The Impacts of L1 Integration towards General English Classroom of Thai Public University Undergraduate Students: An Account of Learning Motivation Perspective

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Abstract

This mixed method research aimed to: (a) investigate the practical ways that mother-tongue language (L1) can be used to facilitate teaching and learning in an English speaking classroom context and in high level education for public university undergraduates; (b) explore how public university undergraduates use their L1 to help them study in different learning situations in terms of learning motivation. This study focused on high level education and the use of L1 in an English speaking classroom context towards learning motivation. Two hundred and seventy undergraduates were randomly selected using systematic random sampling while twenty-four lecturers were purposively chosen so the insights from the multiple angles could be discovered; thus, five research instruments were used to collect the data in this study. Three significant findings suggest: first, participants advise that L1 should be used in a conclusion stage, for clear and comprehensible subject matter should be done before the end of the instruction. Second, it is convincing that nonnative English speaker lecturers feel guiltier when they use students' mother tongue in the instruction; in the meantime, native English speaker lecturers are willing to employ students' L1 in achieving classroom objectives. With this regard, it can be inferred that non-native English speaker lecturers need supportive insights about effective roles of students' L1 in the target language (L2) classroom. Third, students' mother language motivates more confidence in productive skills, while receptive skills allowed the careful application of L1 to assist students' learning.

Keywords: L1 use, General English Classroom, learning motivation

Introduction and Problem Statements

Students' language ability is related to their academic success in many aspects (Cohen, 2014). Thus, Thai students with low English proficiency studying high level education will surely encounter adjusting difficulties. The environment of both English-delivery classes and non-academic activity will be challenging. Specifically, students find themselves in an educational environment where the teaching style, the language used in the instruction, and the learning context, are different from their formative experiences in terms of expectations, learning support and academic requirements (Bureau of International Cooperation Strategy, 2006). What makes the situation worse is the diversity of language backgrounds encountered, implying a complexity in range of communication. Two languages and literacy are needed in the teaching and learning context which leads to high frustration, confusion and stress amongst non-English speaking background students as they try to master the language of their disciplines and communicate with confidence and competence in the English tertiary environment (Alptekin, 2002).

Though on one hand the English-Only Instruction (EOI) approach may work well in some English classrooms for high achiever students who have strong English proficiency; on the other hand, it may demotivate those in the majority who are considered as low achievers.

It is inarguable to claim that the language barrier is one of the major learning difficulties the learners face in the target language classroom. Moreover, using only the target language (L2) in the classroom may demotivate the learners to participate in classroom activities as they will be bored due to the doubtfulness in communication. Since less participation is paid during the lessons, the learners' learning ability will decrease automatically: discouraging environment, in which only the target language is used, will be harmful to the learners who have low proficiency in the EOI classroom.

Motivation is an important aspect of the learning process. Once individual students employ high motivation in their learning process, learning outcomes are predictably positive (Xu, 2010; Liu, Ahn, Baek, & Han, 2004). To be more specific, 'motivation can be regarded as the most important determiner in learning a second or foreign language successfully' (Xu, 2010, p126). Motivation as a desire to achieve a certain goal is regarded as the force that pushes a learner forward to accomplish a task. Motivation is often seen as a key learner variable because without it the desirable outcome of an activity may not be realized. Indeed, most other learner variables presuppose the existence of at least some degree of motivation (Wongsothorn et al., 2019). Further, motivation can be promoted consciously, which is good news for L2 teachers and learners. This means that by employing students' L1 in the English speaking classroom, it is possible to enhance learners' motivation as Geerson (2013, p 54) explains:

> …the occasional use of Thai in the classrooms may be acknowledged as an effective and efficient teaching strategy to explain particularly difficult linguistic points to learners, as a medium of classroom management, or even as an appropriate affective-motivational strategy (the monolingual fallacy).

Therefore, educator skill in motivating learners is an important aspect of any methodological repertoire (Schmitt, 2002). As student participation during the lesson decreases, the learners' ability to comprehend decreases automatically. In situations where only the target language is used, learners with low proficiency in that language find themselves discouraged and in an environment harmful to their progress (Roberton, Line, Jones, & Thomas, 2000). It is important to understand what knowledge proportion exists among learners and how to balance effective ways to use L1 through academic research. Instructors are then able to manage appropriate use of students' first language within the target language setting moderately. As this current research focuses on the higher education setting, its aim is to investigate appropriate ways to integrate students' L1 in order to improve learner ability, especially for low achievers.

The present situation with Thai undergraduate students at the higher state university level shows the basic core English curriculum is ignoring the students' English proficiency through a standardized advocacy of the English-Only Instruction (EOI) within General English Courses. As a result, the incidence of learning difficulties for low English proficient students studying Basic English courses delivered wholly in the target language (L2) is escalating. The fundamental question therefore remains: "Is there a role for the use of students' first language in an EOI classroom setting?" This interesting question brings the researcher to the statement of the problem of this current study: how can learners overcome their learning difficulties in an environment where they may not understand the lesson content? Mangubhai, (2005) argues that the language barrier is one of the major learning difficulties learners face in the target language classroom; and in this case of this study it is English.

In conclusion, it is desirable to create the most productive learning environment in every classroom. Educators (university lecturers) are responsible for finding the best instructional tools to help the students to pass through their learning obstacles. In light of current state university level oversight of students' language proficiency when learning in an English delivery classroom the language barrier will continue to exacerbate learning difficulties. This study therefore seeks to address whether there is a role for students' L1 in the target setting or not. Likewise, the study expects to clarify how students' L1 can contribute to the learning motivation perspective in order to support English lecturers in preparation of appropriate leaning tasks for their students. In doing so, effective notions of student L1 integration can be stimulated to overcome learning difficulties in the target language (L2) setting. The findings of this study can inform decision-making and policy for relevant authorities responsible for educational development at both macro and micro levels.

