



Gender-Based Study of Thai Learners' Metadiscourse in Writing for Journalism

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Abstract

Many scholars have conducted research into ways to improve EFL learners' writing proficiency by seeking to address several problems related to achieving this goal (Darani, 2014; Lu, 2013; Thomas, Thomas, & Moltow, 2015; Wang, 2013). However, the issues of learner identity in written communication and the role of the language EFL writers use as their linguistic resources to convey their meaning through writing are rarely addressed. Gender-based studies suggest male and female identity may influence linguistic behaviour (Hyland & Tse, 2004; Tse & Hyland, 2008). Therefore, this present article draws insights from Hyland's (2005) metadiscourse model to demonstrate how meaningful metadiscourse markers support male and female writers to accomplish written tasks. The approach highlights the importance of language as both an interactive and interactional device to communicate with readers. This article is an account of a small-scale qualitative oriented study undertaken to examine writing as a social activity among Thai learners. Through interview and linguistic analysis, this study particularly aims to reveal Thai learners' linguistic behaviours while writing letters to the editor and news reports. A linguistic analysis was conducted of thirty-two written texts from sixteen tertiary level learners enrolled in the English for Journalism course. The main finding to emerge from this study is that although male and female Thai writers select metadiscourse markers to communicate with their readers in letters to the editor and news reports, knowledge of metadiscourse and their linguistic resources should be more explicitly taught in the classroom as a way to argue with the readers. In addition, educators should be aware of the metadiscourse items learners of different gender use in their writing for specific purposes in higher-education pedagogy.

Keywords: Metadiscourse, Gender, English for Journalism

1. Introduction

The study of identity and second language (L2) learning is one of the most rigorous research areas in the field of applied linguistics (Ortega, 2009). Identity theory discusses and specifies a sense of self as socially constructed and socially constrained. In addition, Schmitt (2010) states that identity is an important social factor because linguistic patterns not only signal social and individual identity, they also signal people's conscious awareness of their personal identities in language use. Identity construction is seen as a composite of age, gender and class (Valentine, 2015). Rather than viewing gender and other identities as something fixed, gender is viewed as dynamic. As such, it creates and recreates itself along with the other identities as the situation changes and as relationships are negotiated and mediated in the social activities of the particular community of practice.

Scholars widely examine the influence of gender and language use to highlight how social members construct their culture (e.g. Aziz, Jin, & Nordin, 2016; Joseph,

2004; Tse & Hyland, 2008; Valentine, 2015). In the field of language study, gender is now largely viewed as “a social construction of, and by, social embodied individuals in language and social practices throughout the individual’s lifetime, in ways which entail individual agency and resistance” (Sunderland, 2011, p. 318). As a result, investigating gender and language use will shed light on the variations, styles, and ways social members of different gender make meaning through their language selection.

Language in this study is not regarded as a set of rules, but rather as a semiotic tool (Halliday & Hasan, 1985) that interactants use to make meaning to achieve particular social purposes. As a result, studying the language used by interactants allows for their identity construction to be explored. As Belsey (1980) suggests, “it is through language that people constitute themselves” (p. 59). Therefore, examining learners’ language use may also highlight learners’ identity through language construction.

Since the early 1970s, studies on language and gender have grown in popularity. In the past, particular focus was placed on discourse and diversity, highlighting what is said or written about women, men, boys, girls, and gender relations (Sunderland, 2011). More recent studies however tend to investigate gender as interlocutor identity and how gender difference may affect the way the interlocutors employ their linguistic resources to make meaning. Gender-based studies of discourse analysis aim to investigate how men and women resort to different strategies and discourse markers to express themselves through the medium of written or spoken language. As a consequence, the interlocutors of different gender make their meaning, either speaking or writing, differently (e.g. Aziz et al., 2016; Ghafoori & Oghbatalab, 2012; Ivanic, 1998; Joseph, 2004; Norton, 1995; Rojas, 2012; Tse & Hyland, 2008). In this present study, the researcher aims to reveal how Thai learners of different gender employ metadiscourse when communicating with their readers in English. Hyland’s metadiscourse taxonomy is applied to guide the investigation. With the theoretical support of the Systemic Functional Linguistics (Halliday, 1994), the present study aims to qualitatively contribute to the categorisation of metadiscourse types that reveal the nature of the Thai writers with different identities in gender.

