the EFL classrooms, consisted of four sections. The first section included ten questions asking about the participants' general information. The second comprised 15 questions concerning purposes and frequency of Thai language use of Thai EFL teachers in the EFL classroom (5 = always, 1= never use). The third contained 15 items asking the participants' attitudes towards Thai language use by Thai EFL teachers in the EFL classroom (5= strongly agree, 1=strongly disagree). The last contained three questions asking for comments and recommendations concerning Thai language use in the EFL classroom.

The second questionnaire is particularly aimed at investigating the students' perceptions towards the Thai language used by their teachers. In the questionnaire, all question items were similar to those in the teachers' questionnaires. However, each question was rephrased, but remains the same meaning. Both questionnaires were adapted from Alshammari (2011) and Levine (2003) and were piloted for reliability using Cronbach's alpha coefficient, the results of which were 0.75 and 0.94 for teachers and students, respectively.

2. *Interview*

Semi-structured interviews were carried out to elicit the informants' general information, attitudes, and suggestions or comments on Thai language use by Thai teachers in the classroom. The interview framework was adapted from Duff & Polio's study, *How Much Foreign Language Is There in the Foreign Language Classroom?* (1990). The teacher informants were asked ten questions and the student informants were asked seven questions.

Data Collection

1. *Questionnaire Distribution*

A total of 445 copies of the questionnaire were distributed: 81 to teachers and 364 to students. Those 81 copies, used to elicit teachers' response, were mailed to their schools. However, only 68 copies (83.95%) were returned. The student copies were distributed in the English classroom; students were requested to answer the questionnaires within the selected class time. All students participants returned the questionnaires; i.e. 364 copies.

2. *The Interview*

Fourty-four participants consisting of 14 teachers (one male and 13 females) and 30 students (11 males and 19 females). The 14 teachers were from seven schools – two teachers from each. Regarding the 30 students volunteered to participate in the interviews. They were selected from one school, ten from each study program. Each interview took about 30 minutes. Note taking and tape recording were conducted during the interviews.

Data Analysis

A series of statistical tests were performed to analyze the quantitative data and to determine frequency, percentage, mean, and SD. A T-test and one-way ANOVA were also performed. The criteria used to identify frequency of Thai language use in English classroom were as follows: 5.0 – 4.51 for "always use"; 4.50-3.51 for "often use"; 3.50-2.51 for "sometimes use"; 2.50 -1.51 for "seldom use" and 1.50 – 1.00 for "never use" (Best, 1997).

Regarding qualitative data, the tape-recorded interviews were transcribed, categorized, analyzed, and summarized in description.

Findings

This section reports finding on the teachers' intentions of using Thai L1 in the EFL classroom, categorized into 7 functions: explaining English grammar, lessening anxiety, providing schematic knowledge, giving instructions, translating, giving feedback, and checking comprehension.

1. Purposes, Amount, and Frequency of Thai L1 use by Thai EFL teachers in the EFL classroom

Table 2 displays the amount and frequency of native language use by Thai EFL teachers in the EFL classroom in seven different purposes. It was found that the overall use of L1 in the EFL classrooms was "*often use*" ($\bar{x}$ = 3.51, S.D. = 0.63).

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The first four functions of the Thai L1 which were most *often used* in the EFL classroom were explaining English grammar ($\bar{x}$ = 4.03, S.D. = 0.87), lessening anxiety ($\bar{x}$ = 3.62, S.D. = 0.79), providing schematic knowledge ($\bar{x}$ = 3.62, S.D. = 0.65) and giving instructions ($\bar{x}$ = 3.54, S.D. = 0.74). Another three functions which were used at a "*moderate degree*" consisted of translation ($\bar{x}$ = 3.39, S.D. = 1.03), giving feedback ($\bar{x}$ = 3.36, S.D. =0.79) and checking comprehension ($\bar{x}$ = 3.21, S.D. = 0.88).