Purposes of the Study:
This study aims to:
1. Investigate the practical ways that L1 can be used to facilitate teaching and learning in an English-Only Instruction (EOI) classroom for Thai public university undergraduates.
2. Explore how Thai public university undergraduates use their L1 to assist in different learning situations in terms of learning motivation.

Research Question(s):
To achieve the study purposes two research questions are posed:
1. What are the practical ways that L1 is used to facilitate teaching and learning in an English-Only Instruction (EOI) classroom context in high level education for Thai state university undergraduates?
2. How can Thai public university undergraduates use their L1 to help them learn more effectively in different learning situations at a high level of education in terms of learning motivation?

Relative to Thailand, little research attention is devoted to consideration of the use of students' L1 functioning as a tool to overcome learning difficulties in an English-Only Instruction (EOI) context. Therefore, it is essential to engage with the real context in order to understand the present classroom situation and the impact the drive for students' L1 incorporation is having in the classroom. It is important to understand what challenges lecturers and students face in the instruction and how to adequately implement students' L1 in the EOI setting. These statements indicate urgent questions need to be answered as it seems there is no clear guidelines established regarding how native and non-native lecturers can balance the use between students' L1 and a target language (L2) in order to improve students' learning ability.

Consequently, this current research investigates L1 functions in order to provide the foundation of how students' L1 can be used as a tool to overcome their learning difficulties as well as to sensitize such a notion for lecturers. In addition, this study highlights the incorporation of students' L1 use in the English classes in a high level education setting in terms of facilitating students' learning progress and enhancing learning motivation. The understanding involved is critically needed to spread awareness to those stakeholders involved. Then the practical approach of students' L1 use intervention in such settings will be better served.

Review of Literature

The Roles of Students' L1 in English Classroom
The use of learners' first language (L1) is a debatable issue in second language (L2) education for years. Based on the English-Only Instruction (EOI), language learners are usually encouraged to use L2 in their classroom activities; meanwhile, students' L1 will be discouraged for not being used as much as possible. Thus students are pushed to produce the target language (L2) as much as possible as well as Brooks and Do (1994) note that teachers are sometimes avoid using group work just because they feel that students will use their L1 in during group activity.

There are the growing numbers of research studies in which to advocate the use of students' L1 in the classroom; for instance, Hall (2017) unveiled empirical evidence supporting the idea of L1 as a helpful tool in the ESL/EFL classroom. Schweers conducted a survey comparing lecturers' and students' opinions towards the use of Spanish in English classes at the University of Puerto Rico. The findings indicated that more than 80% of the students believed that Spanish should be employed in their English classrooms. Moreover, 86% of the participants preferred Spanish to be used when difficult concepts are taught on each topic. This means that most of the participants in this study thought that Spanish facilitated their learning in English classrooms. Considering the perception of the instructors, all of the lecturers admitted that Spanish used in English classes was effective as well as was helpful towards their teaching. Therefore, the research results clearly proved that both students and lecturers advocated the use of L1 in their English classrooms.

The issue of the learner's first language (L1) in the foreign language classroom has been an arguable discussion for a long time. In the field of second language teaching and learning, Thai people believe that the most productive way to learn a new language is to be immersed in the target language (L2). If a student wants to learn English well, then he or she must listen, speak, read, and write in English as much as possible. In Thailand, people also believe that a native English-speaker lecturers are the ideal language teachers as they are believed to offer a perfect target language classroom (Wiriyachitra, 2001). However, due to the low English proficiency, some students almost learn nothing or little knowledge conveyed by means of English. Needless to say, they get frustrated and eventually to become demotivated learners in their English language learning (Larsen-Freeman, 2009). As Laopongharn and Sercombe (2009) point out, adult English learners' failure in completing the course and the poor attendance result from lack of comprehensible input and frustration.

Although those who support English-only learning environments claim that the benefits of exposing the learners to English as much as possible is the effective way to help students learning English, recent research confirmed that the use of L1 increases both learning and comprehension in the target language (L2) classroom (Miles, 2004; Storch& Wigglesworth, 200). As you can see, there seem to be a continuity of the discussion about how students' L1 can play the role in L2 teaching and learning; hence the answer of this crucial question is a challenging goal for those who are in the field and of course it is worth finding the right answer.

Necessity of L1 for Instructional Purposes
The most obvious reason to doubt the effectiveness of English-Only Instruction (EOI) is the learner's inability to understand the incoming language since all instruction will be taught in the target language (L2). In other words, the learners get lost easily when the lecturers talk to them in the L2 simply because they are not ready for it. To be more specific, the students' linguistic competency of the target language is not sufficient for them to cope with the arriving message, which thus turns into incomprehensible input (University of Michigan,

n.d.). Thus, Prodromou (2002) suggest that probably the most effective way for the limited-English-proficient learner to learn new knowledge more effectively and to connect such knowledge to their structure of existing knowledge is to employ his L1 to learn the target language classroom.

Moreover, Miles (2004) suggests that the idea of "English-Only" in the English as a second language (ESL) class should be workable but the use of L1 should be more efficient and more successful. From the day human beings were born, they have learned their native language in an immersion environment; naturally, people are easily convinced that because the immersion process by which children learn a new language is as effective as it should be similarly effective for adults. In contrast, for adult language learners, the process can be frustrating, very difficult and time-consuming (Miles, 2004). Similarly, Mason (2006) states that adults' information processing is different from children's with respect to learning to read L2. Children adopt a bottom-up approach to make sense of their reading materials when learning to read L2 input; whereas adult learners are able to take advantage of the knowledge they have attained from their L1 and transfer it to L2.

