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# Emotionality and Composition in Thai and in English

Pisarn Bee Chamcharatsri  
*Indiana University of Pennsylvania*

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EMOTIONALITY AND COMPOSITION IN THAI AND ENGLISH

A Dissertation

Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies and Research

in Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Philosophy

Pisarn Bee Chamcharatsri

Indiana University of Pennsylvania

August 2012

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Indiana University of Pennsylvania  
School of Graduate Studies and Research  
Department of English

We hereby approve the dissertation of

Pisarn Bee Chamcharatsri

Candidate for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

---

David I. Hanauer, Ph. D.  
Professor of English, Advisor

---

Patrick A. Bizzaro, Ph. D.  
Professor of English

---

Sharon K. Deckert, Ph. D.  
Associate Professor of English

---

Thom G. Huebner, Ph. D.  
Professor of Linguistics  
San Jose State University

ACCEPTED

---

Timothy P. Mack, Ph. D.  
Dean  
School of Graduate Studies and Research



Title: Emotionality and Composition in Thai and in English

Author: Pisarn Bee Chamcharatsri

Dissertation Chair: Dr. David I. Hanauer

Dissertation Committee Members: Dr. Patrick A. Bizzaro  
Dr. Sharon K. Deckert  
Dr. Thom G. Huebner

This empirical study examined the perceptions and experiences of nine Thai college student writers' expression of emotions in poetry, narrative, and opinionated writing written in their first (L1) and second (L2) languages: Thai and English. The study focused on the participants' perspectives in order to gain more understanding of the phenomenon of expressing emotions in writing in different languages.

The participants were nine Thai college students who attended a public university in Thailand. The data, gathered over three months, included 54 written responses and 36 interview sessions. The written responses included poems, narrative stories, and opinionated writing both in Thai and English. The interviews were conducted in Thai, transcribed, and translated into English. The interviews were then analyzed from two aspects: focusing on each individual's perceptions and experiences and focusing on genre writing and their emotionality writing experiences.

This study's analysis suggested that the participants had positive responses to the written tasks when expressing emotions through different genres in L1 and L2. It also showed that emotions are one of the crucial elements in participants' writing experiences and that cultural and linguistic identities played important roles in the tasks of emotionality writing in both languages. The emotionality writing helped L2 learners gain meta-linguistic awareness of L1 and L2 and reflect on their language learning and

personally significant experiences. Through that awareness, L2 learners could become educators for others who want to learn about their L1. The emotionality written tasks allowed the participants to reflect on their language learning and personally significant experiences. This study argued that emotionality writing should be encouraged in L2 writing classrooms and addressed the ramifications of expanding of L2 writing on a pedagogical level.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Writing a dissertation is like climbing a mountain. Working on this dissertation, I planned a trip, packed appropriate tools and equipment, climbed up and down mountains, acclimatized myself, pitched a tent, and headed to its peak. Finishing this dissertation is like reaching the peak of one mountain that oversees other peaks. One should never undertake the journey of mountain climbing alone, nor write a dissertation. The completion of this dissertation involved many people to whom I wanted to express my gratitude.

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## CHAPTER ONE

### EMOTIONALITY WRITING

#### **Epigraph 1**

In a composition classroom in an American university, I taught a mainstream College Writing course with 25 students, all of whom used English as their first language (L1). I asked students to work on two major assignments -- one a creative writing assignment focused on their life experiences, another on academic writing in which students needed to incorporate other texts into their paper. For the first assignment, students were asked to focus on significant moments in their lives (Hanauer, personal communication). One student told me in the Fall semester that he focused his creative work on his unpleasant experiences and that he felt worse while writing about those experiences. What he said next amazed me; he told me that after writing about those experiences, he felt much better and was relieved that he had had the chance to express those stories in written format. As for the second assignment, students reported that they were frustrated with the process of selecting topics, finding relevant sources, and writing their papers. Some of them felt lost because they were only then learning the skills necessary for accomplishing the assignment. Another extreme situation was when one student came to class with a sad face, saying that her house burned down and everything was lost.

#### **Epigraph 2**

As an intern in a College Writing course for English as a Second Language (L2) for two years, I had a chance to observe and respond to L2 students as they performed different aspects of writing. One common theme for most L2 students was the difficulty

they experienced in expressing themselves in writing. One such assignment was to compose poems focused on significant moments in their lives or their study abroad experiences (Hanauer, 2010). One Mexican male student wrote a poem, which appeared in Hanauer (2010):

First day of going to class  
First day school in America

Afraid to get in  
Getting into a classroom  
Sitting there

Feeling lonely  
Everyone staring at me  
I feel like I am in the dark

Afraid to speak  
I could not make friends  
I feel insignificant

(Hanauer, 2010, p. 107)

### **Composition and Emotion**

Although composition is a branch of classical rhetoric, the issue of emotion in writing had not gained much attention from compositionists until recently. Looking at classical rhetoric, Aristotle (1984) proposes that when speakers arrange their speech, they “must not only try to make the argument...demonstrative and worthy of belief; [they] must also make [their] own character look right and put [their] hearers, who are to decide, into the right frame of mind” (p. 90). In other words, speakers need to present their selves (*ethos*) “as having a good moral character” (Cherry, 1998, p. 386), their emotions (*pathos*) “arousing an appropriate emotional response in the audience” (Cherry, 1998, p.

386), and involve their logic (*logos*) -- “[or] principles of sound argumentation” (Cherry, 1998, p. 386) when giving speeches. Aristotle (1984) also asserts that “Emotions are all those feelings that so change men as to affect their judgments...” (p. 91). In order to make successful speeches, orators must make their audiences feel emotionally elevated (Aristotle, 1984).

In the field of composition, when one hears the term “emotion” or “affect”, what may come to mind is Flower and Hayes’ (1981) seminal study of the cognitive process of composing by American students. The researchers employ the think aloud protocol and proposed three areas that influence the writing process: “the task environment, the writer’s long-term memory, and the writing processes” (Flower & Hayes, 1981, p. 369). The omission of the emotional aspect has been discussed by Brand (1991), in which she questions and critiques Flower and Hayes’s (1981) study of cognitive processes of writing, finding that “it precludes access to affective phenomena by excluding them from research plans and any corresponding pedagogies” (Brand, 1987, p. 440). Other scholars (Brand & Powell, 1986; Ritchie, 1989) including McLeod (1991) agree that the study of cognitive process on writing is incomplete if emotions are left out of the picture: “...if we are to understand the whole process, we need to look at affective as well as cognitive phenomena” (p. 96; 1997).

In response to this call, Hayes revises his social-cognitive model, calling it an “individual-environmental model” (p. 5). He points out that this revised model had “a significant place...for motivation and affect in the framework” and claimed that “there is ample evidence that motivation and affect play central roles in writing processes” (Hayes, 1996, p. 5). The affective aspects that Hayes adds to the model have motivated new

writing research goals based on Pennebaker and Beall's (1986) psychotherapeutic study (Hayes, 1996; Pennebaker & Beall, 1986).

In the research literature on writing, affect and emotion are closely tied to the expressive function of language. As Kinneavy (1971) posits in his book, *A Theory of Discourse*, expressive discourse

...involves some process of externalization or action dictated by the presence of a goal to be achieved. This notion of expression is not therefore a simple discharge of emotion or a relaying of impressions; the emotion must be directed to an aim (p. 401).

Kinneavy goes on to say that we as human beings need language to find ourselves and express our thoughts and that "[we] use language to achieve the projects which [we] value, and the desire for the project has an emotional component" (Kinneavy, 1971, p. 403). Kinneavy's point is similar to that made by Elbow (1998a) about the use of freewriting with students to find their selves and voices in their writing. During the process of finding their voices, students may see themselves as explorers "...on a journey -- a path toward new thoughts, feelings, memories and new modes of seeing and writing" (Elbow, 1998a, p. 284). This is similar to expressive pedagogy in which students are asked to explore themselves through their experiences. Cherry (1998) writes an article, *Ethos and Persona: Self-representation in Written Discourse*, in which he discusses the concept of *Ethos* or self-representation in written discourse. He encourages compositionists to study the presentation of self in written discourse. As Ritchie (1989) notes, students bring into our classes "the unique histories...[and] often powerful, sense of self which developed as they experimented with new forms of written expression" (p.

156). Coincidentally, Newkirk (1997) also looks at students' writing from Goffman's (1959) performative theory. What Newkirk does with his students is to bring in autoethnographic writing to his class where students write about their personal experiences. Activist and author bell hooks (1994) also supports this same concept of students bringing their experiences into the classroom in what she calls "engaged pedagogy...[which] means that teachers must be actively committed to a process of self-actualization..." (Hooks, 1994, p. 15). Gradin extends the concept of voice and expressive pedagogy by expanding into what she deems

social-expressivism...that [allows] students to carry out the negotiation between self and world. A first step in this negotiation must be to develop a clear sense of one's own beliefs as well as a clear sense of how one's own value system intersects or not with others, and how, finally, to communicate effectively" (1995, p. xv).

What she defines above somewhat echoes Kinneavy's position in his chapter on *Expressive Discourse*, namely that when writers use language to express their feelings and thoughts, they have a sense of audience and/or an aim to accomplish. However, Gradin adds a social component to Kinneavy's expressive discourse. She proposes that compositionists should not ignore the personal experiences that students bring into our classrooms. hooks (1994) agrees that "[students] rightfully expect that [teachers] will not offer [students] information without addressing the connection between what they are learning and their overall life experiences" (p. 19). As Gradin explicates,

writing, for expressivists, is an act of the whole being; it is through reflecting, questioning, feeling, experiencing, reasoning, and imagining that writers become

writers. While this might seem an ambitious and ideal approach to writing instruction, I would argue that it is just such an ideal that we need to hold to fully educate students in a system that often denies the emotive, creative, and imaginative aspects of the intellect (1995, p. 57).

Micciche (2007) notes that we construct or perform ourselves everyday through our "...crafted narratives and familiar plot-lines" (p. 51). Spigelman (2004) similarly states that "...we understand that the stories we tell ourselves of our experiences come filtered through the collective subjectivities of our social and cultural relationship, so that our interpretations of experience are not simply individual processes" (p. 63). From this perspective, students are being perceived not solely as cognitively involved in their writing process, but socially and emotionally involved as well. Gradin observes

...if we allow the students to examine first their own feelings, beliefs, and the way in which their experiences have brought them..., they are then able to at least begin the process of negotiating difference and seeing how they relate to and in the larger social world (Gradin, 1995, p. 119).

One of the issues that concern compositionists is the under-preparation in dealing or talking with students when tasking them with writing about their personal stories. This may be because emotion or affect in the writing classroom is under-theorized and most teachers are not prepared to deal with issues that they do not feel comfortable discussing with their students (Bishop, 1993; Micciche, 2007). Berman (2001) cautions that "teachers who encourage personal writing may find themselves emotionally or legally unprepared for their students' self-disclosure..." (p. 10). Another explanation might be that teachers are trained to focus on writing skills and leave the students' emotion out of

the process (Knoblauch & Brannon, 1984). Another discussion of emotions in composition classrooms comes from hooks (1994) who writes,

the presence of feelings, of passions, may not allow for objective consideration of each student's merit. But this very notion is based on the false assumption that education is neutral, that there is some 'even' emotional ground we stand on that enables us to treat everyone equally, dispassionately (p. 198).

In an attempt to be objective to all students, this may be one of the reasons some teachers decide to devise writing assignments that are not related to students' personal lives. Moffett (1994) encourages compositionists to bring back personal stories to writing classrooms because isolating writing skills "loses its grounding in emotions and the senses, in private and social experience..." (p. xi). Bishop (1993) suggests that "when writing is demystified -- understood as a useful, personal, and productive activity...-- then the activity of writing and teaching writing becomes radically more democratic. We all have life histories that are in need of and available for exploration" (p. 506).

Referring back to Epigraph 1, I cannot ignore the stories students brought into my composition classrooms. As for the first student, I can relate to my student's feeling of relief. During the writing process, when people start writing about their emotionally charged experiences, they tend to feel sad or angry. Once the writing is done, they may feel emotionally and physically healthier (Pennebaker & Chung, 2007).

### **Second Language Writing and Emotion**

An applied linguist, Aneta Pavlenko, asks the following questions in her important book, *Emotions and Multilingualism*.

What is the nature of the emotional bonds that tie individuals to their languages? How do these ties influence self-expression? What are the consequences of living in exile [or abroad], away not only from one's country but also from one's language? What happens when one falls in love across a language boundary? (Pavlenko, 2005, p. 22)

Second language learners may feel frustrated, confused, and lost as they attempt to express their emotions in another language. Their situation is exacerbated as they struggle to identify the emotionally equivalent terms that they think best represent what they wish express in another language.

Such situations pose complex questions -- If a person speaks more than one language, in which language would he/she express his/her emotions? If one wants to express his/her emotions, would he/she express it verbally or in written form? These are a few interesting questions that always trigger conversation among language learners, teachers, and applied linguists. Thus in this dissertation, as a second language writer and an applied linguist, I intend to explore the relationship between writing and emotion from a second language (L2) writing perspective.

Many studies have been conducted investigating how L2 learners express their emotions through verbal interactions and how second language users narrate their personal stories (Pavlenko & Driagina, 2007; Rajagopalan, 2004; Rintell, 1990). Other researchers show how L2 learners use emotion-laden words to express notions of love (Dewaele 2008, 2010) or anger (Dewaele 2004, 2006, 2010; Dewaele & Pavlenks 2002; Pavlenko 2001a, 2008a) in English and other languages. Other studies have analyzed how authors of published memoirs discuss their experiences of emotions in English



(Besemeres, 2004, 2006; Hogan, 2010; Pavlenko, 2002a) or in English as a “stepmother tongue” (Novakovich & Shapard, 2000). Still others have explored the roles of cognition and emotion in the written discourse of L2 learners (Clachar, 1999). The act of writing about emotional experiences by L2 writers “entails reflecting on states of feeling often not perceived by others, and thus experienced as *interior*, rather than located in the social domain” (Besemeres, 2006, p. 36). Recently, the counter argument presented by Rimé (2009a, 2009b) asserts that emotions are not entirely individual, but socially situated and contextualized, “exemplifying the dynamic process through which individuals constantly reconfigure their experience as a function of the elements of their psychological field -- events or persons” (Rimé, 2009b, p. 94).

The student who composed the poem in Epigraph 2 described his first day of school in America. He felt anxious and lonely as he said that he was “afraid” to walk into the classroom. As he sat in the classroom by himself and feeling “insignificant”, he imagined himself sitting in a dark room. Readers can emotionally understand how the student felt without an explicit explanation of his feelings. The poetry assignment aimed to help L2 students overcome the focus on form/grammar instructions that they had in their previous learning experiences. Instead, they were to focus on the content/message of what they wanted to say (Hanauer, personal communication; Chamcharatsri, 2009). Poetry helps students express feelings previously unexpressed. Agreeing with Bolton (2004, 2008), Hanauer (2010) writes, “poetry is useful for eliciting succinct, emotion-laden understandings of self experience” (p. 134). But it is not without its challenges. Pavlenko and Driagina (2007) rightly point out that “[t]he task of interpreting, communicating, and describing emotions in a second language (L2) is even harder

because different languages have distinct emotion vocabularies and ways of expressing emotions” (p. 91).

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to empirically investigate the relationship between emotion and writing in undergraduate Thai students. By researching how second language users express emotions, we as educators will gain a better understanding of the role of language used to express emotions in both the mother tongue and in a second language, as people from different cultures express their emotions differently (Besemeres, 2004; Dewaele, 2010). The goals of this empirical study are: 1) to understand the role of both languages, Thai and English, in expressing emotions; 2) to examine the relationship between the act of writing and the expression of emotions in a second language; and 3) to broaden the field of second language acquisition’s knowledge of that relationship. This study may contribute to sociolinguistic, pragmatic, and applied linguistic scholarship.

Based on the goals stated above, this study is guided by the following research questions:

1. In what ways do undergraduate Thai students understand and experience/perceive emotional writing in Thai as their first language?
2. In what ways do undergraduate Thai students understand and experience/perceive emotional writing in English as their second language?
3. Are there differences in undergraduate Thai students’ understanding of emotional writing in Thai and in English?

4. Are there differences in undergraduate Thai students' understanding of emotional writing in different genres?

### **Significance of this Study**

What is the role of language and emotion? This study expands the conversation of emotionality and second language writing studies through an examination of students' perceptions of expressing emotions through writing. Some studies suggested that bilinguals had difficulties in expressing themselves emotionally in their second/less dominant languages (Dewaele, 2010; Pavlenko, 2005). This study aims to expand the conversation of how bilinguals perceived their emotions in writing. Language learning and teaching research tends to avoid emotionality issues as being abstract, when in fact emotionality is the central part of the language learning experience. In relation to the field of composition, this study attempts to expand the conversation on emotionality and writing that students brought into my composition classes. As the study of writing and emotionality in second language writing is under-researched, this study will compel second language writing scholars to pay attention to the issue of writing and expressing emotions in another language.

### **Overview of Upcoming Chapters**

This dissertation consists of six chapters. Chapter One introduces the issue being investigated by providing an overview of the study, its purpose, and its significance. Chapter Two reviews relevant research and the theory of social construction of emotions and writing in clinical psychology, composition, creative writing, and second language writing. Chapter Three reviews a brief language education in Thailand. Chapter Four

presents the methodology, including the theoretical perspectives, research methods, research site, tools, and data analysis process used to conduct this study.

The data analysis process is further explained in Chapter Five, which focuses on the participants' perceptions of their experiences in expressing emotions through writing. The last chapter, Chapter Six, summarizes the study's research findings, discusses its contributions to the field of second language writing and points to its implications in L2 writing pedagogy.

## CHAPTER TWO

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The study of emotion covers a wide range of disciplines, including: anthropology (Lutz, 1998; Lutz & Abu-Lughod, 2008); physiology/psychology (Baikie & Wilhelm, 2005; Greenhalgh, 1999; Nandagopal, 2008); clinical psychology (Pennebaker, 1990, 1991, 1997; Pennebaker & Beall, 1986; Pennebaker & Chung, 2007); linguistics or cognitive linguistics (Harkins & Wierzbicka, 2001; Wierzbicka, 1992, 1999, 2004); literary analysis (Besemeres, 2004, 2006; Hogan, 2010; Pavlenko, 2005); creative writing (Bishop, 1993; Bolton, 2008; Bolton, Howlett, Lago, & Wright, 2004); composition (Brand, 1985-86, 1987, 1990, 1991; Brand & Powell, 1986; Daly, 1977, 1978, 1979; Daly & Miller, 1975a, 1975b, 1975c; Daly & Wilson, 1983; Elbow, 1998a; Flower & Hayes, 1981; Jacobs & Micciche, 2003; Micciche, 2007); and, second language studies (Besemeres, 2004, 2006; Dewaele, 2006, 2010; Dewaele & Pavlenko, 2002; Hanauer, 2010; Kinginger, 2004; Novakovich & Shapard, 2000; Pavlenko, 2002a, 2005, 2006, 2008a, 2008b; Pavlenko & Driagina, 2007; Schrauf & Durazo-Arvizu, 2006; Schrauf & Rubin, 2004; Wierzbicka, 2004). There is limited attention paid to second language writers in relation to emotion. With this in mind, this study aims to add a voice to emotion and second language writing scholarship. Because this study addressed the issue of emotions and writing, this review of literature is focused on the fields of linguistics or cognitive linguistics, literary analysis, and second language studies.