Numerous studies have examined gender in relation to spoken and written language use in different countries and various contexts. Little research however has been conducted with regard to Thai learners’ writing in English to express their personal view point through letters to the editor and written news reports. The researcher selected the letters to editor and news report genres as texts in which learners make their meaning. Due to different social purposes of the two genres, it is anticipated that learners may reveal their selection of metadiscourse items differently. While learners write letters to editors to express their opinions on current events that gain public interest, their written news report can show their ability to report factual information relating to authentic news in their first language. Thus, the present study seeks to compliment the current body of research by answering the following questions:

Overarching question: How do male and female EFL learners employ metadiscourse to express their interpersonal and textual meaning when writing in L2?

1. What kind of metadiscourse do male and female writers select when writing letters to the editor?



2. What kind of metadiscourse do male and female writers select when writing news reports?

This study aims to further academic understanding of this issue by focusing on Thai learners' linguistic behaviour. As such, it addresses issues such as the extent to which similarities and differences can be found in the use of metadiscourse markers by Thai male and female students when writing in L2. To this end, previous studies on communities and identities, language as a meaning making tool, and gender and language use are reviewed.

2. Literature review

2.1 *Communities and identities*

Notion conceptions of identity view are as largely developed through discourse as we construct representations of ourselves in particular contexts. "Almost everything we say or write, in fact, says something about us and the kind of relationship we want to establish with our interactants" (Hyland, 2009, p. 54). There are always discursal alternatives which enable us to represent our identity in different ways (Ivanic, 1998). We bring our background knowledge and frame of reference as members of multiple communities to how we understand our disciplinary participation and how we want to interact with others. "Gender, social class, religion, race and geographical region are the most obvious of these experiences" (Hyland, 2009, p. 55). Therefore, investigating the ways in which writers of different genders enact their identity in their written language may highlight their position and how they make meaning to signal their communicative intentions and their argument with the readers.

2.2 *Language as a meaning making tool*

Language is conceptualised as having shared meaning potential and as a sign system within a broader social system (Halliday, 1978). From a Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) perspective, linguistic choices employed in social activity can be explored in relation to functions of language. This is because SFL provides a unique approach to the investigation of the language choices made by learners as they engage in social interactions through functional grammar. Integral to an understanding of SFL is the relationship between text and context.

As Matthiessen and Halliday (1997) argue:

...language is embedded in a context of culture or social system and any instantiation of language as text is embedded in its own context of situation. Context is an ecological matrix for both the general system of language of and for particular texts. It is realized through language; and being realized through language means that it both creates and is created by language. (p. 39)

Systemic Functional grammar is a way of describing lexical and grammatical choices from the wording systems (Butt, Fahey, Feez, Spinks, & Yallop, 2001). The three contextual parameters of situation affect our language choices precisely because they reflect the three main functions of language; namely, ideational, interpersonal and textual functions (Halliday, 1978).

At present, studies on writing in L2 have contributed to expand beyond the ideational dimension of texts (Hyland, 2004). Writing is perceived as a social engagement that unfolds how individuals project their positions into their discourse to

express their attitudes and commitment. In order to reveal the nature of writers and readers' social interaction, the metadiscourse items play significant role in this study. Metadiscourse is a linguistic framework originally developed to reveal writers' discourse patterns. Hyland's modified metadiscourse model (2005) is a powerful framework highlighting how writers communicate with readers (interaction items) and how they guide their readers throughout the text (interactional items). These items are believed to reflect the way learners constitute themselves. (Hyland, 2005)

Hyland (2005) defines 'metadiscourse' as "the cover term for the self-reflective expressions used to negotiate interactional meanings in a text, assisting the writer (speaker) to express a view point and engage with readers as members of a particular community" (p.37). Given Hyland's metadiscourse model (2005) comprises both interactive and interactional dimensions, the model is of value to the present study as it enables the researcher to identify the linguistic devices writers use to manage the information flow to provide their preferred interpretations of the text. The model is also valuable to examine how writers involve their readers in the text and display their personality. Previous studies regard solely the notion of metadiscourse on the metatextual items considering metadiscourse as a set of discourse that serves an ideational function (e.g. Adel, 2006) while others focus more on textual and interpersonal functions of metadiscourse in their analytical framework (Crismore, Markkanen, & Steffensen, 1993; Hyland & Tse, 2004; Kawase, 2015; Vande Kopple, 2002).