Table 2 The purposes of Thai L1 use

Purposes of Thai Language Use	$\bar{x}$	S.D.	Degree
Explaining English grammar			
1. Teachers use Thai to explain English grammar points.	4.03	0.87	Often
Total	**4.03**	**0.87**	**Often**
Lessening anxiety			
2. Teachers use Thai to create more intimate learning atmosphere.	3.68	0.98	Often
3. Teachers use Thai for ordinary conversations.	3.56	0.87	Often
Total	**3.62**	**0.79**	**Often**
Providing Schematic Knowledge			
4. Teachers use Thai to describe learning objectives.	3.81	0.82	Often
5. Teachers use Thai to connect learners' background knowledge to new lessons.	3.47	0.80	Sometimes
6. Teachers use Thai to sum up lessons and activities as well as to answer questions.	3.59	0.78	Often
Total	**3.62**	**0.65**	**Often**
Giving instructions			
7. Teachers use Thai to describe instructions of tasks and tests.	3.51	1.06	Often
8. Teachers use Thai to maintain classroom policies and to manage activity schedules such as tests and assignment submission.	3.66	0.91	Often
9. Teachers use Thai to explain exam instructions to students.	3.44	0.95	Sometimes
Total	**3.54**	**0.74**	**Often**

Purposes of Thai Language Use	$\bar{x}$	S.D.	Degree
Translation			
10. Teachers use Thai to give meanings at word level.	3.41	1.07	Sometimes
11. Teachers use Thai to give meanings at sentence level.	3.37	1.08	Sometimes
Total	**3.39**	**1.03**	**Sometimes**
Purposes of Thai Language Use	$\bar{x}$	**S.D.**	**Degree**
Giving feedback			
12. Teachers use Thai to give feedback to individuals.	3.63	0.86	Often
13. Teachers use Thai to give feedback to students in pair or group work.	3.09	0.94	Often
Total	**3.36**	**0.79**	**Sometimes**
Purposes of Thai Language Use	$\bar{x}$	**S.D.**	**Degree**
Checking comprehension			
14. Teachers use Thai to check students' comprehension regarding listening activities.	3.24	1.04	Sometimes
15. Teachers use Thai to check students' comprehension regarding reading activities.	3.19	0.96	Sometimes
Total	3.21	0.88	Sometimes
Total	**3.51**	**0.63**	**Often**

The findings from the questionnaires were correspondent with the transcript data of the interviews. The teachers thought that using Thai L1 in the EFL classroom facilitated the explanation of difficult contents, particularly grammatical points. They added that conducting classes in a monolingual environment might block students' learning ability because of their limited background knowledge. The teachers also used Thai to describe learning objectives and to get students ready for instructions. Furthermore, having a bilingual classroom, by creating a more intimate learning environment, could reduce learner anxiety. Hence, giving grammatical explanations, describing course objectives and promoting an intimate atmosphere were three primary purposes for the use of the Thai L1 occurring in the EFL classrooms in the present study.

In contrast, the results indicated that giving feedback was the situation in which L1 was *least frequently used* ($\bar{x}$ = 3.09, S.D. = 0.79), particularly for pair-work and group-work assignments. The results from the interviews showed that teachers least frequently used the L1 in giving feedback for these activities because most of them, which mainly relied on

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textbooks and / or tests, were individual undertakings, especially those in English reading and writing courses. That is, pair-work and group-work activities were rarely assigned.

2. Purposes, Amount, and Frequency of Thai L1 use by Thai EFL Teachers in Three Learning Programs

The results obtained from the T-test and one-way ANOVA analyses compared the purposes, quantity, and frequency of Thai L1 use by Thai EFL teachers in the three programs, namely Science-Math, English-Math, and English-Chinese.

According to Table 3, the overall mean score of frequency of L1 use for the 3 programs was "*often use*" ($\bar{x}$ = 3.57, S.D. = 0.67). Considering the frequency of L1 use in each program, the highest was found in the English–Math program ($\bar{x}$ = 3.69, S.D. = 0.55). In the Science-Math program, the use ($\bar{x}$ = 3.62, S.D. = 0.52) appeared significantly (F=12.74, P=0.00) more often than that in the English-Chinese program ($\bar{x}$ = 3.29, S.D. = 0.88).

The data corresponded to the opinions of the 9 teachers (64.29%) who indicated that Thai L1 use by the teachers in EFL classes in the English-Math and Science-Math programs were more frequent than that in the English-Chinese programs. They explained that using Thai L1 was less time consuming; the students of those two programs had fewer hours to study Fundamental English, which mainly focused on grammar. Furthermore, all three program students could practice listening and speaking skills in other courses taught by native English-speaking teachers. Nonetheless, the teachers added that the frequency of Thai L1 use depended on various factors, including students' varying degrees of proficiency, and their learning behavior.