#### **Emotion and Writing: Interdisciplinary Review**

While some may question the justification for studying emotion and writing, studies indicate that there are benefits to focusing attention on emotion in the writing

classroom (Bishop, 1993; Dewaele, 2006, 2010; Hanauer, 2012; Claire Kramsch, 2009; Pavlenko, 2005; Wierzbicka, 2004). Among the benefits reported are that participants in writing programs that include attention to emotion are healthier physically and mentally (Bolton, 2008; Pennebaker, 1991, 1997; Pennebaker & Chung, 2007; Smyth, Stone, Hurewitz, & Kaell, 1999). Other research indicates that composition students feel more confident in their writing abilities (Daly & Wilson, 1983; Kirkland, Dilworth, & Bizzaro, 1989; Mahn & John-Steiner, 2002).

The connection between emotional expression and psychology has long been acknowledged and established in the field of clinical psychology; some studies report that by expressing or talking about traumatic events, patients generally experience mental and physical relief (Pennebaker, 1990, 1991, 1997; Pennebaker & Chung, 2007). Many studies have confirmed that expressing emotions promotes better physical health (Bolton, 2008; Bolton, et al., 2004; Pennebaker, 1990, 1997; Pennebaker & Beall, 1986; Pennebaker & Chung, 2007; Smyth, 1998). One might wonder why psychologists use writing instead of talking to explore traumatic experiences. Bolton (2004) explains it nicely, stating that “[w]riting is different from talking; it has a power all of its own... It can allow an exploration of cognitive, emotional and spiritual areas otherwise not accessible, and an expression of elements otherwise inexpressible” (p. 1). Putting intense emotions into written language is not easy, but it helps participants/patients “increase self-confidence, feelings of self-worth and motivation for life” (Bolton, 2004, p. 1; 2008). The power of writing and therapeutic ability is not only studied in the field of psychology, but also composition, and creative writing or art-based writing as well (Wright, 2004).

Wright (2004) reviews a study of expressive writing that combines both “creative writing background...[and]...scientific paradigm...including immunology, health and social psychology” (p. 7). She concludes that the divide between science and the humanities paradigm should be seen as a continuum, as “[p]oetry may be as precise as science and science as passionate as poetry in working to understand the way in which writing works” (Wright, 2004, p. 13). Bishop (1997) points out that “[p]oetry is not equal to therapy...but usefully—a therapeutic *process*, a mode of thinking. We don’t ‘solve’ ourselves, but we do see and re-see; we say what we didn’t know needed to be said...” (p. 262).

From creative writing to composition studies, Brand (1991) has reviewed the literature of cognitive studies in composition and the connection to composition scholarship. She critiques Flower and Hayes’s (1981) article on cognitive process of writing research, arguing that “it precludes access to affective phenomena by excluding them from research plans and any corresponding pedagogies” (Brand, 1987, p. 440). From a cognitive perspective, Brand (1985-86) encourages compositionists to pay attention to the merger between cognitive psychology and composition as it is “an appropriate and important merger” (p. 6). In her later work Brand (1990) also argues that “emotions guide language choice” (p. 290). She also critiques the cognitive model in that it employs “digital system metaphors” (Brand, 1987, p. 440), which ignore the process of thinking while we write, and “fails to capture the rich, psychological dynamics of humans in the very act of cognizing” (Brand, 1987, p. 440; Brand & Powell, 1986). McLeod (1991) also agrees that the study of cognitive processes on writing is not complete if emotions are left out of the picture: “...if we are to understand the whole process, we

need to look at affective as well as cognitive phenomena” (p. 96). Bishop (1993) eloquently observed that “emotions are ‘hot’ topics for [compositionists]...and ones we tend to avoid” (p. 511). In other words, Bishop points out that studies on emotions are slippery and difficult to grasp, which may be a reason that compositionists tend to avoid discussing them in their work.

Two common terms in the field of emotion writing, clinical psychology, and composition are *expressive writing* and *freewriting*. Pennebaker (1991) has distinguished the nuanced differences between them, noting that in clinical psychology, expressive writing focuses on “the expression of individuals’ very deepest emotions and thoughts about personal and, oftentimes, traumatic events and issues,” while freewriting focuses on generating ideas or perspectives and reflecting on writing skills (p. 158).

Among compositionists, the terms *expressive writing* or *expressive pedagogy*, are often linked to the following figures in composition: Donald Murray, Ken Macrorie, Peter Elbow, James Britton, Toby Fulwiler, Wendy Bishop, Patrick Bizzaro, Thomas Newkirk, and Sherrie Gradin. In this study, I focus on concepts of expressivism/expressive pedagogy in relation to emotions, particularly voice and ownership in students’ writing.

In composition study, the concept of voice has been visited and revisited from multiple perspectives. In 1994, Peter Elbow edits a volume, *Landmark Essays on Voice and Writing*, in which the collection traces the definition of voice back to a pre-literate period. Another edited collection, Kathleen Blake Yancey’s *Voices on Voice* (1994) also traces the history of voice back to the orality era, focusing on reflections of personal voices, voices from non-western scholars, and voices from nontraditional texts. Bowden



(1999) offers a feminist perspective and argues that “voice has served an important function in the movement away from current-traditional rhetoric, but that, as a metaphor, it has outlived its usefulness” (p. viii). She calls for alternative ways of looking at voice, including paying more attention to written works from women and works available through electronic media. In his widely known work, *Writing without teachers*, Elbow (1998b) approaches writing from a speaking standpoint with the *voice* metaphor in which he describes as follows:

In your natural way of producing words there is a sound, a texture, a rhythm -- a voice -- which is the main source of power in your writing. ...this voice is the force that will make a reader listen to you, the energy that drives the meanings...  
(p. 6)

Later in that same book, Elbow describes how he invited students to revise their paper after sensing their strong voices. He writes, “the [invitation to revise] process affects subject matter” (Elbow, 1998a, p. 284). Among Elbow’s students were those who focused more on detailed description of the subject; others started “exploring those same feelings: perhaps angry feelings, perhaps depressed feelings, perhaps a particular area of their lives...[which] often leads students to writing that is autobiographical or self-exploratory” (p. 284; Murray, 1990, 1991). However, Elbow explicitly states when discussing writing about experiences that “feelings...are of no value for writing. ...Therefore, you should probably lean a bit away from them since they have such a tendency to numb or mush or blot out the rest of your experiencing” (p. 334). Elbow’s contention is that writers should write with description by describing what they see, hear, feel, touch, and/or smell. He suggests that “[writers] should try to let [their] words grow

out of those feelings, or if [writers] are writing much later, [they] should try to get back and re-experience them” (p. 335). Voice in this sense is passion in writing. Writers should be passionate or feel confident enough to explore the topics they are writing about. The chosen topics should relate to lived experiences because it is nearly impossible to write about experiences that writers themselves have not yet encountered (Elbow, 1998a; Kirkland, et al., 1989). Minnerly (1994) supports the view that to write with effective voice, one needs to have an affective relationship with the topic. As he puts it,

...that affective content...is a feature of all writing and that all writing seeks to be effective, then it would follow that the degree to which voice is *affective*—the degrees and kinds of emotion that the writer uses—can be directly related to the way in which the voice attempts to be *effective* (italics in original, , p. 62).

When students are passionate about their work, they feel the sense of ownership in their work. Adler-Kassner (1998) reviews the concept of ownership in students’ writing between the eras of progressivism and expressivism. According to her, progressivism argues for student ownership contributing to “a white, middle class community” (p. 215) meaning that students can develop ownership in their work within the same community; expressivism, on the other hand, “argues that effective compositions started with and center around experience -- defined as a personal, private, individually felt understanding by the writer of their subject” (Adler-Kassner, 1998, p. 218). The argument of both progressivism and expressivism can be summarized by Bakhtin (1981), who states, “The word in language is half someone else’s. It becomes ‘one’s own’ only when the speaker populates it with his own intention, his own accent,

when he appropriates the word, adapting it to his own semantic and expressive intention” (p. 293). In other words, the sense of ownership in written discourse comes from socially constructed texts and meaning (Jacobs & Micciche, 2003).

If students write based on their personal experiences, they hear their own voices in their writing and develop a sense of ownership of it. One aspect of voice and ownership in writing is representation of self in writing (Bolton, 2008; Cherry, 1998; Ivanic & Camps, 2001; Murray, 1990, 1991; Newkirk, 1997; Selfe & Rodi, 1980). The representation of self originated in classical rhetoric (Corbett & Connors, 1999) and expression of self in Goffman’s (1959) performative theory, both of which have contributed concepts and terms used in the literature on composition pedagogy -- ethos and persona (Cherry, 1998) or implied author (Booth, 1983). As Selfe and Rodi (1980) stated, “expressive composition . . . refers to the definition or discovery of personal identity and the expression of self through writing” (p. 169).

Recently, the concept of emotion has been revisited from a social constructivist perspective by Micciche (2007), who states

The use of emotion as a key term is intended as both a recuperation of a much neglected, under-theorized facet of rhetorical theory, at least in the context of composition discourse, and as a challenge to the disparagement of emotion in popular and intellectual culture. (p. 7)

McLeod (1987) posits an important question regarding the study of affective domain in teaching writing: “How can an increased understanding of the noncognitive aspects of writing help us to help our students with their writing?” (p. 433). Her answer is to equip students with “metacognition—knowing about knowing” (McLeod, 1987, p. 433) by

asking students to reflect on their emotions while they write. This way we can “help students know themselves in the fullest sense [cognitively and emotionally], and thus help them become better writers” (p. 433; Minnerly, 1994). Pennebaker (1991) supports the claim that by combining cognitive with affective domains, students will be more engaged and develop “a sense of personal involvement with the class material” (p. 168).

### **How has Emotion and Writing been Studied?**

Several widely used research tools to study emotion and writing include Pennebaker and Beall’s (1986) writing prompt, Daly and Miller’s (1975b) self-rating scales on writing apprehension, and Powell and Brand’s (1987) emotional rating scales for pre-, during, and post-writing. This current study aims for compositionists to revisit and expand the conversation of emotions or affect in composition classrooms through the self-perceptions of participants in expressing emotions through writing in different genres in two languages, Thai and English.

Perhaps the most widely cited experimental study is that of Pennebaker and Beall (1986). The writing paradigm created by Pennebaker and Beall (1986) is widely used in many studies in clinical psychology. In this experiment, participants are randomly assigned to four groups and are asked to write for 15 minutes for four consecutive days. The prompt is as follows

For the next 3 days, I would like for you to write about your very deepest thoughts and feelings about an extremely important emotional issue that has affected you and your life. In your writing, I’d like you to really let go and explore your very deepest emotions and thoughts. You might tie your topic to your relationships with others, including parents, lovers, friends, or relatives; to

your past, your present, or your future; or to who you have been, who you would like to be, or who you are now. You may write about the same general issues or experiences on all days of writing or on different topics each day. All of your writing will be completely confidential. Don't worry about spelling, sentence structure, or grammar. The only rule is that once you begin writing, continue to do so until your time is up. (Pennebaker & Beall, 1986, pp. 275-276)

Smyth (1998) conducts a review study of 13 expressive emotional writing studies based on Pennebaker's prompt "including health center visits, affect, immune measures, grade point average, and re-employment status" (p. 174). Smyth, Stone, Hurewitz, and Kaell (1999) conduct their experiment using the same prompt above to find out "whether writing about stressful experiences affects objective measures of disease status in patients with chronic asthma or rheumatoid arthritis (RA)" (p. 1305). This experiment claims to be the first of its kind with chronic diseases because previous studies were done with healthy participants. The study reports that "[the results] extend our knowledge about this writing exercise from self-reported symptom and health use outcomes observed in healthy individuals" (Smyth, et al., 1999, p. 1308).

This same prompt has been used and modified in many experiments on writing and psychotherapy. One example is Lepore and Smyth's (2002) edited collection on expressive writing in relation to health and emotional well-being. Another edited collection by Bolton, Howlett, Lago, and Wright (2004) expands the horizon on expressive writing to include expressive writing in creative writing or art-based writing and through electronic media. One notable aspect of expressive writing and psychotherapy is that the process of writing is more important than the writing or the

product itself. Focusing on the written artifacts “will prevent clients from finding and making use of the particular power of writing” (Bolton, 2004, p. 2).

Besides the use of writing prompts, rating scales have also been used in studying writing anxiety or apprehension, especially in composition scholarship. One aspect of affect in writing that has been heavily studied is writing anxiety; “[w]riting anxiety, or writing apprehension, as John Daly has coined the term, is the most heavily researched affective issue in writing” (McLeod, 1987, p. 427). A few studies in composition employ self-rating scales: One is John Daly’s writing apprehension scale (1977; Daly & Miller, 1975b); another is Powell and Brand’s (1987) Brand Emotions Scale for Writers (BESW). Daly and Miller’s (1975b) justification for using the self-rating scale was that it was easy to administer, low cost, “...simple and quick, and the measurement more general and oriented towards the trait anxiety” (p. 244; McCroskey, 1970).

In Daly and Miller’s (1975b) study, the researchers problematize the concept of writing apprehension, drawing from the field of communication apprehension (McCroskey, 1970). The authors point out:

Given the research on communication apprehension and its effects we felt that there might reasonably exist a general anxiety about writing as well. There may be a large number of individuals who fail miserably in an environment where writing is demanded because of an apprehension or anxiety about writing. (Daly & Miller, 1975b, p. 244)

The Likert scale instrument that Daly and Miller created is adapted from McCroskey’s (1970) communication apprehension to include some questions relating to writing aspects -- “...anxiety about writing in general, teacher evaluation..., peer evaluation..., letter

writing, ...writing in tests, ...and self-evaluation of writing...” (Daly & Miller, 1975b, p. 245).

In Daly’s studies, the construct of writing apprehension “attempts to differentiate [between] people who find writing enjoyable and those who experience high levels of anxiety when writing is required” (Daly, 1977, p. 566). The Likert scale is designed to measure writing apprehension by a “self report instrument, ... [as] factorially separate from a variety of other...variables such as trait anxiety, oral communication apprehension (stage fright), and receiver anxiety” (Daly, 1977, p. 566; 1978, p. 10). The study shows that students identified as “[h]igh apprehensives not only write differently and with lower quality than low apprehensives, but, in addition, fail to demonstrate as strong a working knowledge of writing skills as low apprehensives” (Daly, 1978, p. 13; Daly & Miller, 1975b).

The purpose of Powell and Brand’s (1987) study is to “describe the development and factorial validation of an emotions scale for writers...to improve understanding in a systematic way of the psychology of writing” (p. 330). Their research tool, Brand Emotions Scale for Writers (BESW), is adapted from Izard, Dougherty, Bloxom, and Kotsch’s unpublished manuscript on The Differential Emotions Scale (DES). Powell and Brand develop “a 20-item scale designed to measure the emotions of writers (a) immediately before writing...; (b) immediately after writing...; and (c) during the process” of writing (1987, p. 329). During their development of the BESW tool, three criteria were considered:

First, the scale needed to measure both emotional states and emotional traits... .

Second, the scale had to be short because a longer scale might produce its own

emotions if it discouraged writing or interfered with it. Third, it needed to measure both negative and positive emotions because writing would be expected to elicit both kinds. (Powell & Brand, 1987, p. 331)

Though there are some inconsistencies in the BESW scale in terms of word choice and overlapping interpretations of emotion terms, Powell and Brand (1987) conclude that “the BESW appears to be an instrument of promising internal consistency capable of measuring positive and negative emotions as traits during the process of writing and as perceived feeling immediately before and after writing” (p. 336).

What should be noted about Powell and Brand’s (1987) participants is that the study recruited “from twelve different samples. The majority of subjects were students...in college writing classes,...public school teachers, a high school composition class, and professional writers” (p. 332). This study involved a wide range of participants from college students to professional writers, which was the unique aspect of their study on emotions and writing.

The study of emotion and writing has been conducted by using different methodologies, including having students respond to writing prompts and self-rating scales especially to gauge writing apprehension.

### **Emotion and Second Language Writing**

Terms related to emotion and second language acquisition include language aptitude (Dörnyei & Skehan, 2003; Guiora et al., 1975); motivation and anxiety (Clément, Dörnyei, & Noels, 1994; Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2009; Gardner & MacIntyre, 1993; Lambert, 1955; MacIntyre, 2002; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991; Schmidt & Savage, 1992; Skehan, 2002); foreign language learning affect (Arnold, 1999; Chastain, 1975;



Gardner & MacIntyre, 1993; Schumann, 1975); and, second language learning and emotions (Dewaele, 2004, 2006, 2010; Dewaele & Pavlenko, 2002; Elinor Ochs & Schieffelin, 1989; Pavlenko, 2002a, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008a, 2008b; Pavlenko & Driagina, 2007). However, there is a limited but growing number of research studies on second language writing, which this review attempts to cover.

Schmidt and Savage (1992) conduct a study on Thai students and their motivation in learning English. The study reports that for Thai students, learning English is a challenging activity. Schmidt and Savage (1992) point out that the motivation theory from the “Western values are ill-fitted to the Thai context” (p. 25). MacIntyre (2002) states that “[e]motion has not been given sufficient attention in the language learning literature...” (p. 45). When discussing emotion and language learning, researchers have spotlighted the learners’ motivation (Dörnyei & Skehan, 2003; Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2009; Schmidt, Boraie, & Kassabgy, 1996; Schmidt & Savage, 1992), anxiety (Oxford, 1999), and attitudes. Gardner and MacIntyre (1993) credit Lambert’s (1955) study of motivation pointing out that “an interest in learning another language often developed because of emotional involvement with the other language community or...a direct interest in the language” (Gardner & MacIntyre, 1993, p. 1).

The concept of emotion or affect and language learning has evolved around learner’s styles and strategies, willingness to communicate/anxiety in language production, or Myers-Briggs personality types (Ortega, 2009, p. 194). Like the proposals made by compositionists such as McLeod (1987) and Brand (1991; Brand & Powell, 1986), Arnold and Brown (1999) maintain that the concepts of cognition and affect in learning another language should be seen and understood as being interconnected. They

argue that we should pay attention to affect in language learning because it can help learners acquire another language effectively and can demonstrate to us how to “overcome problems created by negative emotions and how we can create and use more positive, facilitative emotions” (p. 2). They claim there are a few teaching methods that take affect into consideration, notably Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) (Imai, 2010; Rinvulcri, 1999), collaborative learning in EFL contexts (Imai, 2007, 2010), or the Natural Approach with its affective filter (Krashen & Terrell, 1983).

From a sociolinguistic perspective, Ochs and Schieffelin (1989) discuss the concept of affect in language in different languages. To them, the term “emotion” includes “feelings, moods, dispositions, and attitudes associated with persons and/or situations” (p. 7). Theirs is considered one of the earlier works on linguistic features in emotions. The authors listed discourse and grammatical features found in different languages such as French, Spanish, Thai, English, and Japanese. Their study has provided the theoretical framework for many subsequent studies (Pavlenko, 2005; Rintell, 1990).