The issue of whether L1 should be used in the English class has been debated for several years. Both proponents and opponents propose rationales to support their beliefs. As Turnbull (2001) states, proponents of English-only in the class stress the benefits of the quantity of exposure to the target language. They firmly believe that L1 should be completely excluded from the classroom. They also suppose that maximising the exposure, or "time on task" to the target language (L2) leads to language learning attainments in the form of successful and confident language use. On the other hand, the supporters for L1 use have strong belief in the Threshold Hypothesis proposed by Cummins (1979). The hypothesis is that an individual's achievement in L2 relies heavily on the level of their mastery of the native language. Therefore, the most positive cognitive effects come about when both languages are highly developed. In contrast to the "time on task", instruction via the learner's L1 does not cause any harmful outcome on development in the L2 (Cummins, 2000),

Related studies

According to Nation (2003), the use of students' first language (L1) in foreign language teaching creates a friendlier atmosphere than the so called "English-only" approach in the classroom. An appropriate use of L1 offers a familiar and effective way for the learners in order to engage with the learning materials, which will save time and keep the learner motivated. This is especially so for learners who have limited English proficiency (Nation, 2003). One of the most obvious arguments for English Medium Instruction is that the employment of L1 will slow down the acquisition of the target language (L2). Yet there is evidence against this argument. Jingxia (2010) has studied about the use of L1 in EFL classroom; the research revealed that the incorporation of L1 is prevalent in the EFL classrooms of some Chinese universities and that it plays a positive role in the teaching and learning of English language. The investigation was undertaken at three Chinese universities sought to find out the general situation of the L1 use to Chinese students as well as was proven the positive role of the use of Chinese in the EFL English classroom.

A further study conducted in Thailand (see Nilubol & Sitthitikul, 2016) suggests that the value of the L1 in scaffolding interaction is apparent in the context and exemplifies quite a different communication from that available monolingually. In monolingual teacher prompting, it may be said that if a teacher uses only L2 to explain new L2 vocabulary, benefits may accrue as students are led to operate in the target language. Moreover, as they experience L2 exclusively, students can develop strategies for surviving in L2 on occasions when meanings are not known or not fully clear. However, such exclusive use of L2 may not

serve as the most effective and efficient means of rendering meaning. Moreover, a belief in the value of confining vocabulary explanation to L2 synonyms can also sometimes buttress an anti-bilingual dictionary stance. It appears that rather than offering potentially confusing synonyms in the target language, meaning can more accurately and swiftly be provided by translating into L1 (Turnbull, 2001). The variance in studies indicates that there seems to be some room for L1 use in the target language context; in other words, a careful use of students' L1 may be beneficial towards teaching and learning at EFL context (Nilubol, 2016).

Lately, scholars seem to separate into two major groups which are positive supporters and the dissenters. Some researchers encourage practitioners to use L1 to facilitate their students' learning in a second language environment, but the others try to push out the conceptual idea of English-Only Instruction (EOI) which is to have students interact with only L2 during the lessons. The two opposing camps, clambering for victory, have been colliding for almost a decade (Wongsothorn et al., 2002). The findings of this empirical study can be a call to attention for authorities whose objective is to develop and improve the educational system with more consideration on the notion of student's L1.

Methodology

Population and Sample
With the intention of discovering holistic aspects of the data from multiple angles there were four major groups of participants: native English-speaker lecturers (NEL); non-native English-speaker lecturers (NNEL); high English proficiency undergraduate students (high achiever); and low English proficiency undergraduate students (low achiever). Also, the notion of multiple angle viewing seeks to avoid bias in the study.

There were four out of eight native English-speaker lecturers (NEL) purposively chosen from the research site. Both experienced and inexperienced in teaching ESL and EFL undergraduates at the research context: an experienced lecturer teaches at least three years in the field while an inexperience lecture has worked less than three years in the research context. Since the NELs are not able to communicate in Thai, the researcher would like to examine how they perceive the use of students' L1 in the context. Also, the notions from different angles will be discovered to avoid bias in the study. In the meantime, twenty NNELs were chosen as representatives of forty lecturer population at the research context and all of them are able to communicate in English proficiently. As NNELs are Thais who passed through the stages of learning English and their experience in teaching at the research context: the notions being gathered from them will be useful in studying the incorporation of students' L1 in the context. Table 1 shows demographic information about the lecturer participants' ESL or EFL teaching experience as explained.

Table 1: Frequency and percentage of lecturers' length of ESL or EFL teaching experience   (N = 24)

Length	Frequency	Percentage
Less than 1 year	2	8.3
1 – 3 years	5	20.8
3 – 5 years	5	20.8
More than 5 years	12	50.0
Total	24	100.0

Another group of the participants in this study is 6,000 undergraduates, according to the registration system, from both main campus and Nong Khai campus. By using Yamane's

formula of sample size with an error 5% and with a confidence coefficient of 95% (Yamane, 1973).