As reviewed above, although the metafunctions of language emphasise ideational, interpersonal, and textual meaning, metadiscourse explores beyond the ideational/propositional meaning to focus on the interpersonal and textual meaning of texts. Scholars categorise metadiscourse into two distinct functions: that which is used to organise the content in a coherent manner (textual meaning); and that which equips writers to express their perspectives and engage with readers in the text (interpersonal meaning). Although previous work on the metadiscourse model (Hyland, 2005; Hyland & Tse, 2004) did not emphasise the distinction between interpersonal and textual meaning, the metadiscourse markers were defined as interactive and interactional markers. As such, "the organisational choices are referred to as interactive resources; whereas the evaluative and engagement markers are referred to as interactional resources" (Hyland & Tse, 2004, p. 167).

2.3 Gender and language use

Gender differences have been securitized in Second Language Acquisition theories and have long highlighted the influence of affective factors on a person's L2 learning. In Thai EFL context, studies on second language acquisition have investigated gender as one of the affective factors influencing the Thai learners' language learning (e.g. Khmakhien, 2012; Loo & Kitjaroonchai, 2009; Suwanarak, 2015). While numerous studies on affective factors in L2 learning devoted their focus to learners' L2 competencies, studies investigating the relationship between gender differences and linguistics choices are limited. In addition, to my knowledge, no study has empirically sought to examine gender-based studies in Thai context and has linguistically studied the language use of different genders. Francis (2000) explained that children understand the world as gendered binary code. The oppositional identity constructions impact on their social identity and ability. Therefore, children of different genders seem to employ discourses and position themselves differently in



interactions. Previous studies on gender and discourse postulated the existence and distinctiveness of male and female language. (e.g. Francis, 2000; Francis, Robson, & Read, 2001; Lakoff, 1975; Martin, 1997). Lakoff (1975) argued that a woman's speech shows lack of assertion and contains evidence of nervous ticks such as "hedges, qualifiers, intensifiers and other devices that reduce the force of assertions or prevent the expression of strong statement" (Lakoff, 1975, p. 19). More recent studies have contributed to study the language of different genders in both spoken and written discourses.

Much research on spoken text has extensively focused on examining the differences in language use by men and women, such as talkativeness and gender, competitive and cooperative speech styles, and the relationship between gossip and gender (Ahearn, 2012; Francis, Burke, & Read, 2014; Wardhaugh, 2010). Tardy (2006) argues that both oral and written interactions are influenced by many factors, one of which is the gender of the speaker or the writer. Indeed, male and female writers may not be doing the act of interaction with equal use of language resources as Adel (2006) argues that writers' gender tends to affect how much or what type of metadiscourse is used (p.198).

A few studies to date have employed gender-based paradigms together with metadiscourse analysis to confirm the differences between male and female writers in persuasive essays (Abbas & Sheena, 2012; Aziz et al., 2016; Crismore et al., 1993), academic book reviews (Tse & Hyland, 2008), compositions (Karbalaeei, 2013), English Master theses conclusion sections (Zadeh, Baharlooei, & Simin, 2015), research articles (Cao & Hu, 2014), academic writing (Ghafoori & Oghbatalab, 2012), post-graduate writing (Hyland & Tse, 2004) and medical texts (Gholami, Tajalli, & Shokrpour, 2014). None of the previous studies however focused on Journalism writing by Thai EFL learners. Furthermore, the majority of them are positioned in the academic writing genre; whereas this present study focuses more on the writing for professional purposes genre. Given writing for professional purposes is viewed as an important skill in today competitive global market, it is of interest to this researcher to discover the nature of Thai learners' writing for journalism purposes in particular.

3. Methodology

This study investigated gender communication. It is based on the view of writing as a social and communicative engagement between writer and reader to explore the metadiscourse markers employed by either gender. The aim of this paper is to shed light on the processes of L2 writing in the journalism genre; specifically, letters to the editor and news reports. Particular focus is on the way L2 writers select metadiscourse as their interpersonal resources. Letters to the editor and news reports of 16 (8 male and 8 female) third-year English major students were randomly collected. The participants are Thai students enrolled in the English for Journalism course in their 2nd semester. The written texts are parts of their in-class assignment collected in week 7 and week 16. The data were analysed using Hyland's taxonomy (2005) to determine whether or not male and female writers use interactive and interactional metadiscourse markers when writing in the journalism genre. Grammatical errors were not corrected to preserve the originality of the data and to reflect authentic L2 use. The model is shown in Table 1 below:

Table 1 : An interpersonal model of metadiscourse (Hyland, 2005, p. 49)

Category	Function	Examples
Interactive	Help to guide the reader through the text	Resources
Transitions	Express relations between main clauses	In addition; but; thus
Frame markers	Refer to discourse acts, sequences or stages	Finally; my purpose is
Endophoric markers	Refer to information in other parts of the text	Noted above; see fig; in section 2
Evidentials	Refer to information from other texts	According to X; Z states
Code glosses	Elaborate propositional meanings	Namely; e.g.; such as
Interactional	Involve the reader in the text	Resources
Hedges	Withhold commitment and open dialogue	Might; perhaps; about
Boosters	Emphasise certainty or close dialogue	In fact; it is clear that
Attitude markers	Express writer's attitude to proposition	I agree; surprisingly
Self-mentions	Explicit reference to author (s)	I; we; my; me; our
Engagement markers	Explicitly build relationship with reader	Consider; note; you can see that

Overall, the model works well with the present study. However, there were times students transferred to their L1 which is Thai. The researcher had to translate the Thai used to English so that it could be analysed in accordance with the mentioned model.

In order to obtain information on descriptive analysis, the gathered data were typed into Microsoft Excel to analyse the frequency of metadiscourse markers and lexical density. The data were counted, identified and analysed twice by the researcher and a research assistant to control any inaccuracies in frequency counts. A colour-coding technique was also used to present the data and to make it more manageable as shown in Appendix 1. However, in this particular paper, the researcher also used the Superscript (also shown in Appendix 1) to present the data in black and white presentation. The results were used to explore the linguistic items employed by the male and female students. Following this, the frequencies of metadiscourse markers use by the male and female writers were calculated. The results of the data analysis are discussed in the following section.

4. Results

The descriptive and linguistics analyses of the differences between Thai male and female students when writing letters to the editor and news reports are illustrated in the Figures and Tables in this part. In addition, an explanation of the results and excerpts from learners' interview were also provided.

The results shown in Table 2 reveal that when writing letters to the editor, the male writers produced a total of 860 words with 194 metadiscourse items; whereas the female writers produced 983 words with 218 metadiscourse items in total. This result suggests that female writers are more frequent users of metadiscourse compared to male writers when writing letters to the editor.

In terms of numbers of words in the news reports, Table 2 shows that the male writers produced a total of 699 words with 88 metadiscourse items; whereas the female writers produced a total of 948 words with 98 metadiscourse items. One may



reasonably infer from this result that male writers in this particular study are more frequent metadiscourse users compared to female when writing a news report.

Table 2: Metadiscourse frequent users

	Male			Female			More frequent user
	Token	Metadiscourse	%	Token	Metadiscourse	%	
Letters to the editor	860	194	22.56%	953	218	22.88%	Female
News report	699	88	12.59%	948	98	10.34%	Male

The first text type being analysed was the letters to the editor. Writing a letter to the editor is considered as a good starting point for a discussion. “Discussions are used to look at an issue from a range of perspectives, before making a judgement or recommendation.” (Humphrey, Droga, & Feez, 2015, p. 195) Sometimes, writers write letters to the editor to provide a response that reflects their reaction to the news event (Fredrickson, 2008). Certain metadiscourses are expected in this type of text; namely, interactives, transitions, frame markers, hedges, boosters, attitude markers and self-mentions. Learners expressed their personal judgement and beliefs through the use of attitude markers showing their identity in the Buddhist society. The topic of discussion seemed to influence the way learners express their feelings when they commented on the luxurious lifestyle of the monk. The topic was a controversial issue at that time in Thailand.

4.1 Research question 1: What kind of metadiscourse do male and female writers select when writing letters to the editor?