In comparing the frequency of the seven purposes of using Thai L1, five functions were found *most frequently used*: explaining grammar ($\bar{x}$ = 3.76, S.D. = 1.03); providing schematic knowledge ($\bar{x}$ = 3.68, S.D. = 0.85); lessening anxiety ($\bar{x}$ = 3.63, S.D. = 0.95); checking comprehension ($\bar{x}$ = 3.55, S.D. = 0.86); and giving instructions ($\bar{x}$ = 3.51, S.D. = 0.81), respectively. The two last functions which were reported as "*sometimes*" were translation ($\bar{x}$ = 3.48, S.D. = 0.84) and giving feedback ($\bar{x}$ = 3.43, S.D. = 0.82).

Table 3 Seven Purposes of L1 use in 3 programs

Purposes of the Use	Programs			Programs (Total) $\bar{x}$ *(S.D.)*	F	Sig
	Science-Math (n=169) $\bar{x}$ *(S.D.)*	English-Math (n=96) $\bar{x}$ *(S.D.)*	English-Chinese (n=98) $\bar{x}$ *(S.D.)*			
Explaining Grammar						
1. Teachers use Thai to explain English grammar points.	3.88 (0.90)	3.83 (0.98)	3.49 (1.22)	3.76 (1.03)	4.80	0.01 *
Total	**3.88 (0.90) (Often)**	**3.83 (0.98) (Often)**	**3.49 (1.22) (Sometimes)**	**3.76 (1.03) (Often)**	**4.80**	**0.01 ***
Providing Schematic Knowledge						
2. Teachers use Thai to describe learning objectives.	3.87 (0.80)	3.79 (0.79)	3.40 (1.15)	3.72 (0.92)	8.83	0.00 *
3. Teachers use Thai to connect learners' background knowledge to new lessons.	3.63 (0.79)	3.95 (0.80)	3.44 (1.23)	3.66 (0.95)	7.18 9.21	0.00 *
4. Teachers use Thai to sum up lessons and activities as well as to answer questions.	3.67 (0.88)	3.93 (0.89)	3.33 (1.20)	3.65 (1.00)		0.00 *
Total	**3.73 (0.67) (Often)**	**3.89 (0.73) (Often)**	**3.38 (1.12) (Sometimes)**	**3.68 (0.85) (Often)**	**9.47**	**0.00 ***
Lessening Anxiety						
5. Teachers use Thai to create more intimate learning atmosphere.	3.92 (0.97)	3.67 (1.06)	3.29 (1.25)	3.68 (1.10)	10.71	0.00 *
6. Teachers use Thai for ordinary conversations.	3.78 (0.99)	3.65 (0.87)	3.17 (1.15)	3.58 (1.04)	11.47	0.00 *
Total	**3.85 (0.86) (Often)**	**3.66 (0.83) (Often)**	**3.23 (1.08) (Sometimes)**	**3.63 (0.95) (Often)**	**14.13**	**0.00 ***

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Checking comprehension						
7. Teachers use Thai to check students' comprehension regarding listening activities.	3.56 (0.91)	3.68 (0.95)	3.24 (1.11)	3.51 (0.99)	5.23	0.01 *
8. Teachers use Thai to check students' comprehension regarding reading activities.	3.63 (0.90)	3.82 (0.95)	3.36 (1.03)	3.60 (0.96)	5.90	0.00 *
Total	**3.59 (0.76) (Often)**	**3.75 (0.82) (Often)**	**3.30 (0.99) (Sometimes)**	**3.55 (0.86) (Often)**	**7.14**	**0.00 ***

Purposes of the Use	Programs			Programs (Total) $\bar{x}$ *(S.D.)*	F	Sig
	Science-Math (n=169) $\bar{x}$ *(S.D.)*	English-Math (n=96) $\bar{x}$ *(S.D.)*	English-Chinese (n=98) $\bar{x}$ *(S.D.)*			
Giving instructions						
9. Teachers use Thai to describe instructions of tasks and tests.	3.70 (0.91)	3.71 (0.91)	3.34 (1.11)	3.61 (0.98)	4.88	0.01 *
10. Teachers use Thai to maintain classroom policies and to manage activity schedules such as tests and assignment submission.	3.94 (0.87)	3.98 (0.86)	3.53 (1.22)	3.84 (0.99)	6.82	0.00 *
11. Teachers use Thai to explain exam instructions to students.	3.11 (1.13)	3.29 (1.04)	2.82 (1.09)	3.08 (1.10)	4.73	0.01 *
Total	**3.59 (0.76) (Often)**	**3.66 (0.70) (Often)**	**3.23 (0.94) (Sometimes)**	**3.51 (0.81) (Often)**	**8.71**	**0.00 ***
Translation						
12. Teachers use Thai to give meanings at word level.	3.70 (0.85)	3.49 (0.89)	3.26 (1.05)	3.52 (0.94)	7.30	0.00 *
13. Teachers use Thai to give meanings at sentence level.	3.53	3.45	3.27	3.44	2.25	0.11