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

The calculation from the formula above came up with 270 undergraduate students from the first- year and the second-year: general English courses are mainly conducted with all levels (Level 1 to Level 7, see Figure 1) in the mentioned year group. Again, both high achievers and low achievers will be chosen to participate in this study in order to gain in-depth notion about the implementation of the students' L1 in the context. To be more accurate in considering the high and the low achievers, the researcher categorised these two group based on the learners' English proficiency from the standadised English test score, which the participants used to apply for the university: the participants whose English test score is higher than 50% will be considered as high achievers; on the other hand, those whose English test score is lower than 50% will be considered as low achievers. Moreover, the researcher will confirm the participants' language level with their English lecturers in order to make sure that the participants will be put into the right group according to their language ability.
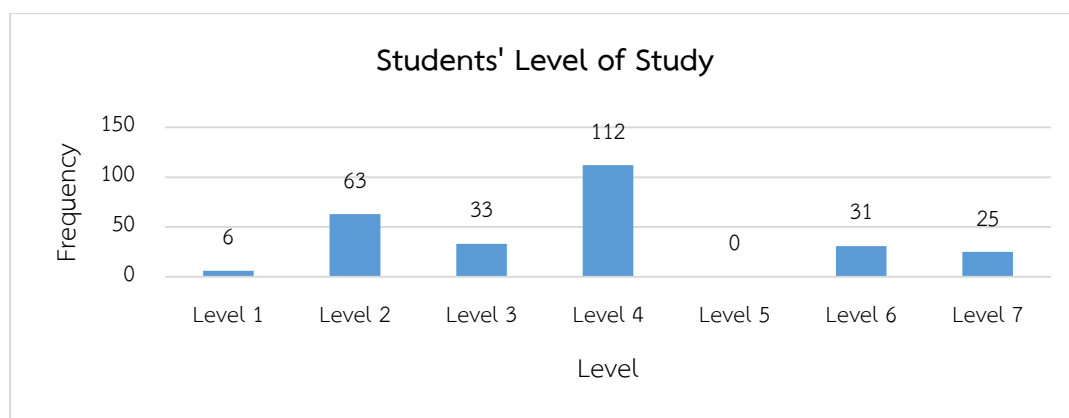

Figure 1. Frequency of students' level of study (N = 270)

All participants were selected by employing two sampling techniques: first, the undergraduate participants were chosen by systematic random sampling as the population was large. The population, according to university registrations, were alphabetised by name list to ensure that all the population had an equal chance to be chosen. The second sampling technique was a purposive sampling. NELs and NNELs were chosen based on the maximum variation sampling basis, which seeks a wide range of extremes and is the principle that deliberately tries to interview a very different selection of people to capture a wide range of perspectives from the participants. The section following presents the specific details of the participants from each group:

Data Collection
The study was conducted in three sessions and the research instruments used in each session are discussed accordingly:

Data collection 1: a perspective questionnaire was administered to the participants, both lecturers and undergraduate students. The participants were given a few days to finish, thus giving them ample time to think and consider their answers. To be more specific, the Perspective Questionnaire (For lecturer) was adapted from the attitude of using native language (Korean) in ELT classrooms of Kim and Petraki (2009) and the Perspective

Questionnaire (For student) was adapted from the beliefs measurement called "the Inventory for Beliefs about Translation (IBT)." --this questionnaire was used to investigate the student participants' belief towards the use of L1 in their classroom in Liao's (2006) study. Also, the questionnaire was translated into Thai to assure that student participants have clear understanding about the questions since there were low English proficiency participants included in this study.

Data collection 2: semi-structured interviews were conducted with a purposive sample of the lecturers and students. Lecturer participants were interviewed in English. Student participant interviews, with both high achieving and low achieving learners, were conducted in Thai as they may not be so comfortable to do the interview in English. Using Thai helped them express their answers more clearly and accurately.

Data collection 3: longitudinal observations conducted within the classroom and across a whole semester (in order to get reliable results) were used to triangulate notions gained from the questionnaire and the semi-structure interviews. Both teachers and students were observed in all groups being studied.

An informal pilot study was conducted with a small group of the lecturers and students at the researcher's home institution. Conducting a local pilot study permitted the researcher to ask the participants for suggestive feedback on the research instruments and it also helped eliminate the researcher's bias (Mason, 2006). By using the educational experts' feedback from the pilot research the instruments were refined.

Data Analysis

The 294 data questionnaires (lecturer and student participants), 14 semi-structured interviews (lecturer and student participants), and longitudinal classroom observations informed the study. The result from the questionnaires, interviews, and observations were submitted to the participants in order to confirm reliability. A combination of deductive and inductive approaches were used for the analysis of both types of data (Patton, 2002). First deductive coding followed priori categories. Second, inductive coding continued to identify and carefully improve such categories.

The SPSS programme was used to analyse the data from the questionnaires; Mean and Standard Deviation (S.D.) were taken into account in order to display the research results of this paper more effectively. Firstly, the questionnaires were administered to all participants; graphs and charts helped the researcher present a clearer picture of the result of the study. Secondly, the programme was used to calculate the result of the classroom observation check list in order to present a clearer picture of the correspondence amongst the research instruments used in the earlier steps.

The researcher then coded the interview data through repeated readings all of the transcripts. First, open coding was done using coloured markers to highlight related sentences. Second, through axial coding, coloured sentences were grouped according to the research questions. Considering the relationship among those coloured sentences enabled them to be categorised. Finally, selective coding allowed refinements to develop theoretical themes. Constant comparative analysis supported triangulated confirmation thereby validating the categories and themes and increasing the reliability of the findings (Patton, 2002).

As Mouton and Marais (1990) described, the concept of triangulation is sometimes used to explain the combination of qualitative and quantitative methodology. Further, the term triangulation refers mainly to the use of multiple methods of data collection to increase the reliability of the research result. To employ both qualitative and quantitative approaches within this study, data triangulation from multiple data collection sources were used herein (Denzin, 2000). According to Polit and Beck (2004), this triangulation aims to provide a basis

for convergence on the truth. They also advocate that "by using multiple methods and perspectives, the researcher strive to sort out 'truth' information from 'error' information" (p.429).

Results

Practical Ways L1 Can Be Used in an English-Only Instruction (EOI) Classroom
The data from this investigation revealed that both native and non-native speaker lecturers agreed towards the use of students' L1 in the learning environment. They supported the use of Thai language as a teaching and learning tool in order to enhance students' English learning ability. Table 2 describes lecturers' positive attitudes towards the usefulness of L1 in English-speaking classroom. As you can see in the below table, participants agreed that L1 is useful in English-speaking classroom, especially for pre-intermediate students (M = 3.81, $S.D.$ = .85) and intimidate students (M = 3.41, $S.D.$ = .79). For upper-intermediate students; however, participants showed neutral attitudes (M = 2.88, $S.D.$ = 1.07) which means that L1 could purposively use when necessary in particular stages during classroom activities.