Rintell (1990), following the lead of Ochs and Schieffelin, conducts a study on the narrative of emotion among second language users using a pragmatic approach. She argues that “...to express emotion is to perform a speech act...both as a pragmatic function and with respect to its place in the discourse” (p. 77). Rintell’s (1990) study compared the narrative structures elicited by native speakers and L2 users in expressing their emotions and concludes that there are differences on how narrative stories are structured between these two groups in terms of stylistics and discourse.

Wierzbicka (1992), another linguist, also defines the concept of emotions from a social constructivist perspective. Noting how emotions are co-constructed in contexts, she attempted to re-define the concepts of emotion as follows:

1. Emotions play a crucial role in human lives and in human affairs, and the study of emotions is a vital and necessary part of psychology and cognitive science.
2. Emotions are exceptionally difficult to investigate (so much so that until recently they were regarded as simply inaccessible to scientific study).
3. A wealth of insight into the structure of emotions and into the nature of people's emotional lives is contained in the folk theories of emotions (cf. Johnson-Laird & Oatley, 1992); and folk theories of emotions are crystallized in the language of emotions, in particular in the emotion lexicon of a given natural language.
4. Scholars wishing to study emotions rely to a considerable extent on the emotion concepts provided by their native language. This is unavoidable and not necessarily harmful: provided they are aware of this fact and don't delude themselves that when they speak, for example, of 'anger', 'joy', or 'disgust' they are talking about some biologically determined, universal human realities, and if they realize that they are viewing human emotional experience through the prism of their own language.
5. By studying the concepts encoded in English words such as disappointment, relief, distress, or anger from a universal, language-independent perspective, we can, first of all, learn a great deal about a system of thought and

knowledge internalized by the speakers of English, and second, we can learn how to go beyond that system and thus free ourselves of the confusion between human emotions and English emotion concepts, which has plagued, and still plagues, a good deal of the literature on emotions.

6. By studying English emotion terms we can prepare the ground for a cross-cultural comparative study of emotion concepts: a task vital for the understanding of both human culture and human cognition ( pp. 557-558).

The challenge for scholars to conduct research is, according to Wierzbicka, an important reason for studying it. Often research on emotions is conducted by focusing on participants' first languages. The study of emotion language among bilinguals in their first and second language can benefit the field of second language acquisition (SLA) by confirming the process of internalization and providing more understanding of the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis in relation to language and culture or linguistic relativity (Wierzbicka, 2009).

Other studies conducted on emotions in different languages focus on the relationship between body and emotional terms (Enfield & Wierzbicka, 2002; Harré, 2009; Hasada, 2002; Pavlenko, 2002b; Wierzbicka, 2009; Yu, 2002) or on cross-linguistic comparisons of the emotional terms in two languages (Pavlenko, 2008b; Pavlenko & Driagina, 2007; Wierzbicka, 1999, 2009). If it is true that emotive terms vary from one culture to another, it is a challenging task to study emotion in bilingual writers. For bilingual learners, using language to express ideas is complex. To use language to express emotion is even more so. Aneta Pavlenko (2005) posits important questions in relation to language use and emotion of bilinguals: "What is the nature of the emotional

bonds that tie individuals to their languages? How do these ties influence self-expression? ... What happens when one falls in love across a language boundary?” (p. 22). In this study, she gathered her data from a web questionnaire asking how bilinguals/multilingual speakers express their emotions in different contexts. In this inspiring work, she opened up the discussion of emotion in different research areas including psycholinguistics, lexicons, literature, pedagogy, and identities.

Most bilinguals may have the same experience of trying to find terms they want in expressing their feelings. This is because “[t]he task of interpreting, communicating, and describing emotions in a second language (L2) is even harder because different languages have distinct emotion vocabularies and ways of expressing emotions” (Lindquist, 2009; Pavlenko & Driagina, 2007, p. 91). When L2 learners cannot express their emotions as they think they could in L1, bilingual learners feel frustrated and question their language proficiency. They may not feel satisfaction when they swear at people in the target language; other times, they may want to express their frustration to others in their L1 simply to satisfy their personal emotions and contents (Dewaele, 2004, 2006; Pavlenko, 2002a). In their study on emotion among bilinguals, Dewaele and Pavlenko (2002) focus on gender, language proficiency, and sociocultural competence. They conclude that gender and language proficiency do not correlate with the expression of emotion in another language. As for sociocultural competence, it depends on how much exposure bilinguals have to the target culture or how much they have internalized the target language.

In another study, Dewaele (2004) uses the same corpora from a web questionnaire in relation to the use of swear words and taboo words among multilingual populations.

He concludes that multilinguals feel detached when they swear and use taboo words in other languages. As a pedagogical implication, he proposes that educators should expose multilingual learners to both visual and linguistic resources so that learners will become familiar with the appropriate use of taboo and swear words. Wierzbicka (2004) notices that when two interlocutors share both first and second languages, they can switch the language to best express their feelings. However, when bilinguals interact with “monolingual speakers of the host country, they have to choose communicative styles (regulated by different cultural scripts)” (p. 101). This means that bilinguals have to be exposed to and know how to express their feelings according to the ‘monolingual’ interlocutors’ norms to get their message across. However, my study argues that both interlocutors needed to know each other’s norms to accommodate and communicate effectively.

While some studies focus on the differences in lexicon levels, pointing out that there is often no equivalent representation in written forms for emotionally related lexical items (Pavlenko, 2008a, 2008b); other studies focus on autobiographical narratives, including memoir writing (Besemeres, 2006; Schrauf & Durazo-Arvizu, 2006). Hanauer (2003) notes that “the advantage of narrative as a research method is that it presents a subjective reworking of the individual’s biographical concept and thus allows the researcher an insight into the hidden conceptual and emotional world of the individual” (p. 78). It is no wonder that many narrative stories were chosen by applied linguistics as an approach to study student writers’ emotional struggles. However, Clachar (1999) states that the empirical study of second language writing and emotion is scarce, as so far the study of narrative and emotion has been discussed by analyzing published memoirs

such as Eva Hoffman's (1990) *Lost in Translation*, or a collection of stories written by those who emigrated to another country and had to use English in daily activities (Novakovich & Shapard, 2000).

Pavlenko (2001) asserts that the use of narrative in second language classrooms "allows the authors to reinvent themselves...[and] it allows second language (L2) users to assume legitimate ownership of their L2 and to provide the readers with new meanings, perspectives, and images of 'being American—and bilingual' in the postmodern world" (p. 317). Hanauer (2003, 2010) proposes the use of poetry for studying emotion in second language writing, as poetry can be reflective of negotiated experiences, thoughts, and feelings of the writers (2004). The most recent scholarship on emotions and L2 writing is Hanauer's (2010) study of poetry writing and L2 writers. He creates a second language poetry corpus from over 800 poems written by L2 writers. The corpus shows that L2 writers are better able to express their emotions by using "affective words, positive emotive words, and sadness" in their poems (Hanauer, 2010, p. 51).

As Wierzbicka (2004) observed, "research into the interface of emotions and bilingualism promises to throw new light on wider issues of the relationship between languages, culture, and self..." (p. 94). In these studies, the relation in the uses of L1 in the English context can be seen as a self-representation or identity reconstruction. Schrauf and Rubin (2004) have conducted a study on "*mnemonic trace*, an unobservable mental state, as it emerges in the psychological process of recollection in an analytically isolated moment before its transformation in performance" (p. 23). This suggests that bilingual memories are more complex in terms of retelling the narrative events.

In this chapter, I have reviewed the relevant studies on emotions and how emotion has been studied in relation to the fields of linguistics or cognitive linguistics, literary analysis, and second language studies. I have also exposed the dearth of empirical studies on emotions and writing, especially in the L2 writing population. While there is a growing body of knowledge on emotions and L2 studies, only a limited number of studies focused on participants' self-perceptions of their experience.



## CHAPTER THREE

### LANGUAGE EDUCATION IN THAILAND

The following chapter provides a brief introduction to the language education in Thailand. Information on the Thai language and Thai system of hierarchy is provided, followed by a review of the language education policy in Thailand. A brief introduction to Thai poetry writing is provided. The chapter concludes with a review of English language teaching (ELT) policy in Thailand.

#### **Thai Language and Thai System of Hierarchy**

The Thai language is “the language of education, the language of major communications media, the language of prestige” (Smalley, 1994, p. 13). Thai language or standard Thai is “the official language, the legally appropriate language for all political and cultural purposes” (Smalley, 1994, p. 14). In identifying the level of formality of Thai language in writing and speaking, standard Thai is used in accordance with marked status of the interlocutors.

Prasithrathsint (2007) discusses the work of Palakornkul, who identified eight factors that are used by Thai speakers to identify the level of formality in their language production: “power and status, age, kinship and family relationship, friendship, ethnic-religious groups, occupation, gender, and genealogical distance [or levels of seniority]” (Prasithrathsint, 2007, pp. 112-113). For example, the verb *kin* (to eat), depending on the status of the interlocutors, can be translated into *sawey* (for royal family members), *chan* (for religious leaders), *ruppratan* (for formal settings), *tan* (for cousins, distanced family members, and those who have higher social status), *kin* (for friends and family members),

*dak* (for closed friends in informal settings). The rules of language formality are applied to both spoken and written formats.

This section has concluded the Thai language hierarchy in Thailand. The following section will review the Basic Education Core Curriculum (BECC) (2008) regarding the role of Thai language learning and teaching.

### **Thai Language Learning and Teaching**

The Ministry of Education in Thailand has revised and issued the Basic Education Core Curriculum (BECC) in 2008 for every K-12 school in Thailand as the guideline for them to develop and adapt to suit their local school curriculums. According to BECC (2008), Thai language is “a cultural treasure leading to attainment of national unity and strengthening of Thai nationalism in the Thai people’s character” (p. 41). The purposes of learning the Thai language are to be able to read, write, communicate, and appreciate Thai literature and literary works. In terms of Thai literature and literary works, the aim of teaching is to:

analyse literature and literary works for studying data, concepts and values of literary writings as well as for pleasure; learning and comprehension of chants, children’s rhymes and folk songs representing valuable Thai wisdom - these have contributed to customs and traditions, social matters of the past as well as linguistic beauty, leading to appreciation and pride in our ancestors’ legacies accumulated over the years and passed on to the present. (Basic Education Core Curriculum, 2008, p. 42)

For example, in terms of teaching writing in the Thai language, learning outcomes are specifically spelled out for Grades 3, 6, 9, and 12. The milestones are as follows:

- By the end of Grade 3, students should be able to write short descriptive paragraphs, retell their experiences, and creatively write short stories.
- Continuing to Grade 6, students should demonstrate their composition writing in different genres, and “write to express feelings and perceptions” (p. 43). In terms of literature and literary works, students should be able to “compose various types of Thai verses, e.g. Four-Stanza Verse, Yani 11 Verse etc.” (p. 43).
- To pass Grade 9, students should be able to write “biographies, autobiographies and experiential accounts” (p. 44) and to compose various styles of Thai poetry.
- In order to graduate from Grade 12, students should be able to “write compositions reflecting creative thinking by using idioms and ornate phrases, ...write reports on study and research based on principles of academic writing, ...[and] compose various types of Thai verses” (p. 45).

The common types of Thai verse that Thai students learn in school are *kloong*, *kaab*, and *kloon* (Gedney, 1989, p. 493). The differences among these types of verses are the structures and their purposes, which are discussed as follows. The common form of *kloong* that can be found in Thai language textbooks is *Kloong Sii Subhab* (Quatrain verse), which is considered to be the oldest form of Thai poetry and is used by highly literate scholars (Gedney, 1989).

For the structure of this verse, each line consists of seven syllables. The exceptions are line one and three, which these two lines can have up to nine syllables. The seventh syllable of the first line needs to rhyme with the fifth syllable of the second and the third line. The seventh syllable of the second line needs to rhyme with the fifth syllable of the fourth line.

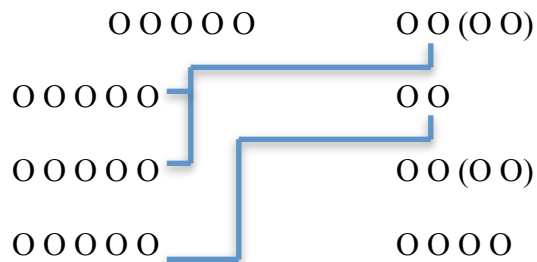


Figure 1: The structure of *Kloong Sii Subhab* (Quatrain verse)

Another common Thai poetry structure that Thai students learn is *Kaab Yanii* 11 (Verse 11). Hudak (1990) notes that this style of Thai verse “is used for descriptions of nature and beautiful objects” (p. 11).

For the structure of this style of verse, each stanza has eleven syllables. One stanza consists of two lines. The first line has five syllables and the second line has six syllables. The last syllable of the first line rhymes with the second or third syllable of the second line. The last syllable of the first stanza must rhyme with the fifth syllable of the second stanza. The last syllable of the second stanza has to rhyme with the last syllable of the third stanza.

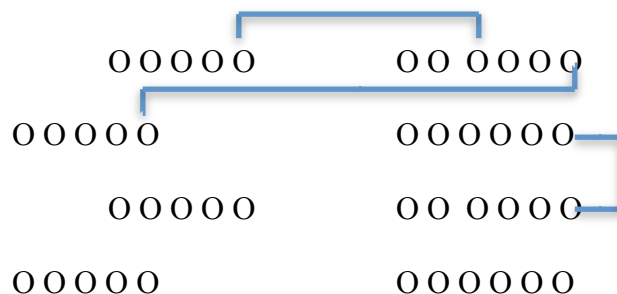


Figure 2: The structure of *Kaab Yanii* 11 (Verse 11)

The other type of poem that many Thai students are familiar with is *Kloon pad* (Poem 8). The structure of this type of poem is as follows: each stanza has four lines and each line has eight to nine Thai words. The last word of the first line needs to rhyme with

the third word of the second line. The last word of the second line needs to rhyme with the last word of the third line and the fifth word of the fourth line of the stanza. When there is more than one stanza, the last word of the fourth line needs to rhyme with the last word of the second line of the second stanza.

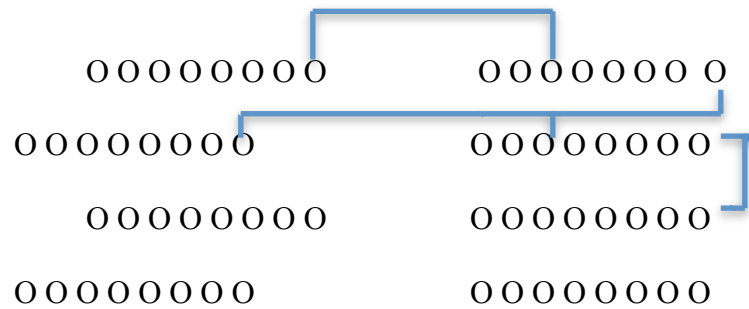


Figure 3: The structure of *Kloon pad* (Poem 8)

A brief introduction of Thai language learning and teaching is reviewed. The following section discusses the role of foreign language studies in Thailand. To be more specific, the issue of English language teaching (ELT) in Thailand is introduced.

### English Language Teaching (ELT) in Thailand

According to the Basic Education Core Curriculum (BECC) (2008), while many foreign languages (i.e. French, German, Italian, Chinese, Japanese, and other languages of neighboring countries) are offered as options for Thai students, English is the only mandatory language in the K-12 core curriculum. The aim of teaching and learning foreign languages is stated as follows:

The learning area of foreign languages is aimed at enabling learners to acquire a favourable attitude towards foreign languages, the ability to use foreign languages for communicating in various situations, seeking knowledge, engaging in a livelihood and pursuing further education at higher levels. Learners will thus have

knowledge and understanding of diversified matters and events of the world community, and will be able to creatively convey the conceptions and cultures of Thainess to the global society. (Basic Education Core Curriculum, 2008, p. 267)

For the purpose of this study, the review of the ELT in Thailand will focus on the teaching of writing. According to the BECC (2008), foreign language learning outcomes are evaluated at Grade 3, 6, 9, and 12. For Grade 3, the language skills focused on this grade level are on identifying, reading, and speaking; there is no writing outcome stated in the BECC.

Upon finishing Grade 6, students should be able to give information about themselves, request and provide information, “express their feelings about various matters and activities around them” (p. 269), and express opinions about their interests in the foreign language. When they finish Grade 9, they should demonstrate the ability to exchange information “about themselves, various matters around them, situations and news of interest [to] society” (p. 270), and “speak and write to describe their own feelings and opinions about various matters, activities, experiences and news/incidents” (p. 270), and summarize and express opinions about experiences and situations of interests. For students to pass Grade 12, they should be able to express their opinions in different contexts, “speak and write to describe their own feelings and express opinions about various matters, activities, experiences, and news/incidents with proper reasoning” (p. 272), as well as justify and support their opinions.

As it has been stated, based on the Thai language education system, students are more familiar with the emphasis on expressing their feelings in the standards of written Thai than they are in English, because the BECC foreign language learning policy does

not mention expressed emotions (2008). This study sheds light on Thai students' understanding of Thai and English writing in relation to expression of emotions in both languages.

In this chapter, I have summarized and reviewed language-learning policy on both Thai and English languages. I have also reviewed common types of Thai poems that are commonly taught to Thai students. In the following chapter, I discuss research questions, methodology, and tools used in this study.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### **Methodology**

This empirical study investigates the concept of emotion and second language writing. To be more specific, this study aims to explore how Thai students express their emotions in writing in Thai (L1) and in English (L2). The research questions for this study are:

1. In what ways do undergraduate Thai students understand and experience/perceive emotional writing in Thai as their first language?
2. In what ways do undergraduate Thai students understand and experience/perceive emotional writing in English as their second language?
3. Are there differences in undergraduate Thai students' understanding of emotional writing in Thai and in English?
4. Are there differences in undergraduate Thai students' understanding in emotional writing in different genres?

This chapter is structured in four sections. The first section focuses on the theoretical framework of the chosen research methodologies. The second section describes the study's participants and elements of qualitative research tools. The third section presents the research tools, and the fourth section shares the research analysis framework.

#### **Theoretical Framework**

This study aimed to gain an understanding of Thai students' expressions of emotion when writing in different languages, specifically in Thai and English. In this



study, “writing is a social act that can occur within particular situations. It is therefore influenced both by the personal attitudes and prior experiences that the writer brings to writing and the impact of the specific political and institutional contexts...” (Hyland, 2009, p. 26). van Dijk (2008) defines “contexts [as] unique constructs, featuring the ad hoc, embodied experiences of ongoing perceptions, knowledge, perspective, opinions and emotions about an ongoing communicative situation” (p. 16). Qualitative studies “[are] concerned with subjective opinions, experiences and feelings of individuals and thus the explicit goal of research is to explore” (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 38) and allow researchers to gain understanding of the “‘participants’ perspective’...[in which participants make sense and meaning and]...how their understanding influences their behavior” (Maxwell, 2005, p. 22). As research in emotion and writing is an emerging field, gaining understanding of participants’ perspectives is an appropriate approach to conducting this study. The aim is to gain participants’ reflections of their understandings in expressing emotions through writing in different languages.