	(0.91)	(1.00)	(1.06)	(0.98)		
Total	**3.61 (0.73) (Often)**	**3.47 (0.82) (Sometimes)**	**3.26 (0.97) (Sometimes)**	**3.48 (0.84) (Sometimes)**	**5.65**	**0.00 ***
Giving Feedback						
14. Teachers use Thai to give feedback to individuals.	3.63 (0.89)	3.80 (0.84)	3.19 (1.17)	3.56 (0.99)	10.52	0.00 *
15. Teachers use Thai to give feedback to students in pair or group work.	3.34 (0.98)	3.39 (0.90)	3.15 (1.01)	3.30 (0.97)	1.63	0.20
Total	**3.48 (0.77) (Sometimes)**	**3.59 (0.68) (Often)**	**3.17 (0.96) (Sometimes)**	**3.43 (0.82) (Sometimes)**	**7.34**	**0.00 ***
Sum total	**3.66 (0.52) (Often)**	**3.69 (0.55) (Often)**	**3.29 (0.88) (Sometimes)**	**3.57 (0.67) (Often)**	**12.74**	**0.00 ***

* sig =0.01

Table 2 shows the mean scores and S.D. of amount and frequency of the seven purposes of Thai L1 use in the EFL classroom of the three programs. The data from the sub-functions of each function indicated that teachers mainly used Thai L1 for classroom management, discipline maintenance and providing general information for the students of the three programs (no.10, $\bar{x}$ = 3.84, S.D. = 0.99). The interviews with the teachers showed that they thought that class size could be a problem. In a disorganized class of more than 40 students, it was necessary to use Thai; using English was found inefficient in some cases.

Moreover, the functions of L1 use occurred *often* in the EFL classroom for explaining grammar (item1, $\bar{x}$ = 3.76, S.D. = 1.03), providing schematic knowledge (item2, $\bar{x}$ = 3.72, S.D. = 0.92); and having general conversations with students (item5, $\bar{x}$ = 3.68, S.D. = 1.10). These situations often occurred in the Science-Math and English-Math programs, but only at a moderate level in the English-Chinese program. The teachers stated that using Thai to explain grammar points could help students learn faster and more easily. In addition, it was easier and less time consuming to explain learning objectives, and to have everyday conversations irrelevant to the learning content, and to distribute news or school activity announcements.

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In contrast, the results showed three situations in which L1 was used *least frequently* in the EFL classroom: giving instructions (item 11, $\bar{x}$ = 3.08, S.D. = 1.10), giving feedback to individuals (item 15, $\bar{x}$ = 3.30, S.D. = 0.97), and giving word meanings (item 13, $\bar{x}$ = 3.44, S.D. = 0.98), respectively. The teachers argued that L1 use was unnecessary in such scenarios because students had been trained to read for quizzes, tests or other instructions; they knew what they were required to do.

Discussion and Conclusions

This section discusses the purposes, quantity, and frequency of Thai L1 use by Thai EFL teachers in upper secondary EFL classrooms of seven extra-large schools.

1. The findings obtained from the questionnaires and the interviews confirmed that Thai EFL teachers used the mother tongue language for seven different purposes at the "*often*" level. In other words, it was inevitable for most teachers to use L1 in the EFL classroom. Teachers agreed that Thai language played a significant role in teaching English because they could use it as a tool to clarify complicated or unfamiliar points in the lessons. The findings corresponded with those found by Schweers (1999), Tang (2002) and De La Campa & Nassaji (2009). They maintained that L1 use in the EFL classroom played significant roles in lowering language barriers in communication and promoting students' learning ability. This finding was also supported by the studies by Atkinson (1987), Schweers (1999) and Nation (2001), showing that the proper adoption of L1 in L2 classrooms benefits language learners.