Table 2: Descriptive statistics for positive attitudes towards the usefulness of L1 in English-speaking classroom (N = 24)

Level of students	Level of attitude		
	Mean	***S.D.***	**Interpretation**
Beginner to pre-intermediate students	3.81	.85	Agree
Intermediate students	3.41	.79	Agree
Upper-intermediate to advanced students	2.88	1.07	Neutral

Note. S.D. represents standard deviation

Meanwhile, the above research findings indicated that the attitudes of both native and nonnative speaker lectures towards the use of students' L1 in their instructions went to the positive scale. According to the data collected from the perspective questionnaires and the semi-structured interviews, the lecturers from both groups agreed that the use of Thai helps students learn English better; besides, both experienced and inexperienced lecturers had the same attitudes towards the incorporation of students' L1 in their instruction. This can be concluded that lecturers in the research context advocated the use of students' L1 as a helpful tool to develop their teaching. Moreover, the data from the classroom observation demonstrated that native speaker lecturers sometimes allowed high achiever students to explain the meaning of the words and expressions to the low achiever students.

In addition, lecturers and students advised several practical ways which they found useful in overcoming learning difficulties that occur during the instruction at the research site. The outstanding practical ways were: first, inexperienced lecturers advocated the use of students' L1 at the beginning stage of the lesson, which is to give instructions. Second, all inexperienced lecturers saw the benefit of explaining the meaning of words or expressions of the target language in students' mother tongue. Experienced lecturers found students' L1 is good for clarifying English sentences. Both experienced and inexperienced lecturers emphasised that classroom management and the encouragement of students' discipline should not be incorporated with the students' mother tongue. Third, the students, both high achievers and low achievers, agreed with the use of their L1 to explain complicated content such as grammar rules and sentence structures. High achieving students strongly agreed with the use

of the mother tongue to explain the content being taught in the classroom. Additionally, low achiever students were more comfortable using their mother tongue to ask and express their thoughts in the classroom. Once they had confidence to ask and talk, they could be moved on to another step in their learning pathway.

The below quotations displayed empirical evidences to support significant implementation of students' L1 in terms of facilitating teaching and learning in an English-Only Instruction (EOI) classroom.

"The most challenging aspect is my studentśre always worried about their gramma knowledge. Also, they don't know how to form a sentence in order offer their messages. However, they said that they want to master in speaking English as much as possible. Also the number of students in the class sometimes do not allow every student to have time to speak English."

(T 002)

"If the lesion is related to force difficult expressions or gramma, they teacher should Thai explain for able students to make sure that they can put into practices."

(T 004)

"Teaching listening skill required to use Thai, especially beginners because they may have problems about understanding native accents. So using Thai can benefit them to understand both vocabulary and phonetic aspects."

(T 012)

"L1 should be used to explain the meaning or expressions that are not familiar to Thai culture. Listening is a commonly difficult skill to activate, L1 shall help reduce anxiety"

(T 022)

"I think reading skill is required using Thai a lot for both beginners to intermediate students. This skill is a problem for my friends and I to understand what passage is mainly discussed."

(S 106)

"L1 is beneficial for translation in reading. Reading comprehension can't be translated literally, so L1 will play an important role in solving this problem."

(S 002)

"Using L1 in speaking practice is not encouraged, but what the T can do whith L1 is explain the culture   differences and appropriateness when using L2 with L2 speakers. Guide them wider views about different   accents dialect, so they are more open and appreciate their own English."

(T 007)

"L1 is used to explain organization, transition, giving samples to students of good us bad writing. L1 should not be any hindrance in learning writing."

(S 212)

"Most if not all of the students I have taught were born with Thai or some other Thai dialects as their mother tongue. Their perspective is shaped by it. Their world is seen through it. This includes their education. Using Thai as a medium of a certain level can provide them benefits in their learning and in every language skill."

(T 008)

Learning Motivation on Students' L1 Use in Different Language Skills
Table 3 displays students' attitudes towards the usefulness of L1 in learning English. The descriptive statistics show that students' attitudes towards the use of L1 in the English lessons is neutral (M= 3.38, $S.D.$ = .50). According to the below quantitative result, the students tend to agree that L1 help them learn better in reading (M = 3.48, $S.D.$ = .58), writing (M = 3.43, $S.D.$ = .66), and vocabulary (M = 3.74, $S.D.$ = .70). Particularly, the data indicates that the

incorporation of L1 in the English classroom helps students learn, in terms of vocabulary, as it has the highest mean score in the questionnaire.

Table 3: Descriptive statistics of level of attitude towards English learning skills (N = 270)

Skills	Level of attitude		
	Mean	***S.D.***	**Interpretation**
Reading	3.48	.58	Agree
Writing	3.43	.66	Agree
Listening	3.29	.78	Neutral
Speaking	3.33	.60	Neutral
Vocabulary	3.74	.70	Agree
Grammar	3.31	.81	Neutral
Comprehension	3.25	.60	Neutral
Total	3.38	.50	Neutral

Note. S.D. represents standard deviation

Particularly, more questions were inquired during the semi-structured interview to get in-depth notions about how the participants perceived the use of L1 in the four skills of learning a language: listening, speaking, reading, and writing (Crystal, 2001). The findings of this study revealed some predictable, and some more unusual, results accordingly.

First, an unusual finding relates to the incorporation of their L1 in the listening skill. When the same question was asked of low achievers and high achievers, high achievers agreed that they used L1 to translate when they listened to English; they also asserted that mentally translating English into Thai helped them to understand more. Surprisingly, just under half of the low achieving students strongly disagreed about the use of Thai translation in their mind while they were listening to English, while the remainder strongly agreed that the mental translation of English bettered their comprehension when they listened to English.