### **Thai Cultural Understanding**

Thai people are generalized as being emotionally inhibited (Komin, 1991). Komin studied and reported the values of Thai people that are used when interacting with others, including

social smoothing values...at all times, one shall be careful not to hurt another person’s feelings (ego), for example, not to criticize as well as not to reject another person’s kindness or good intention, even though it is contrary to one’s own feelings...[including] caring and considerate...[which is] obviously a Thai cultural-laden value, and an important means to maintain or preserve one

another's feelings and ego... [and] being flexible (responsive to situations and opportunities) in not doggedly forcing and asserting one's own desire at times of potential differences and conflicts...[and] for interactions to be smoothly proceeded and void of overt conflicts, such characteristics of being calm and cautious. (Komin, 1991, pp. 145-147)

With this in mind, expressing strong emotions is rarely seen from Thai people because we try to “front” (Goffman, 1959) or present ourselves to be in harmony and try to avoid confrontation. However, not every Thai person falls into this categorization; this is the broader expectation from the Thai society.

### **Research Site**

A public four-year university in Thailand was chosen as the research site for this study. The university has two campuses: an inner city campus and a branch campus, which is located approximately 50 miles from the metropolitan area. With the reputation of being one of the leading public universities in the country, the university provides both a Thai Program and an International Program. The Thai Program uses Thai as the language of instruction, while the International Program uses English as the language of instruction.

### **Research Participants**

The participants in this study were nine Thai college students who are currently pursuing their degrees in a public four-year university in Thailand. The participants were all students from an English class, a required introductory course for every undergraduate. The nine participants were pursuing different degrees: Accounting,

Computer engineering, Dentistry, English, Engineering, Journalism, Science, and Translation.

All participants studied English in the K-12 Thai educational system and used Thai as their language of everyday life. While none of the participants had extensive experience living abroad, several participants traveled abroad or participated in homestay programs abroad.

### **Research Tools**

In this study, writing prompts and interviews were used as research tools to collect participants' understanding of expressing emotions in different genres in Thai and English. The following section describes the writing prompts, different writing genres, and interview questions.

### **Writing Prompts**

In this study, three emotions (fear, love, and anger) were chosen to be used as the writing prompts of the project. The reason for choosing these three emotions out of the five "discrete emotional states – happiness [or love], sadness, anger, disgust, and fear [is that these emotions] are not further reducible to a small number of common dimensions...and these emotions emerge early in human development" (Niedenthal & Halberstadt, 2001, p. 361).

Nine participants responded to three different prompts for three different genres: poetry, narrative, and opinion/editorial. For each of the three emotions, participants were asked to compose two pieces of writing -- one in Thai and one in English. The topics for the prompts were broad, and participants could choose based on their willingness to share their stories for the study. Participants were given one hour to respond to each prompt.

Immediately after the participants finished responding to the prompts, they were interviewed and asked about their writing experiences.

***Poetry genre -- love.*** In Thai society, showing affection in public is not acceptable. In fact, Thai people do not usually show affection through language, but through touching. Rarely do Thai people speak or use the language of love to show their affection in public. Instead, they may write love poems or notes to one another, a practice rooted in historical courting customs. Today, poetry is used less often in courting situations, but Thai students have studied famous Thai epic and love poems written by nationally renowned poets.

Participants were asked to compose poems related to the topic of love, based on their experiences, in both Thai and English.

*Prompt in English.* Please compose a poem in English expressing your love.

*Prompt in Thai.* กรุณาเขียนบทกวีแสดงความรัก

***Narrative genre -- fear.*** Izard (1971) reports that fear is the “low frequency [emotion]...which we do not like to acknowledge, and which we are not likely to spend much time contemplating or trying to understand” (p. 291). The feeling of fear could be the result of traumatizing experiences, hence writing narrative “is a way for us to reflect upon the significance of what happened. It connects our experience to other experiences in our lives...” (DeSalvo, 1999, p. 60).

Participants were asked to write a short narrative in both Thai and English regarding events that made them fearful. The events could be those that participants witnessed or personally experienced. Participants were encouraged to write only about

events that they were willing to share with others. They were given a one-page minimum for each language.

*Prompt in English.* Please write a one- to two-page essay in English about the (most) fearful events that you have witnessed.

*Prompt in Thai.* กรุณาเขียนเรียงความเกี่ยวกับเหตุการณ์ที่น่ากลัวที่เคยประสบ หรือเห็นด้วยตนเองประมาณ ๑ ถึง ๒ หน้า

***Opinion/editorial piece -- anger.*** As Komin (1991) states, Thai people value social harmony and avoid confrontation. Thais always try to solve problems and conflicts in nonviolent ways (Bilmes, 2001). If they want to express anger, Thais verbalize their rage rather than commit it to writing. An event known as the red-yellow shirt incident marked a milestone in Thai political history, in that Thais expressed their anger and hatred for one another. The red-yellow shirt incident ignited a period of unrest due to political differences among the Thai people. The source of the unrest was an ex-prime minister, Thaksin Shinawatra, who was charged with running the country with his own interests in mind. When he was investigated for the transgression, he fled the country. During the time that the ex-prime minister was outside the country, he spoke disrespectfully about the King of Thailand, who is beloved by the majority of Thai people. Shinawatra's behavior caused a split between the supporters of the ex-prime minister (the red shirt group) and the supporters of the King (the yellow shirt group). The red shirt group supported he because the members of this group believed that the ex-prime minister was innocent and should come back to run the country. The yellow shirt group, on the other hand, believed that the ex-prime minister was a criminal and should come back to Thailand to serve his jail term. Each group started from public speeches

held at different locations around the nation. The incident worsened when these two groups collided. The protesters did not just attack one another, but went so far as to set up road blocks, ignite bombs, and burn down major department stores. It was a chaotic situation in the metropolitan areas.

Participants in this study were asked to express their anger in relation to political issues in Thailand specifically because research suggests that expressing anger in writing in another language is a challenging task. For example, participants in Dewaele's (2010) study stated that "anger repertoires in the TL [target language] were not part of the curriculum, hence their difficulties in expressing anger or irritation in authentic communication in the TL" (p. 115).

*Prompt in English.* Please write a one- to two-page essay in English expressing your anger toward the recent political events in the form of an opinion piece.

*Prompt in Thai.* กรุณาเขียนจดหมายแสดงความรู้สึกโกรธหรือความไม่พอใจเกี่ยวกับเหตุการณ์การเมือง ความยาวประมาณ ๑ ถึง ๒ หน้า

## **Interviews**

Interviews were useful for participants to express their thoughts and emotions in this study. Interviews are one of the most widely used qualitative research tools. Their specific purpose is "to find out about another person's feelings, thoughts, or experiences..." (Holstein & Gubrium, 2003, p. 69). Interviews allow the researcher to learn about another person's life history. In one sense, an interview can be seen as a way to "present a subjective reworking of the individual's biographical concept and thus allows the researcher an insight into the hidden conceptual and emotional world of the

individual” (Hanauer, 2003, p. 78). Atkinson and Coffey (2003) explicate that interviews provide subjective-constructed narratives based on another person’s lived experiences (p. 118). Atkinson and Coffey state that “memory is a cultural phenomenon and is therefore a collective one” (2003, p. 118). In other words, culture shapes the way we memorize and perceive the world, “[l]anguage and discourse, narratives, visual styles, and semiotic and cultural codes are culturally relative and arbitrary...even motives, emotions, intentions, and the like are matters of collective action, expressed through the codes of shared idioms” (Atkinson & Coffey, 2003; Atkinson & Delamont, 2008, pp. 286-287).

After participants responded to the writing prompts, they were invited to participate in an interview reflecting on their writing experiences. The interview took approximately 45 to 60 minutes for each participant. Participants were given choices to use either Thai or English during the interview. An audio recorder was used to record the interviews. The use of the audio recorder reduced the validity threats to the study’s findings (Maxwell, 2005).

The questions investigated each participant’s self-reflection and their perceptions of expressing their emotions through writing. Semi-structured interview questions were used in this study. After writing each piece, participants were invited to immediately reflect on their first writing experience:

- Could you tell me about the poem/narrative story/opinion piece?
- What emotions were you trying to express in this piece?

After responding in writing to the second and the third prompts, participants were invited to reflect on their writing experiences:

- Do you think you conveyed emotion successfully?

- What are the challenges you faced in emotional writing?
- How was the experience of writing emotionally?

After responding to all three prompts, participants were invited to a post-writing interview, where they were asked to reflect on their responses to the writing prompts:

- Reflecting on the poems/narrative stories/opinion pieces in Thai and English, do you think there are differences in expressing emotions in Thai and English?
- Think back over the three texts you wrote. What are the differences between writing these three genres, and how good are they in expressing emotions?

### **Research Procedures**

The following section discussed the research protocol used in this study:

Invitation to participate, data collection process, data analysis, translation, and member checking.

#### **Invitation to Participate**

Participants were invited to participate in the study and were given two informed consent forms (See Appendix A). The researcher introduced and explained the study to the participants. After answering questions, the researcher left the room so participants could sign the informed consent form. This helped increase their anonymity. Participants kept one copy of the form for themselves and placed the researcher's copy in an envelope. Participants were later contacted to arrange a meeting time and location. The researcher met with each participant individually.

#### **Data Collection**

The genres of data collection began with the poetry piece, narrative piece, and opinion piece, respectively. The procedure of the data collection was as follows:



Each participant was asked to compose first in Thai. After the participant completed the Thai piece, the researcher conducted a brief interview with the participant. Then the participant was asked to compose another piece in the same genre in English. After the participants came back with the writing piece, another brief interview was conducted. After the second interview, participants were dismissed and a next meeting was arranged to meet for the new genre. This process was repeated with each participant.

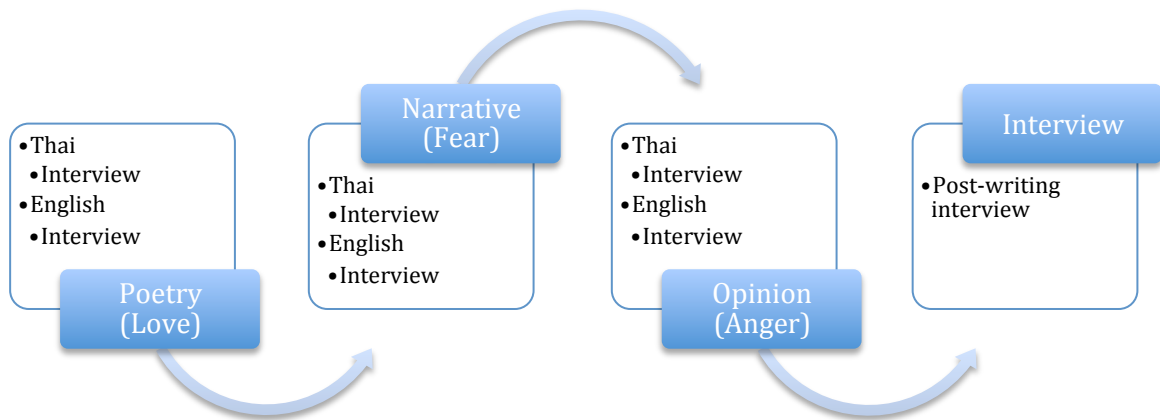


Figure 4: Research design used in the study.

### Data Analysis

Grounded theory was used in analyzing data in this study. Grounded theory “captures the *adductive* logic through which [researchers] explore the social or natural world through practical engagements with it, derive working models and provisional understandings, and use such emergent ideas to guide further empirical explorations” (Atkinson & Delamont, 2008, p. 300; Glaser & Strauss, 1967). The process includes transcribing and translating data, reading and rereading, and coding the data for emerging themes.

### **Interview Data**

Interview files (Interview I, II, and post-writing) were transcribed and translated from Thai to English. The translated interview sets were separated into two sets -- participants' perspectives and genre related interviews. Each interview set was analyzed separately.

### **Individual Participant Data Set**

After the interview data was transcribed and translated, the interview data set was separated into individual sets in order to analyze each individual's experiences and understanding of expressing emotions through writing in different languages. The data set was analyzed by highlighting the emergent themes identified through close-reading analysis of each individual's perspectives.

### **Written Genre Data Set**

After the second stage in which the individual's data set was analyzed, the interview transcripts were grouped according to the genre. The purpose of this analysis was to gain an understanding of participants' perceptions of their emotionality writing experiences related to different genres.

### **Data Translation**

All translation was checked by two Thai speakers who were highly proficient in English: an assistant professor in the English Department in a Thai university and a Thai doctoral student who is currently finishing his dissertation in the United States. Each translator was given a separate translation sheet. They were asked to read and provided feedback on the translated version. After they finished, the two translators and the

research sat down and discussed word choices and structural issues within the translations. All discrepancies were resolved through discussion.

### **Member Checking**

After the data analysis had been written up, each participant was contacted through an email communication. In each email, the written data analysis file was attached. Each participant was given a week to read and provide feedback to the researcher. All participants responded with confirmation feedback to the researcher.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### INDIVIDUAL PERCEPTIONS OF EXPRESSING EMOTION THROUGH WRITING

In the following section, the data is presented through the analysis of each participant's understanding of expressing emotions through writing in Thai and in English: Poetry writing, Narrative writing, and Opinion writing. Thirty-six interview sessions were presented in this data analysis as well. All of the participants' names in this following section are pseudonyms. Each participant's background information will be provided before the presentation of the analysis of written responses and interview data. At the end of each participant's data analysis, four research questions are answered based on individual's understanding of emotional writing in Thai and in English. Excerpts of Thai and English written responses are used as a part of the data analysis. All Thai written responses are presented in Thai and translated into English. The English written responses are presented in the exact wording from the participants.

#### **Maiake**

At the time of data collection, Maiake was a sophomore majoring in Commerce and Accountancy, Thai program. He received his basic education from a Thai school where Thai teachers of English, in Bangkok, taught four English classes per week. However, he was only able to attend one class per week with the English speaking teachers. He had a few opportunities to go abroad and once participated in a one-month homestay in an English-speaking country.

#### **Maiake's Poetry**

When Maiake was asked to respond to the poetry written prompt, he wrote a Thai poem for a Thai girl whom he wanted to ask out on a date. He wrote,

เมื่อรู้จัก มักคุ้น แล้วต้องจิต	หากจะติด ตามน้อง จะว่าไหม
น้องช่างงาม ทั้งกาย และหัวใจ	กุลสตรี ของไทย พี่ที่มอง
ถ้าเกิดโลก ทั้งใบ จะต้องแตก	พี่จะแทรก แผ่นดิน ไปหาน้อง
จะถนอมมิ ให้ใคร มาแตะต้อง	จะบอกรัก รักน้อง ทุกเวลา
หากแต่ว่า น้องจะรัก พี่หรือไม่	พี่ไม่มี อะไร ที่หุหุหุ
ทรัพย์สินสมบัติ ชาติตระกูล หรือเงินตรา	แม้รรา นีพี่ ก็ไม่มี
แต่สิ่ง ห นึ่ง ที่พี่ มีให้แน่	คือรักแท้ ทั้งหัวใจ จากตัวพี่
ขอให้สัตย์ ปฏิญาณ ณ ตรงนี้	ว่าจะมี ใจให้น้อง เพียงคนเดียว

(Maiake, Thai poem)

<i>When knowing familiar then touch mind</i>	<i>if will follow you will okay?</i>
<i>you beautiful both body and heart</i>	<i>fine lady of Thailand I at look</i>
<i>If happen the world whole will break</i>	<i>I will break ground to seek you</i>
<i>will cherish not allow anyone come touch</i>	<i>will tell love love you every time</i>
<i>If only you will love me or not</i>	<i>I not have things that fancy</i>
<i>wealth noble family lineage or monetary</i>	<i>even cars this I also no have</i>
<i>but thing one that I have give sure</i>	<i>is love true whole heart from body mine</i>
<i>plead give vow at this here</i>	<i>that will have heart give you only</i>

(Maiake, Thai poem, my own translation)

The poem was written in the style of *Kloon pad* (Poem 8), in which each stanza consists of four lines and each line has eight to nine Thai words. As shown in Figure 5, the final syllable of the first line is rhymed with the third syllable of the second line. The last syllable of the second line must rhyme with the last word of the third line and the fifth word of the fourth line of the stanza.

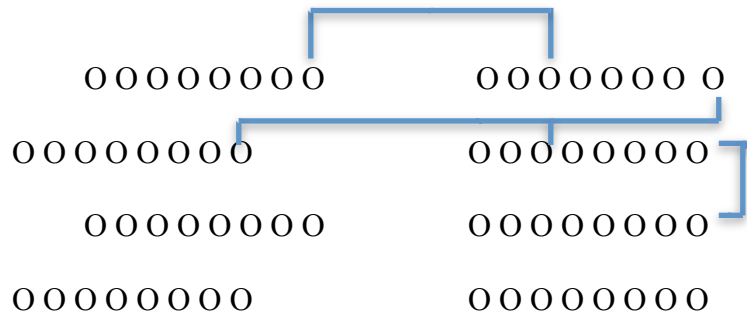


Figure 5: The structure of *Kloon pad* (Poem 8)

The content of Maiake's poem is summarized as follows: When he starts talking to her, he likes her because she is a kind-hearted person and well behaved as a fine Thai lady. If the world were to end, he would search for her to protect her from everyone. The question is whether she will love him in return because he has no cars, nor money, and he does not come from a rich family. What he can give her is love from the bottom of his heart. He vows that he will always love her.

Maiake chose to write his poem as a *Kloon pad* (Poem 8). Thai people can easily recognize this style of poetry writing because of its structure. The challenge in composing the poem by using this structure is to find words that will fit into the rhyming schemes as they are shown above. Thai poets use this style of poetry to describe the beauty of people and scenery (Hudak, 1990). This style of poetry is meant to resemble to ordinary speech (Gedney, 1989).

From Maiake's Thai poem, he expressed his longing for love in the romantic aspect by expressing his love towards to the girl he likes. Maiake expressed his love successfully through the use of word choice and rhymed words in his poem. He used Thai words that describe his romantic feelings well in his poem; for example, he wanted to

cherish her or he wanted to tell her how much he loves her every single minute. Moore (2000) published a collection of Thai words that contained the word *jai* (or “heart” in English), which he claimed have over 300 words appeared in this book. There are two chapters in Moore’s (2000) book devoted to the concept of love: relationships and romance. Under the chapter on relationships and romance, there were 17 subcategories: “betrayal, bluntness, character traits, condition, effort, fear, forgiveness, hypocrisy, joy and tenderness, pain and sorrow, pleasing others, respecting others, revealing the heart, secrecy, trust and importance, unity, and vulnerability” (pp. 86-115). Another chapter on romance contained ten subcategories: commitment, cycle of romance, endearments, infatuation, intimacy, love, loyalty, study the heart, testing the heart, truth and trust” (pp. 186-198).

The word choices that Maiake used in his Thai poem also signified that he could express his romantic feelings well in Thai such as *ta-nhom* (cherish) or *ruk* (love). In the second stanza, he described that he would risk his life to go and protect her if she were in a dangerous situation. In other words, he wanted to express a pure love, which was demonstrated by his desire to protect her from harm. Hence, the emotion that was expressed in this poem reflected pure love and his longing for a romantic relationship with the girl.

When Maiake was asked to write an English poem to express his love, he composed the following poem.