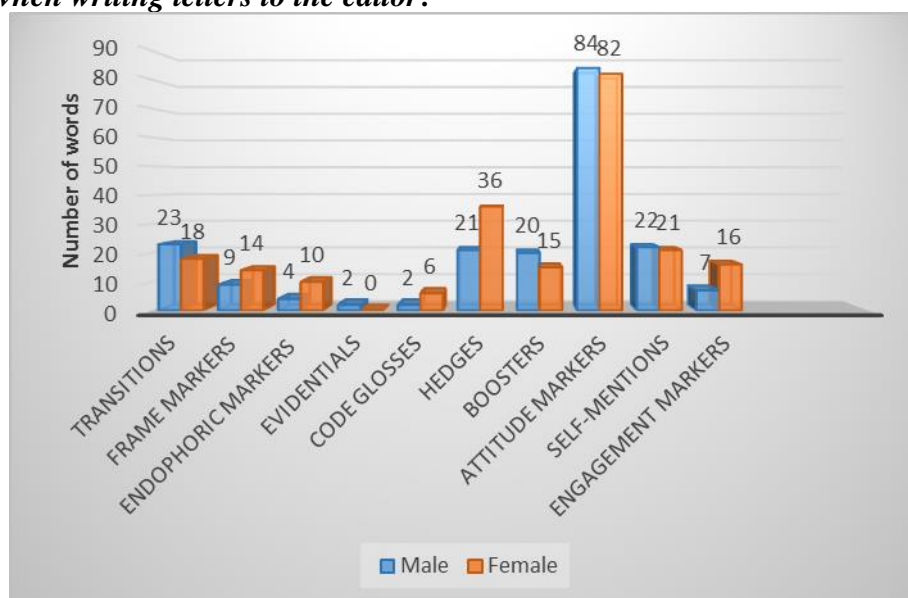


Figure 1 : Frequency of metadiscourse use by males and females when writing a letter to the editor

With regard to the interactive markers shown in Figure 1, when writing a letter to the editor in their L2, both Thai male and female students in this study predominantly used transition markers. The next most common interactive markers used by the students were frame markers and endophoric markers, respectively. Although both

male and female students used transitions the most, male students used transition markers and evidential markers more frequently than female students; whereas female students used frame markers, endophoric markers and code glosses more frequently than their male counterparts. This suggests that both genders used linguistic resources to guide the readers through the text. Among the interactional markers, male students used attitude markers most often followed by self-mention and hedges; whereas female students used attitude markers most often followed by hedges and self-mention. Although hedges are classified as “women’s speech” (Lakoff, 1975, p. 19), male students also employed hedges in their writing to signal less assertive move. Therefore, it can be implied that male also employs woman’s speech when the topic of discussion changes and when they want to negotiate their relationship with the readers.

In the letter to the editor the students composed their reaction to a newspaper item about a social issue concerning the luxurious lifestyle of a Thai Buddhist monk. Both male and female students employed numerous attitude markers to express their personal opinion about the news. Because the students were writing about themselves there were times they used first-person pronouns to position their points of view and offer their suggestions to the reading public. This is shown in Extract 1 and Extract 2 below

Dear Editor

After^{FM} the news about luxurious^{AM} lifestyle of the monk, monks were criticized around the country because^T some monks have bad^{AM} behavior. They are riding in luxurious^{AM} cars and using brand-name^{AM} items even if^T they are supposed^H to live a life of restraint^{AM} and simplicity^{AM}. ISM think^B monks should^H abandon the temple and practice the Thamma. Monks shouldn't^H violate^{AM} religion principal. Beside, many Buddhist believe in^B monks. Religion in center in mind^B. So^T, monks should^H be good^{AM} example for Buddhist. It is not lavish^{AM}. It should^H use things which is necessary^{AM} and enough^{AM}. Monks should^H maintain religion to be continue and don't^{EngM} make it damaged.

Regards^{AM}

Male writer (1)

Extract 1: Male writer’s letter to editor (1)

Dear Editor Re^{EM}: Monk's luxurious lifestyle under fire (Bangkokpost.com on Sunday) (No coding on given headline)

As we knowing^{EngM}, the monks have to^{EngM} live their lives sufficiently^{AM}. They have to^H restrain^{AM} to desires about materialism. But^T why^{EngM} the renowned monks in Thailand have luxurious^{AM} lifestyle. It is not^{EngM} appropriate^{AM} for the monks that they rode a private^{AM} jet, used expensive^{AM} items or luxurious^{AM} cars. Even if^T the monks said the cars were given items. They should^H live sufficiently^{AM}. Their actions defaced^{AM} images of Buddhism. And Buddhists will not^H name faith in^{AM} Buddhism. If they desire to live luxuriantly^{AM}, they shouldn't^H be the monk. ISM hope^B that they should^H be punished.