Second, the speaking skill is considered as the highest expectation from the stakeholders who advertise the use of English-Only Instruction (EOI) at the high level education. One of the most interesting research findings was both high achievers and low achievers did not think of what they would like to say in Thai then translate it into English. Rather, they just expressed their sentences directly in English. Evidently, the participants did not think in Thai first when they wanted to speak English. There were several learning situations where they used their L1 to better their learning ability. For instance, a participant from the low achiever group described the way he used his mother tongue to ask questions in the classroom. Both high achievers and low achievers seemed to use Thai to help them in the speaking skill, especially the low achieving students who needed more English support. It can thus be concluded that asking questions and continuing the conversation are important skills to be incorporated with students' L1 in an EOI context.

Third, in terms of reading skills it was found that Thai translation was helpful for the low achieving students as they often described detailed information about the use of their L1 during reading. The low achievers said L1 helped them learn more effectively and most of the interviewees in the low achiever group indicated that after they read an English passage, they used an available Thai translation to check their comprehension. Moreover, both high achieving students and low achieving students learned English idioms and phrases by reading their Thai translation. Furthermore, both high achieving students and low achieving students thought that English-Thai and Thai-English dictionaries were important to help them with the reading skills.

Fourth, regarding the writing skills: previous research (see Crystal, 2001) shows that students in the class context use their L1 in different ways as well as having different perceptions towards the same issue dependent upon their grouping – high or low achiever. However, both groups worked together in the same situation. Moreover, the interviewees from both groups explained how they used L1 in writing skills as they took notes in Thai, and included Thai translations in their workbooks, while the teacher taught them in English.

In summary, both high achievers and low achievers used their mother tongue to facilitate their learning in different language skills. However, there were two skills which were demonstrated to be very similar in terms of incorporation with students' mother tongue: reading and writing. Both skills allowed the students to think carefully and they could take time in order to apply their L1 to help them learn better and respond more accurately.

ESL/EFL experience affects the use of L1 in the English-Only Instruction (EOI)
The attitudes of both native and non-native speaker lecturers towards the use of students' L1 in their instructions at an English-Only Instruction (EOI) are presented in this section. According to the data collected from both questionnaires and interviews, the lecturers from both groups agreed that the use of Thai helped students learn in an EOI classroom. Likewise, both experienced and inexperienced lecturers had the same attitudes towards the incorporation of students' L1 in their instruction. It can thus be concluded that lecturers generally supported the use of the students' L1 as a helpful tool to enhance their teaching in the research context. Table 4 unveil compared means of lecturers' attitudes about the practical incorporation of L1 in an English Medium Instruction by length of ESL or EFL teaching experience.

Table 4: Compared Means of Lecturers' Attitudes about the Practical Incorporation of L1 in an English Medium Instruction by Length of ESL or EFL Teaching Experience (N = 24)

Teaching experience	N	Level of attitude		
		Mean	*S.D.*	Interpretation
Less than 1 year	2	2.09	.04	Disagree
1 – 3 years	5	3.87	.86	Agree
3 – 5 years	5	3.40	1.17	Neutral
More than 5 years	12	3.07	.65	Neutral
Total	24	3.22	.89	Neutral

Note. S.D. represents standard deviation

The results from Table 4 show that lectures with 1-3 years of ESL or EFL teaching experience agreed with the positive statements about the use of L1 in English classroom (*M* = 3.87, *S.D.* = .86). Interestingly, more experienced lecturers have neutral attitudes: 3-5 years (*M* = 3.40, *S.D.* = 1.17) and more than 5 years (*M* = 3.07, *S.D.* = .65). The findings also revealed that teachers with less than one year of teaching experience tend to disagree with the use of L1 (*M* = 2.09, *S.D.* = .04).

Even though both native and non-native speaker lecturers agreed to the use of L1 with low achieving students, they did not support the use of L1 at all times. All experienced lecturers strongly agreed to moderate use of L1 with low English proficiency students but cautioned against its overuse in the classroom. Surprisingly, half of all the experienced lecturers firmly disagreed with the use of students' mother tongue with intermediate level

students while all participants from the inexperienced lecturers' side advocated the use of L1 with intermediate level students.

As seen in Figure 2, the research findings displayed that both native and nonnative speaker lecturers agreed with the use of Thai in order to help students better their learning capacity ($\bar{x}$ = 3.58, S.D = 1.16); anyhow, all participants disagreed with the frequent use of Thai in their class instructions, even if they could speak Thai. ($\bar{x}$ = 2.25).
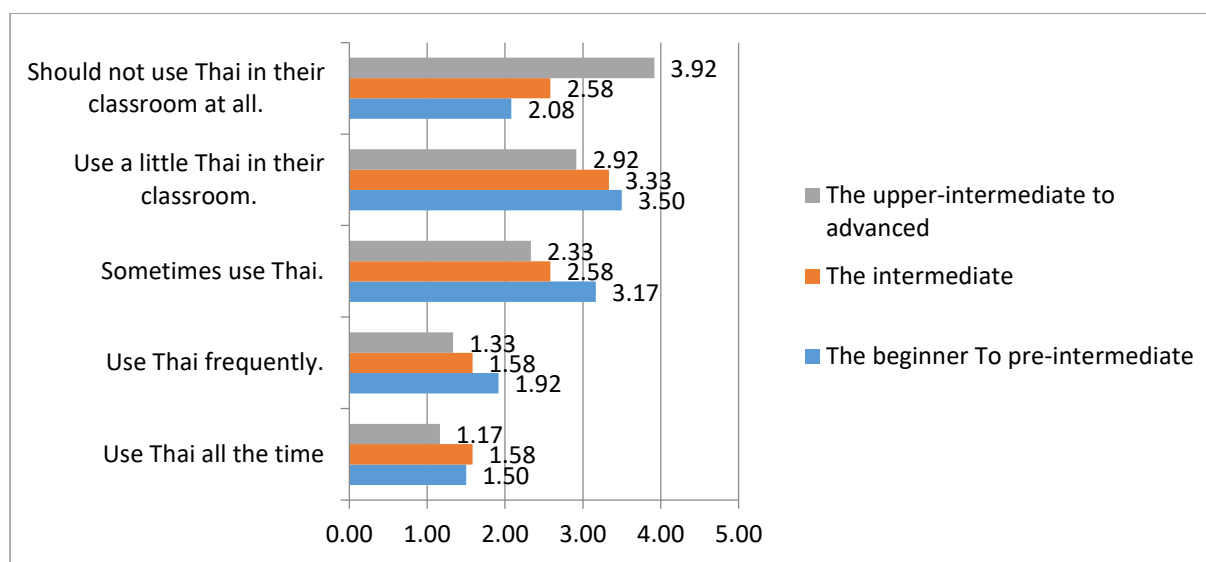