Some say it brings you happy,  
Some talk about it sadly,  
I think it’s my duty

To keep it with me constantly.

\*\*\*\*\*

It's a sweet dream for some people,

But also can be terrible,

I will call it as a candle

That can bring us light and dark.

(Maiake, English poem)

From his poems, he attempted to express his difficulty with love through the use of imagery. He tried to use metaphor in the expression of love in English. The love he tried to work out in the first English poem was a reminder or a life-lesson that love has two sides: happiness and sadness. As he stated in the third line, he wanted to remind himself or “his duty” to keep the lessons that he learned from others that love can make him happy and sad.

For the second English poem, he presented both sides of love: sweetness and bitterness. He employed the candle as a metaphor of love that it can light up someone's life. It can also darken someone's life if the candle went out. To contrast this with his Thai poem, his struggle to express his love is shown in the abstract quality of his English poems. The emotion that he tried to express was not easily noticeable. His concept of love in English is philosophical or intellectual, but not romantic in Thai.

He did not use the endearment terms such as *ta-nhom* (cherish) or *ruk* (love) like he used in his Thai love poem. Readers need to read between the lines to understand the feelings he wants to express in his English poems such as the lessons he learned from others about love in his first poem or that love could either brighten or darken a person's



life in the second poem. Though the English poems were short, they showed his English writing proficiency in which he tried to find words that rhymed at the end of each line. When he was asked to reflect on his poetry writing experiences, he stated in his interview:

“Talking about my writing experiences in the expression of emotion, I felt that the Thai language offers variety of word choices. It might be because I studied Thai language since I was a kid. That helps me learn new words and their meanings. However, the obstacle that happened with both languages [Thai and English] was that I read the words, I understood what they meant, but I could not use them. Like I read something and I understood what the author wanted to convey but the challenge was to use that word to express my ideas in my writing.”

(Maiake, personal interview, my own translation)

Maiake’s understanding of being able to successfully express emotions through writing was demonstrated through the words he chose to use. In his Thai poem, he felt satisfaction in expressing his longing for a girl and asking for her love. On the other hand, his English poems contained metaphors that he used to express his love on a philosophical level. Maiake preferred using the Thai language to English in writing poetry because he felt more competent in his Thai language. As seen in his Thai poem, he employed Thai words such as *ta-nhom* (cherish) or *ruk* (love), which he did not use in his English poems. This showed that he was able to use Thai words to express his emotion. Maiake also reflected on his English poetry writing experience that it was difficult for him. His English poems employed simple words, but with a profound metaphorical

understanding of love, such as the use of the candle metaphor. He felt that his choice of words in his English poems was not as explicit as in the Thai language.

### **Maiake's Narratives**

Reading Maiake's Thai narrative, readers of Thai can easily identify the nervousness in his writing.

วัน หนึ่ง ขณะที่ ผมกำลัง ขับรถ อยู่บนสะพาน สมเด็จพระเจ้าตากสิน ขวลงสะพาน  
ทันใดนั้นเอง เครื่องยนต์ก็ดับไปเสียเฉยๆ ... ที่สำคัญ รถกำลังไหลลงสะพานไป  
โดยไม่สามารถควบคุมได้ ผมเริ่มกระวนกระวาย...

(Maiake, Thai narrative)

*One day while I was driving downward on the Somdej Prachao Taksin Bridge,  
suddenly the engine stopped running without any signs or symptoms...more  
importantly my car was slowly sliding downward, which I was unable to control. I  
started feeling nervous.*

(Maiake, Thai narrative, my own translation)

Maiake's Thai narrative told a story that he had a problem with his car while he was in the middle of a bridge. From his Thai narrative he was able to express that his nervousness was building up. As he unveiled his fearful story, he used transitional phrases, such as *suddenly*, to signal readers of what happened. From this sentence, the use of "suddenly" implied the feeling of surprise that the car engine stopped running. He also used emphasis in his story, as in *more importantly*, to show that something was about to happen in the story. Because he was not able to control his car in the middle of the bridge, he felt nervous that he would cause an accident on the bridge.

It was an interesting choice that Maiake chose to write about this nerve-wracking experience. Maiake had explicitly described his feelings of fear in retelling his story: his

fear of causing a car accident; his fear of being unable to control or stop the car; and his fear of being unable to restart the engine. His narrative expressed mixed feelings of fear, excitement, and nervousness. When he was asked to reflect on his Thai writing experience, he stated:

“When I saw the word ‘fear,’ immediately I thought of something that made me worried or decision making that was required in handling that fear, which could come from feeling frightened or other factors.”

(Maiake, personal interview, my own translation)

Intuitively, Maiake interpreted the word “fear” in Thai as in being worrisome or being quick in making decisions to solve problems. His definition of fear was reflected in his Thai narrative where he described an incident when he needed to make a decision to solve his problem on the bridge. His Thai narrative writing matched his definition of fear that he described in the interview. His definition of fear was a combination of anxiety and fright.

Looking at Maiake’s English narrative, he wrote the same situation as in the Thai version. He used the word “nervous” in his English narrative to describe his emotion in the story; “I was getting nervous that time but wanted to try more, so I did the same sequence but the engine remained the same” (Maiake, English narrative). Besides the word “nervous,” he also used the word “stun” in his English story as he wrote; “I was stunned while the car was still moving down the bridge” (Maiake, English narrative). Other words that he used in English narrative were “surprised” and “fearful mood.” The four words he chose to describe his fear in his English narrative writing showed his understanding of the term “fear” in English.

Maiake reflected on composing his English narrative that it could not convey emotion as well as his Thai narrative.

“The expression of fearful emotion in this [English] piece cannot convey as explicit emotion as in the Thai version. The English version cannot persuade readers’ emotional involvement when compared to the Thai version.”

(Maiake, personal interview, my own translation)

As stated in his reflection, he perceived that his ability to express fear in written English was not as competent as it was in written Thai. In other words, he preferred the Thai narrative in its expression of emotion. Another point to be made is that in the quote above, he comments on his own English writing experience from a reader’s perspective. This implies that he was not fully satisfied with his English narrative’s expression of emotion. He mentioned that his English narrative writing could not “persuade readers’ emotional involvement.” He had the impression that since he could not perceive emotion in his own English writing, other readers would not be able to recognize the emotions presented in his writing. This was in contrast to his writing in the Thai language.

Maiake’s reflection not only sheds light on the socio-cultural aspect of language but also on the idea that physical emotion can be nuanced in two different languages: Thai and English. According to Maiake

“Some words can be written in English easily, but I don’t know the meaning of that word in Thai such as “nervous.” I understand what it means, but I don’t know how to say this word in Thai, maybe afraid or a bit edgy. I know how to use the term, but do not know how to say or to write this word in Thai.”

(Maiake, personal interview, my own translation)

Looking at his Thai narrative written response, he actually translated the word “nervous” or *kra-whon-kra-whay* in Thai, but he did not realize that the word he wrote in Thai means “nervous” in English. I have highlighted the word “nervous” in Thai in his response. His Thai narrative writing contained emotive words. After writing narrative stories in both Thai and English, Maiake reflected on his writing experience and shared that he knew the meaning of the word “nervous” in English and could use it in different contexts. However, he did not know how to translate it into Thai because he has been using it in English in his daily conversation with peers by mixing the term with Thai utterances. It is an advantage for him that he learned how to express his nervousness in English.

### **Maiake’s Opinion Pieces**

For his Thai opinion writing in expressing anger, he wrote about the definitions of two words: *phon-pra-yot* (conflict of interest/benefit) and *karn-meung* (politics). After defining these two words, he went on to critique Thai society from the macro perspective that politicians should not use their power for their own interests; they needed to think in terms of the public good to help develop the country. He critiqued politicians who benefited from following their own political agendas. He concluded his opinion writing by sharing his personal beliefs as he wrote;

ผมยังเชื่อ ว่า การอบรมปลูกฝัง สมาชิกในครอบครัว ในสิ่งที่ถูกต้อง คือ การไม่เอารัด  
เอาเปรียบ และ การคำนึงถึง ประโยชน์ส่วนรวมเป็นหลักนั้น ย่อมเป็นหนทาง  
ที่ทุกคนสามารถทำได้ รวมทั้ง ยังเป็นการพัฒนาคุณภาพ ทางด้านจิตใจ ตั้งแต่หน่วยย่อยๆ  
ของสังคม อันจะยังประโยชน์ต่อส่วนรวม และประเทศชาติ ในอนาคตต่อไป อย่างแน่นอน

(Maiake, Thai opinion writing)

*I believe that teaching family members to not take advantage of others and to think of public interests before our own will help develop the quality of life from the smaller units, which will be beneficial to both personal and societal levels.*

(Maiake, Thai opinion writing, my own translation)

Maiake's attempt to express his dissatisfaction was not explicit. He tried to present himself as being neutral in discussing political issues. By rationalizing these two words, *phon-pra-yot* (conflict of interest/benefit) and *karn-meung* (politics), in his Thai opinion writing, he presented the emotion in a subtle way. Readers needed to infer the emotion expressed in his writing. In his English opinion writing, he approached his writing from the same structure; he defined two terms: "benefit" and "policy." He also concluded his English opinion writing with the same message that he wrote in his Thai writing; "...family is the best unit, the smallest unit, to teach the members the right thing. Let's start today to see our country a better future blue sky."

Maiake reflected on expressing his opinion in writing both in Thai and English: "I think the experience in Thai writing was very interesting because I could convey the message that I wanted to convey well. I could portray the macro picture of the situation so that everyone [Thai readers] could read. When I was asked to write in English, I could not express my emotion or something when comparing to Thai. I also had no idea whether readers could understand my message or my intention in writing this piece. This might be because of my English proficiency. I could not employ idioms or cultural aspects of conveying emotion through language."

(Maiake, personal interview, my own translation)

In expressing dissatisfaction through writing, Maiake felt that he could express his feeling better in his Thai writing because he knew his audience well. He also knew how to approach the topic from both linguistic and cultural perspectives. However, he was not sure how to express his dissatisfaction when he was asked to express it in English. One explanation was that Maiake was less familiar with the opinion-writing genre in English because his exposure to political news and comments had been in the Thai language (Smalley, 1994). Though he translated his Thai writing into English, he was not sure of the readability of the writing. Another explanation was that Maiake was not sure about the conventions of English opinion writing. Therefore, he translated the Thai opinion writing into English. By translating the Thai writing into English, he felt that he was lost, as he was not sure how to approach his English audience through his writing.

After he finished responding to six written prompts, Maiake reflected on the important role that language played in expressing emotions.

“It is very difficult in conveying emotions in English because it has something to do with vocabulary. I know that I have limited adjectives, I do not know how to describe the scene to make it more vivid or convince readers’ emotions when comparing the writing in Thai.”

(Maiake, personal interview, my own translation)

Maiake saw the importance of knowing vocabulary and especially adjectives in expressing emotions in English. As he stated, he felt that he could use Thai in expressing his emotions well because he could “convince” readers to understand how he felt. This can be seen throughout his written pieces in his Thai poem and his Thai narrative writing along with his comments during the interviews. In other words, Maiake saw the use of

expressing emotions through writing as a discourse of argument that allowed him to share his feelings in the hope that others would feel the same emotions. In contrast, he felt that he could not effectively express emotions in English due to his limited understanding of English poetry and his lack of proficiency in English, especially in writing his opinion. This is also reflected in the fact that Maiake had had limited opportunities in the past to express emotion when he communicated his opinions in written English.

### **Summary of Maiake's Perceptions of Expressing Emotions Through Writing**

Guided by the four research questions posited in this study, the following section summarizes Maiake's understandings of emotional writing through different genres in Thai and in English.

1. In what ways does Maiake understand and experience/perceive emotional writing in Thai as his first language?

Maiake showed his understanding of expressing emotions in Thai through the use of Thai emotive words. In his interview, he stated that it was easy for him to express his emotions through the Thai language. He was confident in his ability to express his emotions through writing in Thai. He demonstrated his understanding of the Thai language by the use of nuanced definitions in Thai words used to express emotions. In his Thai narrative, he used different words so that readers could feel what he went through. Maiake's Thai opinion writing was written from a macro-political perspective in which he expressed his concern for Thai families at large. He felt that he was able to express his ideas and emotions in his Thai opinion writing.



2. In what ways does Maiake understand and experience/perceive emotional writing in English as his second language?

Maiake shared his understanding that the ability to effectively express emotion in English required an understanding of the culture, the impact of a lack of practice, and knowledge of English emotive words. As he stated in his interviews, he was not sure how to express emotion in English; therefore, he felt that he was not able to share his emotions in the written responses. For example, Maiake felt that he was not able to express his emotion in English through opinion writing. He was not sure whether English-speaking readers would be able to feel the emotion he wanted to express in his English opinion writing. He was not sure of how English-speaking readers expressed their anger in their culture. In other words, cultural understanding played an important part for Maiake in expressing emotions in writing.

In addition to the cultural issue, he also felt that he needed to know more English emotive words for him to be able to express emotion. Maiake's English poems employed simple words to express emotion. Despite his use of simple words, he showed an ability to use metaphor to convey emotion in his English poem. Other difficulties that he faced in expressing emotion when he responded to the English narrative writing and English opinion writing were attributable to the translation of emotive words from English to Thai and from his lack of experience in expressing emotions in English. He felt that he could not express his intended emotion in his English narrative because he did not know many English emotive words. In this sense, his perception of expressing emotions through

writing was the ability to convey and “convince” the readers of the emotions he wanted to express.

3. Are there differences in Maiake’s understanding of emotional writing in Thai and in English?

The differences in expressing emotions in Thai and in English that Maiake shared in his interview responses were the issue of culture and emotive words. These differences were reflected throughout Maiake’s writing experiences. For the cultural issue, he discussed it when he finished responded to the English opinion writing. As he understood it, cultural representation was an important aspect in expressing emotions. He felt that he was able to express his emotion in Thai better because he has an understanding of how Thai people expressed their anger in Thai opinion writing. This showed his understanding of the differences in expressing emotions in Thai and in English.

Another difference that he pointed out in relation to the expression of emotions in Thai and in English was the difficulties in English emotive words. In other words, he felt that he needed to have the exact word to describe or present his emotions in his writing. He felt that the English language would be an appropriate language for him to use in expressing emotions if he knew more English vocabulary. For example, he employed Thai emotive words in his Thai poem, which he did not do so in his English poems. He demonstrated his control over the Thai language by using nuanced definitions of emotive words in his Thai poem. However, he faced a problem when he wanted to translate the term “nervous” from English to Thai in expressing his emotion. He felt that if he were

able to translate this word from English to Thai and use it in his narrative, he would be more satisfied by his writing. For his English written responses, he was able to express his emotions as he wanted to, but he felt that he needed to learn more English emotive words. He felt that he did not possess the vocabulary used to express emotions in written English.

4. Are there differences in Maiake's understanding of emotional writing in different genres?

Maiake presented his understanding of different genres in expressing emotions as follows. In poetry writing, Maiake presented his understanding that word choice is an important aspect in expressing emotion in this genre. He also demonstrated his ability to express his emotions from a different viewpoint. In his Thai poem, he employed different Thai emotive words. The Thai words that he used were also sophisticated, which came from his understanding of Thai poetry. For Maiake's English poem, he did not use any complicated word choices, but he was aware of the concept of metaphor in English poetry.

For his narrative writing genre, his understanding of presenting his emotions through narrative writing was based on the use of description. Though he translated his narrative from Thai to English, he still showed his understanding during the interview. He discussed the use of descriptive words and how these words "convince" readers to experience the same emotions he wanted to convey. He also showed his awareness of audience in his narrative writing.

Maiake also wrote his opinion writing in Thai and then translated it into English. He felt that he was not able to adequately express his emotions in his

English opinion writing because of a lack of vocabulary and cultural terms.

Maiake was aware of cultural aspects of emotional expression from his response to the English opinion writing prompt. He felt that he did not know how to express emotions to English-speaking audience because he was not equipped with cultural knowledge or the idioms needed to express them.

### **Em**

Em was a sophomore in the Accounting Department, an international program, where English was used as the medium of instruction in the majority of his classes. He graduated from a Thai school in Bangkok where he had attended kindergarten through high school. Out of the five English classes Em had taken, four had been taught by Thai-speaking teachers of English and only one by an English speaking teacher. At the time of the interview, Em was dating an English speaker.

### **Em's Poetry**

While Em was responding to the Thai poetry-writing prompt, he stated that he forgot the structures of Thai poems. Instead he wrote his “poem” in prose:

“แม้ว่า เราจะไม่ได้อยู่ด้วยกันทุกวัน แต่สักวัน เราจะต้องได้อยู่ด้วยกัน  
ทุกวัน...ฉันไม่อยาก ที่จะเสียเวลาอีกแล้ว ฉันอยากที่จะ หยุด หยุด หยุดตรงที่เธอ” (Em,  
Thai poetry writing)

*Though we were not together now, someday we will be together...I do not want to  
waste my time anymore. I want to stop, stop, stop at you.*

(Em, Thai poetry writing, my own translation)

To summarize his “poem,” he wrote that only time could tell how much he loves the other person. He was willing to wait till the day the other person accepted his love. He

ended his “poem” by stating that though he was young, he was ready for a serious relationship. In his “poem,” he showed a creative use of the Thai language by repeating the word “*stop, stop, stop*” in his writing.

From this last statement that Em wrote, he showed his ability to express his romantic feelings in Thai language. He wrote, “*Though we were not together now, someday we will be together,*” Em defined love as searching and longing for a romantic relationship between two people. He explicitly stated his feelings in his “poem.” This technique of the repetition of a word or anaphora helped readers understand the feeling he wanted to express in his writing. He felt tired and frustrated from searching for his significant other.

For his English poetry writing, he also did not respond to the written prompt in poetic format.

“I won’t say that I love you because I don’t feel it now. All I can say is I do like you and I want you to be mine no matter what; even if you’re in XXX and I’m in XXX.”

(Em, English poetry writing)

He wrote his Thai “poem” in the prose. His expression of love in English was similar to his Thai “poem” in that he wanted to be with this person even though they were not in the same country. He was willing to wait for the return of his significant other. Em had demonstrated his English ability in differentiating the meanings of two words: love and like. As he wrote in his English poem, “I won’t say that I love you because I don’t feel it now. All I can say is I do like you,” Em did not want to “say” the word “love” to another person because he knew that the word was too strong to express such emotion at this

stage in his relationship. Instead he chose to use the word “like” to express his emotion for his significant other. When he was asked to reflect on his writing experiences, he stated in his interview that he could not express his love in Thai.

“I felt corny when expressing love in Thai because I never use Thai in conveying romantic feeling. I expressed my feelings in Thai in terms of endearment to my parents and my closest friends. For the English language, the writing looked okay. It looked less ‘drama’. It looked right and ‘conveyed expression’ better.”

(Em, personal interview, my own translation)

When Em wanted to express his romantic emotions in Thai, he felt awkward and nervous because he had never used Thai to express romantic love. Since he was seeing someone who spoke English as an L1, he felt a bit embarrassed when expressing romantic feelings in Thai. In contrast, he felt less of an emotional burden when using Thai to express “endearment to his friends and parents.” For Em, expressing love in Thai was the same discourse of endearment that he used with his parents and friends. One explanation for this could be that he had an actual audience for his “poem”; therefore, he felt that he had succeeded in expressing his emotion to another person.