Sincerely^{AM}

Female writer (1)

Extract 2: Female writer's letter to the editor (1)

With regard to the news report, this write-up constitutes a different social purpose of writing than a letter to the editor. A news story is used to chronicle a newsworthy event (Humphrey et al., 2015) and writers are therefore expected to report factual information about the event without their personal involvement or bias. Particular metadiscourse markers are expected to be used in the report including transitions, frame markers and evidential.

4.2 Research question 2: What kind of metadiscourse do male and female writers select when writing news reports?

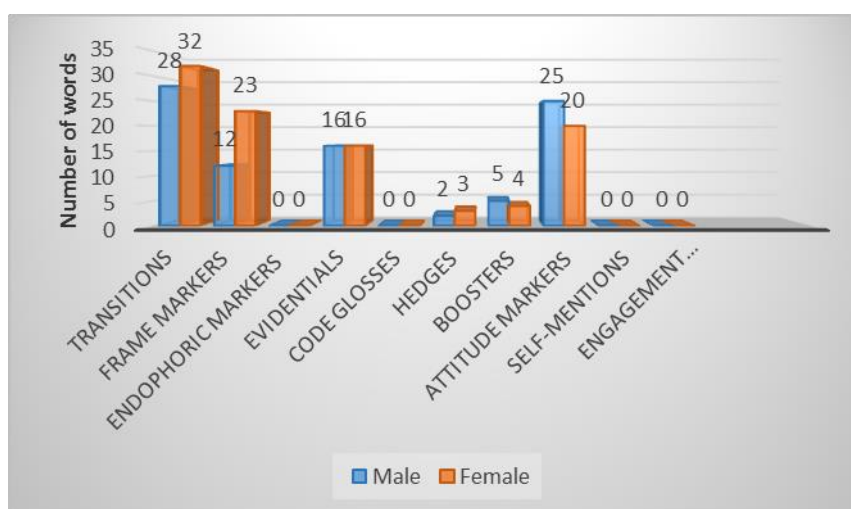


Figure 2: Frequency of male and female's metadiscourse in news report

In terms of interactive markers, when writing the news reports both male and female students employed transitions markers, frame markers, and evidential markers only when reporting the news. Both genders used transitions equally. Female students used a greater number of transitions and frame markers than male students in the news report. Male and female students used an equal number of evidential markers when referring to the news source. In terms of the interactional markers, male students predominantly used attitude markers followed by boosters and hedges; whereas female students predominantly used attitude markers followed by boosters and hedges. Self-mentions and engagement markers were not selected by either gender. When reporting factual information, both male and female students employed transition markers the most to sequence what happened in the news. When reporting factual information, there is evidence of attitude markers as shown in Figure 2 above. Attitude markers were not however the main expression used by the students, but rather they were expressions used to describe the situation or the emotions of the people involved in the news event, as shown in Extract 3 and Extract 4 below:

Headline: Getting lose irks medical student shoot 3 foes.

Photo: Mr. Danot Pweenmet, 27 years old.

A medical student drove to his dorm and^T bought a short gun 9 mm to shoot his foes in front of the restaurant. Getting the looser in fighting caused a medical student

shoots 3 foes. He was arrested in his house and accused a case "attempt to kill." He finally^{FM} denied. At 12:30 pm. In June 22^E, the police "Winai Rawidech" claimed^E there was shooting in front of a restaurant "Ban Din", Nimmanhamin Road Soi 13 and Winai suddenly^{AM} arrive the event. The police investigated witnesses the restaurant and announced^E that the suspect was "Mr.Danot Praweenmet, 27 years old, a medical student who quarrelled with Mr. Moris in the restaurant. The suspect was knocked at left eye forcedly^{AM}. Then, he got angry^{AM} and drove a car to his dorm to bring his short gun 9 mm. and came back to shoot his foe who was just injured.
Male writer (1)

Extract 3: male writer's news report (1)

Headline: Losing irk

Photo: A angry^{AM} medicine student, who is in the picture, shooting his enemies because he was defeated by them.