According to the interviews, the teachers stated that a proper frequency of L1 use depended on many factors, for instance, difficulty of learning contents and background knowledge of learners. The four main purposes of Thai L1 use in the EFL classroom were explaining grammar, lessening anxiety of learners, providing schematic knowledge and giving instructions. This finding confirms with the research results of Liu et al. (2004) who investigated the use of Korean in EFL classrooms of upper secondary students in Korea and found that 8 out of 13 Korean teachers frequently used their mother tongue language to explain grammar, vocabulary, general and extra information. Besides, an earlier work by Forman, (2012), investigating L1 use by 9 Thai university teachers, showed that they often used Thai to teach pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary and culture. The study showed the teachers' serious concern in teaching grammar. Most of them thought that students could not produce English sentences accurately without comprehensive grammatical knowledge, such as parts of speech and usage and that giving an explanation in Thai helped students to approach the difficult learning tasks more easily.

As for the present study, the teachers explained that most of the students considered studying English simply for examinations, possibly leading them to have exam anxiety. Hence, teachers used their mother tongue language to create a friendlier atmosphere in classrooms. In addition, the use of L1 through games, jokes or slang helped to reduce the gap between teachers and students, and could lead to improvements in L2 learning, as argued by Brown (2000). Likewise, Meyer (2008) suggested that using L1 could lower stress and enhance learners' L2 learning motivations. In addition, a study by Nitisakunwut & Soranastaporn (2014), exploring classroom activity-based games used in the English language teaching and learning in Thailand from 2007 to 2014, found that the learners received higher scores and showed a positive attitude toward learning through games.

It is remarkable, however, that the findings of the present study showed that the lowest mean scores were on "giving feedback". This obviously contradicted to the propositions by Jantarach, V. (2011) who argued that teachers' feedback helped improve learners' writing skills because they became more aware of their errors.

2. A comparison of frequency, amount and purposes of Thai language use by Thai EFL teachers with students of the three programs revealed a significant difference. A higher frequency of L1 use was found in the English-Math and Science-Math programs than in the English-Chinese program. However, the intention of mother tongue language use depended on many factors, such as a time limitation, learners' background knowledge and difficulties of learning tasks. Opposing evidence was given by Grim (2010) in observations of L1 use by French teachers in L2 classrooms. A comparison of three secondary teachers and eight university teachers revealed that different learning programs did not affect the frequency of L1 use. Most of the EFL teachers, both in secondary schools and universities, often spoke their L1 in the L2 classroom (0.1% - 24.96%). Also, it was found that 70% of L1 use occurred in secondary schools when teachers had conversations with students.

In addition, the highest mean score of frequency of Thai L1 use by Thai EFL teachers was to "discipline attendance". According to the interviews with the teachers, "There are over fifty students in each classroom; the students often waste their time walking to the classroom where they attend the following subjects. Some of them lack discipline, sleeping, listening to music or focusing on their phones, so I have to begin the class by maintaining discipline instead of teaching." A period of a hundred minutes for one unit of instruction was not enough, implying that teachers needed to deal with a large number of students by clarifying policies, terms, and discipline to maintain learner behavior. The findings conformed

to those of Yavuz (2012), who studied L1 use by Turkish EFL teachers, and found that overcrowded classrooms led to the use of L1 to maintain a positive learning atmosphere.

Conversely, explaining the instructions to assignments or tasks was found the least frequently used because the teachers considered the function inessential. In their view, it was important for the students to practice the ability to comprehend instructions that would be useful in examinations where teacher assistance was not allowed.

In conclusion, using Thai L1 played vital roles in the EFL classroom in the context of the present study. However, overuse of L1 can be risky, including its overuse in explaining grammatical rules. This may deprive students from opportunities to develop communicative skills in L2. L1 use in L2 learning settings may affect students' L2 learning abilities. Thus, it is recommended that teachers should pay careful attention to balancing the use of L1 and L2 in the classroom.

Recommendations

It was suggested that teachers maintain the use of Thai in EFL classroom in order to explain difficult concepts, check students' comprehension, and increases their motivation. However, the amount of Thai use should be limited especially when it comes to improving students' English listening and speaking competencies.

In addition, future studies focusing on language use in the target language classroom may be carried out with students of diverse characteristics, with samples from government and private schools, from different levels of high schools, and from different fields of study in universities, for instance.

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