At the end of his Thai and English poetry writing experiences, he stated that he preferred the English language because he uses English on a daily basis for his academic career and his personal life:

“I wrote about my personal experience and the experience that happened in English. I personally like English and use English everyday. Therefore, I felt it was easier to express my feelings in English. At this moment, I write everything

in English. I meant I used the English language more than Thai in every language skills.”

(Em, personal interview, my own translation)

This was an interesting remark that Em shared in his interview. Though he is Thai, he prefers to use English in the expression of his emotion instead of in Thai. This is a shift in language preference for Em. One explanation could be that the event Em referred to “happened in English”; therefore, it was “easier” for him to express his emotion in English. In other words, he felt that it was easier to retell his experiences in the language of occurrence because he did not need to translate and find words that could describe his experiences. Another explanation could be that he had a sense of ownership of the language because he “wrote everything in English.” This sense of ownership increased his confidence in expressing emotion in the English language.

### **Em’s Narratives**

For his Thai narrative writing, he wrote about a trip to Hong Kong. The following excerpt was a section when he thought he would not survive a ferry crossing from Macau to Hong Kong during a storm.

เราไม่อยาก ไปมาเก๊า เพราะ รู้สึกว่า ไม่มีอะไรทำ มีแต่เข้าบ่อน และ เป็นคนไม่ชอบบุหรื  
... ตอนนั้น อายุ 15 ขวบ เราก็เที่ยว มาเก๊า แค่ 2 ชั่วโมง แล้วก็ ไปท่าเรือ กลับฮ่องกง  
พอตอนจะถึง ฮ่องกง พายุเข้าแรงมาก เรือเหมือนจะล่ม โยกไปทั้งเรือ  
ของและคนล้มระเนระนาด เราก็คิด ไม่รอดแน่ lol แต่ก็รอด

(Em, Thai narrative)

*I did not want to go to Macau because I felt that there was nothing to do. People went to casinos and I did not like cigarette smoke. ... I was 15 years old at the time. I traveled around Macau for 2 hours then I left to the port to catch my ferry*

*to Honk Kong. When the ferry was about to reach Hong Kong port, a storm hit really hard. The ferry was shaking. People and things got thrown around everywhere. I thought to myself that I would not make it. lol. But I survived.*

(Em, Thai narrative, my own translation)

Because he did not want to stay in Macau, Em decided to take a ferry to go back to Hong Kong. In his attempt to express his fearful experience, he tried to describe the chaotic scene in the ferry. He wrote, “*The ferry was shaking. People and things got thrown around everywhere.*” Because Em was 15 years old and traveled by himself at that time, he was afraid of losing his life and thought that he “*would not make it.*” The interesting part of his writing was the use of “lol” (or laugh out loud). The juxtaposition of his fearful story and the use of abbreviation to show the sense of humor made this section of the story fascinating. This showed that he was nervous in describing the story or he wanted to show that he ridiculed himself after reflecting on this particular incident that he would not survive in this storm. When he was asked during the interview regarding the Thai narrative, he stated the following:

“Writing this [narrative], I felt that it was not an academic language; it was like narrating a story. Sometimes it felt funny because I was not used to writing in this genre. I could not express my emotion well. I could only write about the gist of the story and what happened because I could not express my feeling well.”

(Em, personal interview, my own translation)

As he stated in his interview, he felt that narrative writing was not “an academic language.” He felt that he could not express his emotion in writing because he did not have a lot of experiences in narrating stories through writing. As he reflected on the



experience, he was not familiar with the narrative genre; he was not sure how to structure his story. He decided to “write about the gist of the story.” Therefore, he felt awkward or “funny” to narrate his own personal experience in response to this written prompt. The awkward feeling or “funny” that Em described in his interview could be explained the use of “lol” in his writing.

When he was asked to compose an English narrative, he translated the Thai narrative into English. The excerpt below shows.

“Once the ferry arrived HK, Central side, the storm was coming heavily and many people in the ferry including me were curious that we would have survived or not.”

(Em, English narrative)

In his English narrative, Em described the same situation that he wrote in the Thai language. However, when he was asked to reflect on the English narrative writing experience, he shared his perspective:

“I felt that I don’t know or I think it was more difficult to express emotion in Thai. For the Thai language, the comparative level of the word “suspect” is “very suspect.” For English, the terms “suspect” and “curious” are two different meanings, but there are more choices in English for me to choose according to contexts to convey my emotion.”

(Em, personal interview, my own translation)

Expressing fear in Thai was challenging for Em. As he stated in the interview, he thought that the Thai language did not offer many word choices for him to use in expressing emotions. In other words, he felt that he had limited word choice in Thai. The

use of emphasis words in Thai, such as the word *mahk* (or “very” in English), added to the adjective that he used in his writing to highlight the emotions, was not a successful strategy for him. In contrast, in English he felt more confident to express emotion because English provided “more choices” for him. Em preferred to use English in expressing fearful emotion because he knew the nuances in English vocabulary, and he could vary his word choices according to the contexts in which he wanted to express his feelings.

For the opinion writing in Thai prompt, Em wrote about his dissatisfaction with the political situation in Thailand that had inconvenienced him and had disrupted his daily life.

“บ้านผมอยู่ใจกลางเมือง บริเวณที่ทั้งเหลือง และ แดงประท้วง  
ทำให้จะไปไหนมาไหนลำบาก รถติด ตอนที่มีเหตุการณ์ความรุนแรง ไม่มีที่ซื้อของ  
รถติดมาก จะออกจากบ้านก็ยังไม่ได้ เผากันอยู่รอบบ้าน มีมลภาวะทางเสียง  
ปราศรัยโจมตีกันไปมา เปิดเพลงปลุกระดม ... รู้สึกไม่ปลอดภัยต่อชีวิต”

(Em, Thai opinion writing)

*My house is located in the metropolitan area where protesters from both the yellow and the red shirts gathered. The protest caused difficulties in traveling and traffic. During the on-going violence, there was no place to shop. The traffic was the worst. I could not even leave my house because the neighborhood and its surroundings of my house were being burned down. There was noise pollution from the heated speeches and stirring songs during the rally. ... I felt that my life was not safe.*

(Em, Thai opinion writing, my own translation)

Em's dissatisfaction was discernable in his Thai opinion writing. He described the situation and what had happened to his surroundings. His description of the event expressed the sense of frustration that he had felt. Em had been frustrated by the *"protesters from both the yellow and the red shirts"* because these protesters had created *"difficulties"* for him. A sense of his frustration with the situation can be inferred in his writing where he describes that he *"could not go anywhere."* The protests had caused him great difficulties in leading his routine life. The traffic congestion was caused by the protesters. When he needed to leave his house to go to school, he felt insecure because of the violent incidents around his neighborhood. He also felt insecure because his *"neighborhood and its surroundings of my house were being burned down."*

### **Em's Opinion Pieces**

For the English opinion writing prompt, he also wrote about the situations of unrest in Thailand:

No matter what color you take side, you are Thai. Why don't you stop quarrel and bring all of you guys to sit down and find the reconciliation to run on this country? It's so simple that we are different from each other, but do not forget we have something similarity as well, we are Thai, living in the same country, having the greatest King. Stop your envy, gluttony, greedy, and other 10 sins and alter your fucking energies to help and develop this country

(Em, English opinion writing)

Reading his English opinion writing, his feelings of rage, anger, and dissatisfaction shine through the word choices in his writing. He was being direct in expressing his anger in this situation through the use of swear word, *"fucking energies."* He wrote, *"No matter*

*what color you take side, you are Thai*” in his first paragraph in his English writing. He discussed a sense of nationalism of being Thai and that Thai people should solve the problem in harmony by bringing everyone together to “*sit down and find the reconciliation to run on this country?*” He felt angry that Thai people fought one another. Em implied in his writing that everyone has an opinion but public interests should come before personal ones.

The use of imperative sentence structure and the list of adjectives that he employed in his writing, including “*envy, gluttony, greed,*” show that he is an advanced user of English. He was able to differentiate the nuanced meanings of these three words to describe and summarize the Thai political situations. He used a vulgar word in expressing his anger as if he were yelling at someone. The use of the imperative structure also showed that he was frustrated with the situation.

When he was asked to reflect on his opinion writing experiences, he stated the following:

“Writing in English can better express emotion than writing in Thai. But there were some parts that I was not sure how to write. For example, I was not sure how to use some vocabulary or which preposition to use. I decided to avoid those words and used the ones that I was sure of.”

(Em, personal interview, my own translation)

As Em reflected on his opinion writing experiences in Thai and English, he preferred the English opinion writing to the Thai version because he felt that he could express his anger well. His strategy in choosing the vocabulary that he knew in writing worked out for him because he was able to convey his feelings to his audience. This

could be the reason of his preference in the English writing. Another reason might be because since he used the English language in his daily life, he felt that he was more competent in the language.

“The English language will always be easier to write because I use English frequently and I like the language better than the Thai language. I feel that the English language ‘express feeling’ better. One word can be translated into many meanings. Even though there are many words to choose from, I feel that it better ‘conveys’ the feelings.”

(Em, personal interview, my own translation)

Em’s preference in the English language can be seen from his English written responses. All of his English responses conveyed his emotions well when compared to his Thai written responses. The comment that Em mentioned regarding the different meanings of English words showed his English proficiency that he was able to notice the nuances of the English language. His reflection on expressing anger in writing was very interesting. Though he is Thai, he preferred English to Thai.

After responding to all written prompts, Em reflected on his writing experiences and expression of emotions:

“After writing on three emotions, six pieces, I felt good because it allowed me to get to know myself and know my limits. How many times would I have this opportunity to write on these topics – narrative, opinionated writing, and poetry? Rarely does it happen. Not even a chance in university classes. This is a good experience. I felt that I could not express feeling at all in Thai language, my

language or mother tongue. At least I could convey some meanings. For English, I knew that I could express feeling by the use of vocabulary.”

(Em, personal interview, my own translation)

These written prompts gave Em the opportunity to look back at his writing experiences and reflected on his writing proficiency across three genres. These writing prompts helped Em raise his awareness of writing genres. As he stated, he did not have much experiences in writing these three genres either on his own or “in university classes.”

An interesting remark that Em talked about in his interview was that he was not able to express emotions in Thai, or what he called in his words “my language or mother tongue.” He felt that he was not content to express emotions in Thai because of the limited choice in Thai words. Looking through his Thai written responses, he was able to express his emotions in Thai to a certain extent, but he did not feel that he could employ the Thai language to express his emotions. Another explanation could be that he had limited experiences in expressing emotions through writing in the Thai language.

Therefore, Em chose to use English as his language for daily communication, including expressing emotions. From his reflection, he felt that he could better express his emotions in English because he knew more emotive words. He demonstrated his ability in expressing emotions in his English written responses such as the use of vulgar words and the use of imperative sentence structure. He was able to employ different emotive words in English to express his feelings. From Em’s perspective, vocabulary plays a role as emotional markers in writing. When Em felt that he could not express his emotions well in Thai, it was because he felt that he did not have enough Thai emotive words. In fact, he felt more confident and more carefree in expressing emotions in

English and uses English on a daily basis because he has more English-speaking friends. This could be the reason he felt he could express emotions in English better than in Thai.

### **Summary of Em's Perception on Expressing Emotions Through Writing**

To answer four research questions posted in this study, the following section presents Em's understandings of emotional writing in different genres in Thai and in English.

1. In what ways does Em understand and experience/perceive emotional writing in Thai as his first language?

Em's understanding of expressing emotions in Thai was as if it were his second language. In other words, he created a distance between himself and Thai, his L1. His perception was that he was less able to express his emotions in Thai. In other words, he was not confident in expressing his emotions in Thai. To express romantic love, he felt awkward and shy to express his emotion in Thai through poetry writing. As he stated, he felt "corny" when he expressed his emotion in Thai. In his Thai narrative writing, he was not sure which words to use in expressing fear. Reflecting on his understanding on Thai narrative writing during his interview, he felt that the use of Thai adjective was not an effective strategy in expressing his emotion. Because of his perception of Thai as an L2, he felt that he had limited Thai emotive words to use in expressing his emotions in his written responses.

2. In what ways does Em understand and experience/perceive emotional writing in English as his second language?

Em expressed his control over the English language in expressing emotions through writing. He felt confident and comfortable with the language. In other words, he owned the English language because he stated in his interview that expressing emotions in English “looked right” to him. His sense of ownership of the language came from his own observation that he knew more English emotive words than in Thai. Based on his writing experiences, he demonstrated a nuanced understanding of English emotive words, especially in his English narrative. For example, he discussed the definitions of these two terms, “suspect” and “curious,” during his reflection. In his English opinion writing, he demonstrated his understanding in his written response by using an English swear word, “fucking,” to express his anger. This showed his confidence in using the English language to express his emotions.

3. Are there differences in Em’s understanding of emotional writing in Thai and in English?

Em’s understanding of expressing emotions in Thai and in English was an interesting case study. Based on his perception, he was not a competent Thai language user even though he is Thai. He felt that he was not confident to express his emotion in Thai. In other words, he felt awkward and nervous when he needed to express his emotion in Thai. He felt that he did not have sufficient control over the language. He felt that he was less able to differentiate nuanced meanings of Thai emotive words.

In contrast, he has developed a feeling of ownership over the English language. He felt that his understanding of the English language was highly



proficient. Based on his repertoire of English emotive words, he felt he was confident and competent in expressing his emotions through writing. He also used a vulgar word in English, which he did not use it in his Thai written responses. When he responded to English written prompts, he showed his ability in varying English words to express his emotions.

4. Are there differences in Em's understanding in emotional writing in different genres?

Based on Em's experiences, knowledge of emotive words and unfamiliarity of written genres seemed to be running themes in Em's understanding of emotional writing in different genres. He felt that he was less able to express his emotion in poetry writing because he had limited emotive words in Thai. In other words, his perception in expressing emotions in poetry writing was based on emotive words used in poems. In his narrative writing, he also demonstrated his understanding of this genre by mentioning his ability to carefully select emotive words.

Another point to consider is Em's lack of familiarity with written genres and the expression of emotions. Em's poetry writing was an interesting one because he stated that he forgot the structures of Thai poetry. Instead, he wrote his Thai and English "poems" in prose. As he stated in his interview, he did have not many opportunities to write poems. Therefore, he stated that he could not recall any poetry convention in either Thai or English. His reflection after finished responding to the narrative writing prompts suggested that he had a limited understanding of expressing emotions through his own narratives. In other words,

he had limited exposure to the genre; therefore, he felt that he was not as competent in expressing his emotions when compared to expressing his opinions in writing. His response to the opinion writing prompt showed his perception of emotion writing: opinions needed to be emotion-laden. He showed his understanding by using emotion-laden words in his English opinion writing.

### **Chalit**

Chalit was in his junior year in the Translation Department. He attended his K-12 and had studied English with Thai teachers of English in a school in the northern part of Thailand. He spoke three languages: Thai, English, and Chinese. He worked as a Chinese-speaking tour guide during his summer break.

### **Chalit's Poetry**

When he was asked to respond to a Thai poetry-writing prompt, he wrote a one-stanza poem in the *Kloon pad* (Poem 8), the same style as Maiake's Thai poem. The structure of *Kloon pad* (Poem 8) can be summarized as follows. One stanza has four lines. Each line has eight to nine Thai syllables. The final syllable of the first line rhymes with the third syllable of the second line. The final syllable of the second line needs to rhyme with the last syllable of the third line and the fifth syllable of the fourth line of the stanza.

รักนั้น เป็นเซนไร ใครใครตอบ

ปากบอกชอบ แต่แท้จริง ไข่มองเห็น

ความจริง ยั่งยืน มักไม่เป็น

สุดท้ายเห็น แต่การจาก พรางกันไป

(Chalit, Thai poem)

*love is what who can answer*

*mouth say like but in truth yet can see*

*love-lived eternity not is*

*finally see but parting in separation*

(Chalit, Thai poem, my translation)

Chalit responded to his “love” poem by discussing his disappointment in love. He approached his poem by asking a philosophical question, “who can describe what love is?” Then he moved on to show the hypocrisy of lovers when they were not sincere to one another. His poem demonstrated the feeling of uncertainty and despair in love by the use of his choice of words: “parting,” “separation,” “no eternity.” We could infer that his perspective on love was not a positive one. In other words, he presented his perspective on love with non-idealistic feelings. When he was asked to reflect on his Thai poetry-writing experience, he said that he wanted to show his negative attitude toward teenage love:

“I wanted to express my negative attitude on love, especially on teenage love. The difficulty in writing this [Thai poem] was to connect thoughts through the use of words that I wanted to express because I did not care much about love. The Thai poem that I wrote was about my perspective on love in Thai society that it’s terrible and frustrating.”

(Chalit, personal interview, my own translation)

In his Thai poem, Chalit wanted to share his negative attitude to teenage love, especially on its hypocrisy and the uncertainty. He stated that he “did not care much about love,” this attitude became a challenge for him to express emotion in his writing.

He found it difficult to come up with Thai words that would convey the emotion he tried to express. It may be because he had approached his Thai poem from a philosophical perspective. Because of being detached from his feelings, he could not think of Thai words that would express his intended emotion in a philosophical way. For his English poem, he also shared the negative side of love:

Oh my love don't get me wrong  
For what I do for you only  
Yet, now you cast my heart so ruthlessly  
Never will I be the same for eternity

(Chalit, English poem)

Chalit responded to the English prompt with the same perspective as in his Thai poem: the negative aspect of love. However, he did not approach the English poem from the philosophical perspective like in his Thai poem. He wrote as if he were describing the feeling to “his love” or his significant other. On the first line of his English poem, “oh my love...,” he opened his poem as if he were beseeching his lover. The second line of his poem described his dedication to his significant other emphasized in the words “for you...only.” On the third line of his English poem, the word “yet” was the turning point that he used to signal readers about the shift in emotion. He was being rejected by his significant other when his love “cast[ed his] heart so ruthlessly.” He used the word “ruthlessly” to help readers understand that there was no hope in this relationship. On his last line he used the words “never” and “eternity” to express the feeling of hopelessness in this relationship. His English poem depicted the pain of being heartbroken.

When he was asked about his English poetry writing experience, he shared his experience as follow:

“When I wrote this English poem, English songs came to my head, especially heartbroken or unsuccessful love ones. I was trying to imitate the choice of words that was used in those songs. However, I did not write from my personal experience.”

(Chalit, personal interview, my own translation)

The relationship that Chalit made between writing an English poem and English songs was insightful. He attempted to “imitate” vocabulary from those songs of heartbreak into his English poem. This could be explained that he used English songs as a point of reference in composing his English poem. The English songs that he listened to gave him inspiration to use rhymes at the end of each line. Though he did not write from his personal experience, he was able to express the negative side of love through words or phrases such as “cast my heart so ruthlessly” and “never will I be the same.” These dramatic expressions were vividly painted for readers to understand the hopeless relationship he wanted to express. As he stated that he had tried to imitate words from English songs, this particular line, “never will I be the same for eternity,” is similar to that found in songs of heartbreak when one loses a lover.