A medicine student was angry^{AM} because^T he couldn't^H defeat his enemies in their fighting. So^T he returned to take the gun to kill them angrily^{AM}. The violent^{AM} event had 3 injured people. The angry^{AM} medicine student was arrest in his home and he was judged that he tried to kill other, however he still refuse. 00.30 AM 22 June 2013, รตอ เชียงใหม่.จ เมือง.อ ภูพิงคราชนิเวศน์ .พงศ ระวิเดช วินัย.^E got the violent news so he went to check the violent news with his team. Then^{FM} the police took the people who were in real situation to investigate. So^T they found that^E the criminal name is ดนตรี ประวิณเมธ.He is 27 years old and^T he is studying at faculty of medicine of a famous^{AM} university. Before^{FM} the violent^{AM} event took place the criminal^{AM} had a fighting with Mr. Moris. He was hit on his eye by Mr. Moris then was angry^{AM}. So^T he returned to take the gun to make the violent^{AM} event.

Female Writer (1)

Extract 4: Female writer's news report (1)

Although this study aims to qualitatively investigate the nature of EFL learners' writing, the statistical analysis (Chi-Square) was also employed to confirm that the metadiscourse use of different genders do not significantly vary as shown in the tables below.

News reports

Total *sex

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp
Pearson Chi-Square	6.200 ^a	6	.401
Likelihood Ratio	8.179	6	.225
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.206	1	.272
N of Valid Cases	16		



Letters to Editor

Total *sex

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp.
Pearson Chi-Square	8.333 ^a	8	.402
Likelihood Ratio	11.090	8	.197
Linear-by-Linear Association	3.195	1	.074
N of Valid Cases	16		

Finally, results of the interview also reveal that learners of different genders are not aware of how their gender affects their L2 writing behaviours. They also believe that there is no difference in learners' selection of metadiscourse between male and female. Both male and female learners are direct and assertive to express their opinion although they prefer using hedges to soften their tone of voice. They believe that hedges help them to be polite when commenting on people or people's behaviours as shown in excerpts below.

Male writer: "I do not believe that gender effect the way we speak or write. Not in Thai culture, I think. If it is in the past, I would say there is a difference, but now, we are the same" I don't know about male and female language but female learners may be too shy to express their opinion strongly or they may feel pity for the ones in the news. However, I think it is only some female not every female though."

Except 1: Male writer's interview data

Female writer: "I am not sure if there is difference between male and female writing. For me, I concern more about grammar and how not to hurt someone's feelings or confuse the readers. I use a lot of attitude markers to elaborate my feeling. Mostly the positive one though. Also, I use hedges to soften my certainty. I try not to be too aggressive. Anyway, I think male writers may feel the same. Politeness is a general norm of good writer, right? Especially Thai writers?"

Except 2: Female writer's interview data

To sum up, this study investigates the nature of Thai male and female writers. It also reveals the learners' selections of metadiscourse devices when writing different text types. Both male and female share common selections of the metadiscourse and from the interview data, it can be gleaned that they do not think there is any difference between male and female when taking into consideration their metadiscursive choice of words.

5. Conclusion and implications

The metadiscourse model provides a comprehensive and integrated way to examine how interaction is achieved and how the "discoursal preferences of different communities construct both writers and readers" (Hyland, 2005, p. 196). The main findings of this study highlight that Thai male and female writers' selection of metadiscourse markers for interactive and interactional purposes are in accordance with the social purposes of particular written genres. The metadiscourse enables the writers to structure their text cohesively through the use of interactive and

interactional markers and thus shape the interaction between the writers and the readers. However, the topic of discussion also shows potential impact on their expression of their identity when expressing personal opinions. Masculine (assertive voice) and feminine (less assertive voice) language are used interchangeably between the two genders in this study. Although empirical studies (Francis et al., 2014; Francis et al., 2001) suggest the relationship between gender and achievement in terms of writing competence of learners of different genders, gender difference does not show any effects on learners' achievement in this study. This finding reinforces the need to ensure these linguistic resources are promoted in L2 teaching. Teachers and educators should give serious consideration not only to the topic and purpose of writing, but also to language as a medium of communication. Given the impact of metadiscourse on writing outcomes, more research is needed to address the use of metadiscourse markers across the various genres used by male, female and transgender EFL writers to illustrate if there is any difference in the construction of their identity in society.

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Appendix

Colour coding and Superscript scheme

Interactive	Colored	Abbreviation
Transitions	brown	T
Frame markers	dark green	FM
Endophoric markers	dark blue	EM
Evidentials	yellow	E
Code glosses	red	CG
Interactional	Colored	
Hedges	pink	H
Boosters	sky blue	B
Attitude markers	purple	AM
Self-mentions	light green	SM
Engagement markers	orange	EngM
NUMBERS OF WORDS		
NUMBERS OF SENTENCES		