Figure 2. Lecturers' attitudes towards the incorporation of L1

For the beginner to pre-intermediate students, the lecturers agreed that students should be allowed to use Thai in their classroom ($\bar{x}$ = 3.50, S.D = 1.51), and the students should be able to fully use Thai in particular learning situations such as grammatical explanation or difficult content ($\bar{x}$ = 3.17, S.D = 1.40). In relation to this finding, all lecturers disagreed about not using students' L1 in the classroom at all ($\bar{x}$ = 2.08, S.D = 1.51); or in other words, lecturers should use Thai frequently with low achiever students ($\bar{x}$ = 1.92, S.D = 1.24) but not all of the time ($\bar{x}$ = 1.50, S.D = 0.67).

In case of intermediate students, native speaker and nonnative speaker lecturers allowed students to use a little Thai in their classroom ($\bar{x}$ = 3.33, S.D = 1.30); nevertheless, they disagreed with incorporating students' L1 frequently with intermediate students ($\bar{x}$ = 2.58, S.D = 1.62). Besides, nonnative speaker lecturers strongly disagreed to use Thai frequently with intermediate students ($\bar{x}$ = 1.58, S.D = 0.90).

For upper-intermediate to advanced students, lecturers agreed that students in upper-intermediate to advanced classes should not use Thai in their classroom at all ($\bar{x}$ = 3.92, S.D = 1.51). However, some of nonnative speaker lecturers moderately agreed upper-intermediate to advanced students should use a little Thai in their classroom ($\bar{x}$ = 2.92, S.D = 1.68.

In addition to the research finding about native and nonnative speaker lectures' attitudes towards the incorporation of students' L1 at the research context, the insights found from the investigation revealed that students' L1 played some roles in teaching and learning capability of both lecturers and students: different options to be chosen in order to implement students' L1 in the instruction effectively at the research context were based on students' language proficiency. Low achieving students were often allowed to use their L1 in their classroom as they were weak in language but not subject matter; in contrast, intermediate and upper-intermediate to advanced students were pushed to practice their target language skill in the classroom as much as possible.

Discussion
The Use of L1 for Pedagogical Purposes
Anh (2012) stated that students' first language (L1) is believed to be a helpful tool in terms of enhancing learning ability as long as it is pedagogically used. She pointed out that students' L1 facilitated teaching activities in the target language (L2) classroom; however, she emphasised that lecturers should not overuse L1 during the instruction. Halasa and AI-Manaseer's (2012) study suggested that non-native speaker lecturers have no need to feel guilty using their L1 in the classroom if they make a pedagogically informed decision to use L1.

Such comment is in line with the findings of this current study, which found most experienced lecturers did not feel guilty about using students' L1 in the classroom. The findings also showed that the native speaker lecturers use L1 to help them improve their classroom activities. However, they disagreed with using L1 to encourage students' discipline. To make a clear conclusion, both native and non-native lecturers accepted the advantage of using students' L1 in the classroom.

In support, Miles's (2004) study on teachers' and students' perspectives towards the advantages of students' L1 for pedagogical purposes demonstrated it can help students learn English. The Miles participants had studied English for six years at secondary school in Japan and considered Japanese as their L1. They were from the three bottom classes after taking the placement test. Further to this, the teachers were experienced native speakers and some of them could speak Japanese. Miles observed the three classes for five months. English-only was implemented in one class; in the second class, students were allowed to speak only in Japanese; and in the third class, both the teacher and the students could talk in Japanese. The results of the experiment indicated the effectiveness of incorporating L1 in the learning mix.

Furthermore, Dietze, Dietze, and Joyce (2009) investigated the issue in a survey study to explore the attitudes of 21 English language teachers from J. F. Oberlin University in Japan on their use of L1 (Japanese) in their classes, based on pedagogical purposes. All the teachers were qualified in English language teaching with master's degrees or above. The research findings indicated that the careful use of L1 during the instruction could improve students' achievements. They also made good use of L1 when necessary to help students learn based on their students' English proficiency levels, and they switched between the two languages when they felt it was necessary. Those teachers with bilingual capabilities strengthened the notion that the use of L1 makes acquiring L2 easier and more effective. Nevertheless, the integration of students' L1 in an EOI context should be based on only educational purposes where it is considered a helpful tool to facilitate teaching and learning motivation.

Learning Motivation on Students' L1 Transfer during the English-Only Instruction (EOI)
In regard to this current study, both lecturers' and students' perspectives in teaching and learning were explored. The research findings from all four collection modes showed that for students, high achievers and low achievers had different attitudes towards the use of their mother tongue in several learning situations.