### **Chalit’s Narratives**

For Chalit’s Thai narrative of fear, he wrote about an experience of extreme turbulence when he was flying to China. It is presented in the following short excerpt:

ช่วงแรก ในการเดินทาง ก็ปกติอย่างเคย จิบชาคุยกับเพื่อนที่ไปด้วยกัน อย่างสนุกสนาน  
แต่สักพักต่อมา ก็ปัดันแจ้งว่า มีพายุ ฝนฟ้าคะนอง ขอให้ผู้โดยสาร คาดเข็มขัด นั่งอยู่กับที่  
อย่าลุกไปไหน เหตุการณ์ กลับแย่ลง เมื่อเครื่องบิน ตกหลุมอากาศ หลายต่อหลายครั้ง  
ประกอบกับ มีการสั่น อย่างรุนแรง ของเครื่องบิน จากซ้าย ไปขวา น้ำชาจากถ้วย ที่ผู้เขียน  
ถือ อยู่ กระฉอก ออกมา มากกว่า ครึ่ง ตอน นั้น คิดว่า อาจ ไม่รอดแล้ว ได้ แต่  
ภาวนา สวดมนต์ ขอให้ สิ่ง คั ก ดี ลี ท ธี คั ม ครอง

(Chalit, Thai narrative)

*At the beginning of the trip, everything was fine. I sipped tea and casually talked  
to my friends. Later, the captain announced that there was a thunderstorm. He  
asked everyone to put on seat belt and sit in their seats. The situation was getting  
worse when the plane faced turbulences so many times. Also the plane was  
shaking heavily from the right to the left. Half of my tea was spilled out of the cup.  
At that moment, I thought to myself that I might not survive. I was praying for the  
sacred spirit to protect me.*

(Chalit, Thai narrative, my own translation)

The contrast of two scenes, before and during the turbulence that Chalit wrote about was very descriptive. He used signaling phrases such as “at the beginning,” “later,” “when,” and “at the moment” to help readers build up their participation in the story. He narrated the scene so vividly that readers could paint the scene. For example, when he wrote about how heavy the plane shook, he described its effect in the sentence, “Half of my tea was spilled out of the cup.” The last sentence from the excerpt showed the intensity of fear he had during that flight; he could not do anything but “pray” for his life. The choice of words that he used in his Thai narrative was easy to understand. The emotion that he tried

to express in his Thai narrative was a feeling of hopelessness and doubt whether or not the plane would crash.

When Chalit was asked to reflect on his Thai narrative writing experience, he shared this perspective on his writing:

“For example, I wrote in Thai, ‘*At that moment, I thought to myself that I might not survive. I was praying for the sacred spirit to protect me.*’ This sentence alone could not truly describe or express my feelings at that moment because the feeling at that moment was so deep. It’s so deep that I don’t think any languages could express that emotion.”

(Chalit, personal interview, my own translation)

When he reflected on his narrative writing experience, he pointed out a sentence that he thought was laden with emotion, “It’s so deep that I don’t think any languages could express that emotion.” The moment to which he referred to in his story was when the plane was hit by severe turbulence such that “*the plane was shaking heavily from the right to the left. Half of [his] tea was spilled out of the cup.*” The “deep” emotion that he was referring to was caused by the life-threatening experience that he had gone through.

Though he expressed this emotion in his Thai narrative, he was not fully satisfied with what he wrote to express this fearful emotion. As he stated, intense emotions cannot be captured or described through any languages, not even with his L1. In his Thai narrative, he employed detailed descriptions, “*shaking heavily from the right to the left. Half of my tea was spilled out of the cup*” to depict his fearful incident, so that readers could infer the emotion from such description.

For his English narrative, he translated his experiences from Thai to English. The excerpt from his English narrative is provided. This was the same section that he wrote in his Thai narrative:

...when I was traveling by plane to XXX. There was a big storm causing extreme turbulence. The plane was shaking as if it was shaken by someone outside. I thought at that time that I might have died that day. Everyone on the plane was so quiet. I knew that everyone had done the same thing for sure. That is “pray for their lives.” Finally, it was such a relief when the bad situation turned to normal. We survived!

(Chalit, English narrative)

In Chalit’s English narrative, he described a scene when the plane he took was hit by severe storm and turbulence. Instead of using a detailed description as in his Thai narrative, he employed the conjunction “as if” to demonstrate the condition of the plane during the turbulence; it had seemingly been held and “was shaken by someone outside.” He also presented the sense of nervousness when he discussed the quietness inside the plane.

In his English narrative, he used punctuation marks to present and express his emotion. The use of quotation marks, “pray for their lives,” provided a meaning of emphasis that all passengers were deep in their own thoughts. He used another punctuation mark, an exclamation point, at the end of his English narrative: “We survived!” This punctuation mark showed readers the sense of relief and happiness that he and his fellow passengers felt after the storm had passed.



In the interview, Chalit described that his body shook and his heart raced. He stated in the interview:

“After I finished writing, I was shaken with a little bit of fear. It felt like I was still afraid...The feeling before I wrote the fear narrative was very intense; I saw myself during that time again. I could clearly see pictures and feel the emotion. However, when I wrote, the written language was not equivalent to the feeling. It was more difficult to express feeling through writing about bad events we encountered.”

(Chalit, personal interview, my own translation)

After writing his narrative in Thai and in English, Chalit reflected on his writing experience, noting that it was “very intense.” In the interview, he stated that writing about this event made him more fearful than words could represent in writing. As he stated in the interview, “I could clearly see pictures and feel the emotion.” He vividly remembered the details and could actually recall and ‘see’ the events. This could be a sign of the ability of L2 writing to embody real emotion. When he attempted to express his emotion in these traumatic experiences in writing, he could not satisfactorily or accurately express his fear in either Thai or in English because “the written language was not equivalent to the feeling.” In other words, he inferred that languages could help convey some of his emotions.

Looking back on his Thai and English narratives, he was able to express his fear through the use of descriptions. However, he thought that he needed to use exact emotive words in his narratives to express his intended emotions. The challenge for the writing experience was twofold for Chalit. As he stated in the interview after writing, “[he] was

shaken with a little bit of fear” (Chalit, personal interview, my own translation). In a sense, he had re-experienced the life-threatening events, once in Thai and again in English. Yet, neither language helped him to express the emotion he wanted to convey. This could explain the difficulties that he had in writing to express his emotions. He perceived that he was not able to fully express his fearful emotions in both Thai and English narratives. However, readers could perceive the emotion he wanted to express through the use of descriptions, punctuation, and choice of words.

### **Chalit’s Opinion Pieces**

For his Thai opinion writing, he critiqued Thai society, stating that it was not ready for a democratic system of government.

สังคมไทย เป็นสังคม ที่ยังไม่พร้อม กับระบอบประชาธิปไตย เพราะคนส่วนใหญ่  
ยังไม่ตระหนัก ถึงสิทธิ และหน้าที่ ของตัวเองใน ระบอบการปกครองเช่นนี้ การตัดสินใจ  
ในการพัฒนา บริหารประเทศ ตกอยู่ในมือ ของนักการเมือง และกลุ่มนายทุน ที่ชี้แนะ  
และสร้างนโยบาย ที่เอื้อต่อ การกอบโกย ผลประโยชน์ ให้แก่ตนเอง และพวกพ้อง  
อย่างไม่จบสิ้น

(Chalit, Thai opinion writing)

*Thai society is not ready for democracy because many people still do not realize about their responsibilities and their roles in this democratic system. Decision-making on developing the country is still in the hands of politicians and investors, in which they create policies that will benefit them and their allies endlessly.*

(Chalit, Thai opinion writing, my own translation)

Chalit’s frustration is evident in the first sentence of his opinion writing, “Thai society is not ready for democracy.” After that he moved on to critique politicians who abused their decision-making power for their own benefits, not for the country: “*Decision-making on*

*developing the country is still in the hands of politicians and investors, in which they create policies that will benefit them and their allies endlessly.*” He felt frustrated that some politicians who had the power to create change did not think of ways to advance Thai society. However, he did not explicitly critique specific politicians: *“benefit them and their allies endlessly.”* The choice of words, *“not ready”* or *“do not realize,”* which he used in his opinion writing to express his dissatisfaction with the Thai political scene. The word *“endlessly”* that Chalit used in his writing implied that he had noticed this cyclical problem; as a result, he was disappointed by the political system in Thailand.

When he was asked to reflect on his Thai opinion writing experience, he shared his perspective:

“I expressed my discontent of the Thai society that it turned out to be that way. I felt that this prompt was easier to write compared to the fearful narrative because I am interested in the topic of critiquing society.”

(Chalit, personal interview, my own translation)

As he responded to the Thai opinion writing prompt, he was irritated by Thai society. From his interview, his expectations of Thai society had not been met. He felt “discontent” because he had wanted more responsible Thai politicians in power who would think of Thai society before themselves. Looking back on his Thai opinion writing, he reflected in his interview that these politicians created policies that would *“benefit them and their allies endlessly.”* In other words, he wanted politicians who thought of society before their own benefits. Then, he compared his Thai opinion writing to the narrative written prompt by stating, “this was easier to write” because he was passionate and “interested in the topic of critiquing society.”

As he reflected in his narrative interviews, he felt that he could not express his emotions like he wanted to in his narratives: “It was more difficult to express feeling through writing about bad events we encountered.” He felt that both languages, his L1 and L2, could not capture his fear in his writing. In this case, his personal interest helped him articulate his thoughts in responding to the Thai opinion writing prompt.

When he was asked to respond to the English opinion writing prompt, he wrote from the same perspective, critiquing Thai politics and society:

“As we know, the political crisis in this country has its deep root from the state of not being able to have the authentic right of Thai people, namely the real owner of the country. Decision of governing and controlling lies in the hands of corrupt politicians from generation to generation. These disgusting people exploit their power to maintain all kind of advantages they have taken from this country.”

(Chalit, English opinion writing)

Chalit’s opinion writing was aimed at critiquing the political situation in Thailand by approaching it from the macro-political perspective. From his excerpt, “the political crisis in this country has its deep root from the state of not being able to have the authentic right of Thai people, namely the real owner of the country;” it is evident that he was frustrated that the political situation in Thailand was not a true democratic society. Because of his interest in Thai politics, he was able to point out the “deep[ly] root[ed]” problem that had been bothering him. The “deep root” that he mentioned in his English opinion writing can be traced back to the “corrupt politicians from generation to generation.” His dissatisfaction came from the inability of the Thai people to exercise

their “authentic right” in society. His anger is expressed by his choice of words, such as “corrupt politicians,” “disgusting people,” or “exploit their power.”

When he was asked to reflect on his English opinion writing experience, he stated that he had tried to express his disappointment in Thai politics:

“I tried to express my sadness in my English opinion writing. As I tried to present what happened or what is happening, Thai people will never be free from this situation. Bluntly I would say stupid, but it’s a strong word but I don’t know any other words to express this emotion. I avoided using that word by thinking of new ones because I felt uncomfortable to write “bad” or “wicked” so I used “disgusting people” to refer to politicians. Normally, I am not good at expressing this kind of emotion like using emotion-laden words or swear words.”

(Chalit, personal interview, my own translation)

As Chalit stated in his interview, he wanted to express his “sadness” in his English opinion writing. However, his word choices, such as “corrupted” or “disgusting,” instead presented his anger. His disappointment was also expressed in his interview response when he stated, “Thai people will never be free from this situation.” He felt that Thai people were taken “advantages [of]” from “generation to generation.” Another observation from his interview was that he wanted to use the word “stupid” in his written response; however, he felt that it was too strong to use in his writing. He decided to avoid using emotion-laden terms because he felt “uncomfortable” in his writing to describe Thai politicians. This could be explained that he knew the nuance of the words “bad,” “wicked,” and “disgusting” in describing a person because his major was in translation. He was careful in choosing adjectives to refer to Thai politicians. Looking back to his

English opinion, he wrote, “These disgusting people exploit their power to maintain all kind of advantages they have taken from this country.” He expressed his anger or his “discontentment” in his writing in a subtle way because he felt “uncomfortable” in using vulgarities in his opinion writing.

### **Summary of Chalit’s Perceptions on Expressing Emotions Through Writing**

Based on the four research questions posted in this study, the following section summarizes Chalit’s understanding of emotional expressions in Thai and in English through writing in different genres.

1. In what ways does Chalit understand and experience/perceive emotional writing in Thai as his first language?

Chalit showed his understanding on emotional writing by creating or reducing distance through the Thai language. This could be observed from his interview response after he finished composing his Thai poem. During his interview, he stated that he wanted to critique Thai society on the issue of teenage love; however, he created the distance by saying that he “did not care much about love.” In other words, the distance he created was done by cutting the topic short. After he finished writing his Thai narrative, Chalit shared that he could not find words to describe emotion in his written response. Since he wrote about his life-threatening experience, he stated in his interview that the event was “so deep that [he] do[es]n’t think any languages could express that emotion.” In other words, he created distance between himself and the event because he did not want to remember the event. Therefore, the distance he created made him feel that he was not able to express his emotion in his writing.

When he responded to the Thai opinion writing, he felt that he was able to express his emotion in the writing because he was passionate about the topic. In other words, he reduced his emotional distance according to his interests. Ultimately, Chalit was comfortable using Thai to express emotions through writing.

2. In what ways does Chalit understand and experience/perceive emotional writing in English as his second language?

Chalit demonstrated his understanding of expressing emotions in English through the distance he created. For example, when he responded to English poetry writing, he did not write the poem from personal experience. In other words, he might not feel comfortable sharing his personal experiences on love. Therefore, he avoided discussing his personal life when he was asked to respond to the written prompt. However, when he responded to the English narrative writing prompt, he wrote about a life-threatening experience that he had experienced. His decision to share his personal experience when he was asked to share the feeling of fear in his Thai narrative was interesting. It may be that the feeling of love was more emotionally laden than the feeling of fear in his Thai narrative. Also Chalit could not distance himself from the life-threatening event. In fact, it still affected him emotionally as he “was shaken” after he finished writing about it. Chalit also maintained a distance when he expressed his anger in his English opinion writing. As he stated in his interview, he did not want to express his strong emotion in his writing by using the word “stupid” to describe Thai politicians. He, instead, used a somewhat neutral term in his

English written response. His understanding of expressing emotions in English should not be extreme, unlike in Thai in which he expressed extreme emotions in his written responses.

3. Are there differences in Chalit's understanding of emotional writing in Thai and in English?

There were slight differences in Chalit's understandings of emotional writing in Thai and in English in terms of word choice, although he approached his emotional writing from the same perspective: creating and/or reducing emotional distance through languages. In his Thai written responses, he reflected on his word choices; he chose Thai emotive words that represented his feelings in a nuanced way. For example, in his Thai poem, he employed several terms, "parting," "separation," "no eternity," to describe the disappointment in love. His English poem, on the other hand, presented the other extreme when compared to his Thai poem. The word choices in his English poem signaled to English readers his feeling of disappointment. In his Thai narrative writing, he was not able to think of any words to describe his fear from the event he experienced. While in English narrative writing, he felt really close to the event that his body "was shaken" from the fear he had. Chalit's Thai opinion writing presented a stronger emotion through Thai emotive words when compared to his English opinion written response. In contrast to his Thai opinion written response, he made his decision to avoid "strong" emotive words in describing Thai politicians in English. In this way, he demonstrated that he felt more confident and more comfortable expressing emotions in Thai than in English.



4. Are there differences in Chalit's understanding in emotional writing in different genres?

Chalit's understandings of expressing emotions in different genres can be summarized as follows. In his poetry writing, he presented his emotions in the philosophical aspect though the use of a question at the beginning of his Thai poem. He demonstrated his understanding by employing Thai emotive words in his Thai poem. His awareness of Thai poetry could be seen from his use of Thai poetic structure. However, he found it difficult to express his emotions in his English poem because he was not familiar with English poetry. Though he was not familiar with the English poetry, he used English songs as his point of reference. In terms of expressing emotions, he used somewhat strong English emotive words in his English poem, in which he discussed in his interview. In a way, he had some English poetry genre awareness through the use of rhymes.

For the narrative writing prompt, his understanding was to present deep emotions that he experienced. He demonstrated his understanding by sharing a life-threatening experience. By sharing his life experience, he demonstrated his understanding that this genre, narrative writing, was relied upon to presented significant life experiences. He also employed descriptions in his Thai and English narratives, which meant that he knew how to retell his experiences in narrative writing. Though he was aware of genre convention, he felt that his L1 and L2 could not fully express his fear that he wanted to. Instead, his fear was manifested in his physical responses, such as his body shook and his heart raced; he stated that he "was shaken" by fear from the experiences he wrote.

Chalit demonstrated his awareness of opinion writing by critiquing Thai politics through the use of strong emotive words both in Thai and English. He was aware that he could share his personal opinions in this genre. Though he did not clearly state his political stance, he presented his impression of favoring one side over the other. His criticisms both in Thai and in English were appropriate to the written genre to express his anger. Though he felt uncomfortable using vulgarity, he was able to express emotions by using appropriate emotive terms in his written responses. From these reflections, Chalit demonstrated that he had the knowledge and awareness of expressing emotions in different genres.

### **Aon**

Aon was a junior in the Dentistry Department. He received his K-12 education in Bangkok, Thailand. He studied English with both Thai teachers of English and English speaking teachers. During school breaks, he has had many opportunities to travel with his family to English-speaking countries. During his free time, he likes to play video games. He also loves new technological devices such as iPads, iPhones, and laptops.

### **Aon's Poetry**

When he was asked to write a Thai poem to express love, he composed the following poem:

รักคือการให้	แต่อาจไม่ ได้รับคืน
แม่ต้องทน กล้ากลืน	จนสุดท้าย ได้รับมา
รักนั้น ต้องทุ่มเท	แต่เมื่อ ถึงเวลา
ความรักจะ มหา	ผู้ที่ได้ ให้รักไป

(Aon, Thai poem)

*love is giving                      but may not receive return*  
*though must stand endure        till at last receive back*  
*love must dedicate                but when reach time*  
*love will come                      those who give love away*

(Aon, Thai poem, my own translation)

Aon composed a Thai poem in the style of *Kaap yanii* 11 (Verse 11). Hudak (1990) noted that this style of Thai verse “is used for descriptions of nature and beautiful objects” (p. 11).

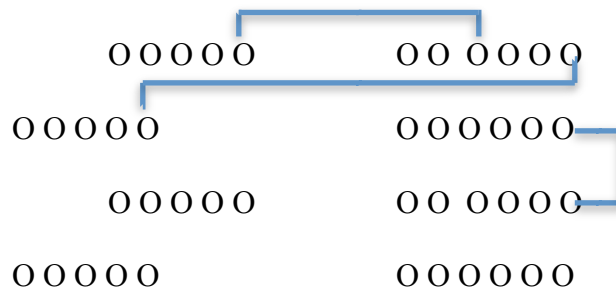


Figure 6: The structure of *Kaab Yanii* 11 (Verse 11)

For the structure of this style of verse, each stanza has 11 syllables. One stanza consists of two lines. The first line has five syllables; the second line has six syllables. The last syllable of the first line must rhyme with the second or third syllable on the second line. The last syllable of the first stanza must rhyme with the fifth syllable of the second stanza. The last syllable of the second stanza is rhymed with the last syllable of the third stanza.