The outstanding examples are that the high achievers strongly disagreed with the use of L1 in their instruction; in contrast, low achievers were willing to be able to use their mother tongue in all subjects. Further, both groups perceived the use of L1 in different learning functions such as asking questions during their lessons. One piece of data from the interviews revealed a low achiever student stating that *"If I cannot use Thai to ask questions*

in my classroom, I will not ask anything and keep silent". Similarly, another low achiever student said that *"This is helpful when I ask questions because I can ask what I really want to know and the teacher can answer the right point."* Additionally, as noticed from the classroom observation, low achiever students were more comfortable to participate in classroom activities if their Thai was allowed in such activities.

From the findings presented above, it can be implied that students' L1 should be purposively used with low achiever students at the beginning stage in order to bridge the transition between the Thai-speaking and English-speaking classrooms. Nilubol and Sitthitikul (Year) support that notion, suggesting that once the newcomers (low achiever students) get settled in the new environment and move from the beginner level to intermediate level, lecturers can be sure that English can be used with them effectively. In doing so, lecturers will be able to break down the language barrier many students carry with them when they first arrive at a new school. Furthermore, the use of students' L1 can be purposively incorporated with low achiever students as it will be helpful to facilitate students' learning ability as well as making students more comfortable at the beginning stage of learning within a second language learning environment (Nilubol & Sitthitikul, 2016).

Storch and Wigglesworth (2003) suggest that even the learners who did not use their L1, as reported in the interviews, may still find L1 a useful tool in more meaning-focused activities such as the joint composition task. They noted that the shared L1 could enable students to discuss the prompt and structure of the composition in more depth and thus complete the task more easily. Storch and Wigglesworth (2003) felt that the L1 would be less useful in the text reconstruction task, which was the more grammar-focused task. This study finds that some use of the L1, even in an L2 setting, could be useful, a position supported by Hopkins (2003) who found that some of the students in the English-speaking classroom felt uncomfortable to participate in different classroom activities because they did not understand the native teachers' L2. If participants in the study were not able to comprehend the subject matter, they were not capable of achieving their homework or classroom assignments. On the other hand, high English proficiency students felt comfortable with the native speaker teachers' pedagogy and there was no evidence pointing in the direction of higher achieving learners (faster learners) feeling more at ease with L2 exclusivity.

Moreover, the use of the L1 may assist learners "to gain control of the task" (Brooks &Donato, 1994, p. 271) and work with the task at a higher cognitive level than might have been possible had they been working individually. Thus, in Vygotskian terms, we postulate that the learners may have been extending their zone of proximal development (Lantolf, 2000). Only when learners gain a shared understanding of what they need to do can they proceed with the task. The use of the L1 could also help learners provide each other with definitions of unknown words more directly and perhaps more successfully. The results suggest that L2 teachers may need to reevaluate views concerning the use of the L1 in L2 group and pair work.

The investigation conducted by Nazary (2008) presented the opposite side of students' attitudes towards L1. He explored 85 students' attitudes towards L1 use as well as undertaking a study of the relationship between students' proficiency levels and their attitudes towards L1 use: the L1 of these participants was Farsi. Based on the participants' English proficiency level, they were chosen from elementary level, intermediate level, and advanced level. The study indicated that all participants attended extracurricular programs to improve their general English at Tehran University. The research findings suggested that Iranian university students were reluctant to utilise their L1 in learning English. From the three proficiency levels mentioned, most of them disagreed on the importance of L1 use. They tended to think that maximising exposure to English was the best way to sharpen their English proficiency. In addition, the comparison among the elementary, intermediate, and

advanced level students revealed that the students of intermediate English proficiency had a tendency not to employ their L1 in class activities. They did not expect their teachers to speak L1 when delivering lectures, either.

In summary, the research findings presented highlight various discussions to provide the notion of how to integrate students' L1 use in an EOI context which should be based on only academic purposes. Likewise, a careful guideline is always needed to conduct appropriate teaching and to facilitate students' learning ability. This current research introduces such a notion for all stakeholders and education authorities to consider significant points for the integration of students' L1 in an English-Only Instruction (EOI) context.

Conclusions

Public university lecturers and undergraduate students in the research context coincided the advantages of the incorporation of students' first language (L1) in their instruction, and all uses of the students' L1 must be based on the academic purposes. Interestingly, experiences affect the attitudes of the implementation of the students' L1 for both native and non-native English speaker lecturers. Therefore, it is critical to provide ample experiences to novice lecturers about how to effectively implement student's' L1 for teaching in heterogeneous English-Only Instruction (EOI) classrooms. Experienced lecturers must be responsible in sharing their notions about what is appropriate and when students' L1 can be useful in the EOI context. It is convincing that non-native English speaker lecturers feel guiltier when they use students' L1 in the instruction. In the meantime, native English speaker lecturers are willing to employ students' L1 in carrying out classroom activities. With this regard, it can be inferred that non-native English speaker lecturers need supportive insights about effective roles for the students' L1 in the target language classroom.

Furthermore, the students' language ability was considered as a key factor which affected the attitudes towards the implementation of L1 from the students' side: high English proficiency students saw more effectiveness of L1 when they were allowed to use it in the classroom, and low English proficiency students felt more comfortable when they were able to incorporate their L1 in the research context. In terms of learning motivation, the scale of carrying out the use of L1 in the EOI context went to positive side. Undergraduate students felt more confident to take risk in learning English by being able to incorporate their L1 in the classroom. Besides, research results confirmed that effective use of L1 was applied to help the students learn in all four skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. More importantly, the purposive use of the students' L1 needs to be kept in mind as it may affect the students' target language learning. Therefore, a careful guideline is critical to be conducted in order to better an appropriate incorporation of the students' L1 in an EOI classroom.

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