Aon’s Thai poem was presented in the style of Verse 11; he wrote about love in the sense of dedication. In his first stanza, he wrote that love is a reciprocal act or *karn hai* (giving); however, the other did not always return the love. The second stanza

suggested that love might be returned if one is persistent, which is evident from the choice of words he used: *thon* (stand) and *klumkleun* (endure). His third stanza talked about the dedication, or *thum tae* in Thai, when one is in love. In his fourth stanza, he concluded that love is rewarded to those who give it to others. As stated earlier, his concept of love is similar to dedication because of the words he used in his Thai poem such as “*endure*,” “*stand*,” and “*dedicate*.”

When Aon was asked to write an English poem to express love, he wrote the following poem:

Everyone is in love  
But love is not for everyone  
Once you find yours  
Let it go, you won't  
And when the time comes  
You will find the true love  
That you can't let it go  
And it won't let you go

(Aon, English poem)

Aon's English poem was written in free verse. Unlike the style of *Kaap Yanii II* that was structured, free verse is a free form of poetry writing (Sellers, 2008). Jamjarat (2007) states that free verse is used for poets to express extreme emotions (p. 632). Aon's Thai poem expressed an understanding of love that involved the process of seeking, compromising, and dedicating. While in his English poem, he approached the emotion of love that not everyone can find “true love.” He approached the concept of love in his

English poem from a perspective of commitment. His English poem talked about a search for love. Once found, those who find love should cherish it. One word that appeared both in Aon's Thai and English poems was "time" or "when the time comes." His expression of love could be related to the test of "true love." With the dedication in his Thai poem and the commitment in his English poem, Aon wanted to express his love from an idealized perspective that one must keep searching. Once love is found, no one will "let go."

When Aon was asked to reflect on his Thai and English poetry writing experiences, he discussed the issue of representation of love in different cultures:

"For Thai language, we can compare whatever easily because we know Thai culture. But in English, we know nothing of how love is represented or what love is compared with. That makes it difficult in writing."

(Aon, personal interview, my own translation)

Aon's interview touched upon the issue of culture and "how love is represented." What he meant by "comparing" could be his way of presenting thoughts, ideas, and emotions in the Thai language. In his Thai poem, he compared love as a reciprocal act of "giving" and "receiving it back." While in his English poem, he did not compare love with any concepts but instead with the act of searching or "finding" love. As a Thai language user, he was capable of expressing ideas and emotions easily in Thai contexts because he "knows Thai culture." In other words, he felt that he was more competent in expressing love in Thai than in English because he "knows" the culture. He also stated that it was easy for him to "compare" the concept of love in his Thai poem. As it was shown in his Thai poem, the first stanza presented in the metaphor structure: "*love is*

giving.” Also from his choices of word used in his Thai poem, he employed different words, “endure,” “stand,” and “dedicate,” to help him express his understanding of love. However, he employed simple words, “love,” “find,” or “true love” in his English poem. This could be interpreted that he took a nuanced approach in expressing his love in his Thai poem, but not in English. Another possible explanation is that he preferred expressing love in the Thai poem because he did not have any difficulties in representing his emotion in his writing.

### Aon’s Narratives

When he was asked to respond to a Thai narrative prompt, he wrote about his first encounter with a cadaver when he was in his sophomore year.

ครั้งแรก เดินเข้าไป ในห้องนั้น ก็รู้สึก อึดอัด อยากออกมา เพราะความกลัว  
อาจจะเพราะ บรรยากาศ ของห้องที่เงียบ มีศพ อาจารย์ใหญ่ เรียงอยู่จำนวนมาก รวมถึง  
กลิ่น formaline ที่ใช้ เก็บรักษาสภาพ เมื่อถึง เวลาที่ต้องผ่า เปิดผ้ามาครั้งแรก ก็ยังรู้สึกกลัว  
เพราะได้ เห็นหน้า ของ คนที่ เคยใช้ ชีวิต อยู่ใน โลก นี้ ในช่วง เวลา หนึ่ง แต่  
ก็ได้ จบ ไปแล้ว เพื่อน ในกลุ่ม ทุกคน ก็ยก มือ ขึ้น มาไหว้ แสดง ความ  
เคารพ เนื่องจาก ความกลัว หรือ ความเชื่อ ในเรื่องวิญญาณ หรือ ศาสนา

(Aon, Thai narrative)

*At first when I entered the room, I felt uneasy and wanted to leave the room  
because of my fear. It could be the silent atmosphere in the room filled the smell  
of ‘formaline’ (sic) to preserve the bodies and lines of bodies or cadavers. When  
it was time to operate, I felt even more afraid when I opened up the covered cloth  
because I saw a face of a person who once lived in this world for a certain period  
of time. My friends and I raised our hands to “wai” to pay respect to the body  
because of the fear we had, our beliefs in spirits, or our religious beliefs.*

(Aon, Thai narrative, my own translation)

In this excerpt, Aon described his fear when he first encountered the cadaver. The feeling of “*uneas[iness]*” and “*silen[ce]*” when he went into that room could be the feeling of nervousness because it was his “first time” to see and work with a cadaver. The fear that he presented in his Thai narrative is evident from his choice of words, including “afraid” or “fear”; and the action that he described to pay respect to the cadaver, “[we] *raised our hands to ‘wai’ to pay respect to the body because of the fear we had, our beliefs in spirits, or our religious beliefs.*” The choice of words that he used in expressing his fear in his Thai narrative was the words “*silent,*” “*uneasy*” in describing the atmosphere, and “*wai*” to pay respect to cadavers. His nervousness was built up until he had “opened up the cover” to see the cadaver that he needed to study. When he was asked to reflect on his writing experience, he gave only a brief explanation:

“I think readers should be able to perceive my fear that I tried to convey in this writing. For me, I think I could express about 80.5% of my fear.”

(Aon, personal interview, my own translation)

In his interview, Aon reported that he was satisfied with his Thai narrative because he could “express about 80.5%.” He was satisfied with his Thai narrative in the expression of fear because he used Thai. He evaluated his own Thai narrative from the readers’ perspectives, which he felt that other Thai readers “should be able to perceive [his] fear” from reading the story. In this sense, he felt comfortable in expressing his fear in Thai writing. From his Thai narrative, he was able to describe actions that implied the sense of nervousness like when he “*opened the cover*” or “*wai*” to pay respect to the cadaver.

The term *wai* in Thai is in fact the act of greeting by putting two palms together in front of the chest while lowering the head to the palm. This is a Thai way of showing respect to other people and also to the Buddha statuettes in temples. This action speaks more than showing respect; it also shows the level of social rank or personal beliefs in the religious sense. The act of *wai* that Thai people do entails several social meanings, including: greetings, saying goodbyes, showing respect, apologizing, and paying respect to one's religious beliefs (Segaller, 2005).

Aon later translated this Thai narrative into English. An excerpt of Aon's English narrative is provided below:

The experienced was learning human anatomy from cadaver, the first time entering the room was a very bad feeling. So many human bodies lied in front of me, the smell of formalin to preserve the tissue was very disgusting. The fear of dead take over everyone's mind, both from religious way and knowing that one day these body will be us. The fear of dead bodies made every living person in that room don't really know what to do. Just because of fear everyone show respect the body by "wai" before doing anything like open the wrapped clothes or make an incision by blade.

(Aon, English narrative)

At the beginning of his English narrative, he described his first experience of studying a cadaver. By walking into the room, a "*very bad feeling*" came upon him. This "*bad feeling*" could be the fact that he felt nervous about seeing and working with an actual cadaver. He later described the smell of formalin in the room as "*disgusting*." This showed the feeling of discomfort and unfamiliarity that he had when he walked into the



room. The sight of these bodies reminded him of the human condition: “...*one day these body will be us.*” He also felt fear from the presence of “*dead bodies*” that no one “*really knew what to do.*” What he described here was a feeling of uncertainty mixed with nervousness and fear. From Aon’s English narrative, the repetition of “*fear*” suggested that he was very afraid. By showing that he felt fear, he paid respect to the cadaver by putting two palms together to “*wai*” the body.

When he was asked to reflect on his narrative writing experiences, he provided his perspective on the language as well as the cultural issues:

“The Thai language was more obvious in expressing fear. It was okay in English; I still could express my feeling. I felt that I could express fear in my English narrative less than in Thai. I tried to vary my English word choice. For example, when I used the word “fear” here, I would try to use “afraid” instead. But it did not fit with the sentence structure; I switched back to use “fear” again. Writing to express fear in English was more difficult than writing in Thai because I had some problems with cultural terms such as ‘wai’ and the term ‘pay respect.’ These two are not equivalent in terms of their meanings. They looked confusing.”

(Aon, personal interview, my own translation)

As Aon reflected on his writing experiences, he preferred the Thai language in expressing his fear to the English language. This was because he did not have any difficulties in representing his fear in Thai vocabulary. As he discussed in his interview, he tried to replace the word “fear” with the word “afraid” in his English narrative; however, he felt that the word did not fit into his sentence structure. Looking back to his English narrative above, he used the word “fear” three times. This frustration of being

unable to switch the words “fear” to “afraid” could be the result of his dissatisfaction with the expression of emotion in his English narrative. Aon’s comment on the choice of word, “fear” and “afraid,” showed that he was able to differentiate the nuanced meanings of these two terms; however, he had some difficulties in using them in his English narrative.

Another comment that Aon talked about was the issue of “cultural terms such as ‘wai’ and the term ‘pay respect.’ As a Thai speaker, Aon was well-aware of the differences in the meanings between these two terms because he discussed it in his interview. In both his Thai and English narratives, he did not try to translate this action; he used the term “wai” in his writing. This could also affect his perception of his English narrative that he was not able to “express fear in [his] English narrative less than in Thai.” The feeling of “confus[ion] that Aon had when he discussed the cultural concept of “wai” in Thai and “to pay respect” in English could be because he was not sure how to express “respect” in the English culture because he was educated in Thailand.

### **Aon’s Opinion Pieces**

After responding to the narrative written prompts, Aon came back to respond to the Thai opinion writing. The excerpt provided below was from a section of the second paragraph of his response:

จริงๆแล้ว มือบต่างๆ ล้วนแล้ว แต่สร้างปัญหา ให้กับ ผู้อื่นทั้งสิ้น คนไทย หลายคน ไม่รู้จัก สิทธิ และหน้าที่ ของตนเอง แต่มือบ ที่สร้างปัญหา มากที่สุด น่าจะเป็น มือบที่ กีดขวาง การใช้ชีวิต ของคน ในย่านค้าขาย หรือ ศูนย์กลางของประเทศ ด้านอื่นๆ ที่ไม่ใช่ สัญลักษณ์ ทางการเมือง

(Aon, Thai opinion writing)

*In fact, mobs always create problems to other people. Many Thai people do not know their rights and their responsibilities. However, mobs that cause problems the most would be the one that obstruct other people's lives in the market areas or other centers of the country that are not related to the political landmark.*

(Aon, Thai opinion writing, my own translation)

In reading Aon's opinion writing, the emotion that Aon expressed was his frustration with Thai politics. His frustration came from the political act of gathering or "mobs" that "obstruct other people's lives." His sense of dissatisfaction and frustration also came from the fact that "many Thai people do not know their rights and their responsibilities." From his Thai opinion writing, the emotion that can be inferred from the written response was the sense of annoyance that he and other people could not lead their normal lives because of the obstruction of political mobs. He was annoyed and felt that the politically-related activities should not disrupt other people's lives like "in the market areas." He shares his frustration and annoyance in his Thai opinion writing using such words as *sang punha* or "create problem" and *keed khwang* or "obstruct."

When he was asked to reflect on his Thai opinion writing, he shared his experience as follows:

"I was asked to write to express anger. I wrote about the feeling of dislike. I wrote about the feeling of having my rights taken away. What was it called? Uncomfortable/frustrated. Having my belongings snatched, making my life more complicated. But the act of writing itself was very smooth."

(Aon, personal interview, my own translation)

As Aon stated in his interview, he wrote his Thai opinion writing to express his “dislike” in relation to the political situation in Thailand. He felt like someone was “snatching” his “rights” because he could not shop at the market. In other words, the “mobs” had “*obstructed other people’s lives*” that he wrote about in his Thai opinion writing. He felt “frustrated” because he did not have the freedom to roam around the city like he used to because those “mobs” made his life “more complicated.” The feelings of annoyance and boredom can be inferred from his interview. However, he stated that he had no difficulties in writing his Thai opinion writing. He felt that it was “very smooth” for him to share his opinion on this political issue.

After he shared his perspective on the Thai opinion writing, he was asked to share his opinions regarding the Thai political situation in English. An excerpt provided below came from the third paragraph of his English opinion writing:

“The most hateful mob that occur in democratic Thai would be the one that takes place in downtown of Bangkok which made the city paralyzed the trading in the city center had stopped people cant get out of their home. The business spot should not be place of political gathering it should be somewhere that has to do more with just like the parliament or maybe statue of constitution.”

(Aon, English opinion writing)

Though he did not directly translate his Thai opinion writing to English, the context and the content of his discussion were the same: political mobs are annoying. In Aon’s Thai opinion writing, he employed different ways to show his annoyance with the political situation. For example, he commented on the roles of Thai people in political situations, stating that they “*do not know their rights and their responsibilities*”, or the obstruction

of “*other people’s lives in the market areas or other centers of the country.*” Reading Aon’s English opinion writing, the feelings of frustration and annoyance are evident in his writing, expressed in words and expressions such as “hateful,” “made the city paralyzed,” or “can’t get out of their home.” He also felt frustrated that the “political gathering” had disrupted or disturbed other people’s lives. He went on to discuss the problems that the mobs had caused, explaining that they made “the city paralyzed the trading in the city center had stopped people cant get out of their home.” The metaphor that Aon used, “paralyzed,” can be interpreted in terms of frustration and annoyance because people could not go where they pleased. The business sectors were also stopped because of the “mobs,” which also created anger and frustration to business owners.

When he was asked to reflect on his English opinion writing experience, he compared the experience to his Thai writing:

“The obstacle of the English written response was that it was more difficult in expressing my emotion. It ‘flowed’ really well in Thai, but this English one seemed disconnected like how to refer to the situation or how to continue the story. Besides the connection of the story, there was a language problem and the feeling of frustration of why people did not understand their rights and their responsibilities. But it was difficult to express. That’s the best I could express.”

(Aon, personal interview, my own translation)

As Aon stated, he thought that he had been able to express his anger well in his Thai written response because “it ‘flowed’ really well.” For his English opinion writing, he wished that he could express his emotion in his writing but he did not have the “language problem.” He faced some challenges in his English written response because

he felt that his English writing was “disconnected” in the area of “how to refer to the situation or how to continue the story.” In other words, he was being careful in presenting his opinions on the political situation. He briefly mentioned “the language problem” in his interview; this could be another reason that he felt he could not convey what he wanted to express in his English written response. To refer back to his English excerpt above, his English written response was similar to his stream of consciousness in which he did not use much punctuation in his English writing. He tried to express his frustration of “why people did not understand their rights and their responsibilities” in English, but he could not find any other ways to help him express his frustration regarding the political situations.

### **Summary of Aon’s Perception on Expressing Emotions Through Writing**

Based on four research questions posted in this study, the following section presents the summary of Aon’s understandings of emotional writing in Thai and in English in different genres.

1. In what ways does Aon understand and experience/perceive emotional writing in Thai as his first language?

For Aon’s understanding of expressing emotions through writing in Thai, the knowledge of culture is important. The cultural specificity was the issue that Aon perceived as his understanding of expressing his emotions through writing. This is noticeable in his interviews after he finished writing his poems and his narratives. In his interview, he knew how to express his emotions based on his cultural understanding in Thai; however, he was unsure how to express his emotion in his English poem because he did not know “how love is represented.”

In his narrative writing, he mentioned a specific cultural concept, *wai*, in his Thai narrative stated that it could not be fully translated into English. He felt the expression “to pay respect” in his English narrative was an approximation.. To understand the concept of *wai*, one needs to understand Thai culture because this concept entails many definitions: greetings, paying respect to (people who they respect, monks, religious leaders), and saying good-bye. Based on his reflection, English readers would not be able to fully understand the emotion he tried to express if they could not understand the *wai* concept.

2. In what ways does Aon understand and experience/perceive emotional writing in English as his second language?

Aon’s understanding in expressing emotions through writing in English was based on specific cultural understandings and the awareness of nuanced understandings of English emotive words. When Aon finished responding to the English poetry writing, he reflected on his experience that he was less able to express his emotion in his English poem because he did not know how to express love in English culture. In other words, his difficulty in expressing love in his English poem was due to a limited knowledge of English culture. He also mentioned about the cultural specificity of *wai* in Thai that was difficult to translate to English. In other words, he felt that the English words, “pay respect,” did not convey the cultural aspect of the term *wai* in Thai. From his reflection of the nuanced understandings of “pay respect” and *wai*, he also discussed other two English words that he tried to use in his English narrative: “fear” and “afraid.” He was trying to vary his English emotive terms in his narrative, but he was not sure

how to use them correctly in his written response. He ended up using the word “fear” repeatedly; he felt that his English narrative was boring. This was another incident that Aon reflected on his understanding through writing that English emotive words were important in conveying his emotions.

3. Are there differences in Aon’s understanding of emotional writing in Thai and in English?

Besides the cultural specificity of language, Aon’s understanding of the differences in expressing emotions in Thai and in English was demonstrated in the emotive words used in his written responses. His major concerns were cultural-related terms in Thai and English emotive words when he responded to emotive written prompts. He felt that he was able to express his emotions in Thai, but not in English because he was concerned about the emotive terms he used in his writing. This could be observed in the interviews from English narrative writing and English opinion writing. In his English opinion writing, he felt that he could perceive less emotion because he was not sure about the emotive words used in his written response.

4. Are there differences in Aon’s understanding in emotional writing in different genres?

In terms of genres, Aon demonstrated his understanding of expressing emotions through several means. First, Aon showed his understanding of poetry writing and expressing emotions through the discussion of culture. He was aware that readers needed to have some cultural background information in order to understand and express emotion in written poetry both in Thai and English. To be



more specific, the concept of metaphor was implied in his interview after he finished responding to English poetry writing. He mentioned that he knew how to express his emotion in Thai poem because he “knows the Thai culture.” However, he was not sure how to express his emotion in English because he had limited English cultural information.

For narrative writing, his understanding was based on the emotive words used in his written responses. Though the Thai cultural concept was discussed, his main concern in expressing emotion in his narrative writing was the English emotive words. He felt that he needed to vary his English emotive words in his story. For example, he mentioned that he had wanted to replace the term “fear” in his English narrative, but but was unsuccessful. He felt that his English narrative was repetitive and boring because of his limited English emotive word choices.

Aon’s understanding of opinion writing in expressing emotions was based on the language issue and his personal interests on Thai political issues. He felt that he was less able to express his emotion in English opinion writing because he could not think of English words. He felt that his English opinion writing was “disconnected” when compared to his Thai opinion writing, which he felt more satisfied with in terms of expressing his emotion. This was because he was interested in this political issue. In other words, his interest in Thai politics helped him feel more satisfied in expressing his emotion. In Aon’s case, expressing emotions in different genres is based on cultural understanding, the ability to use emotive words, and possessing an interest in the topic.

## Mai

Mai was a junior in the Journalism Department. Prior to starting university, she had attended a K-12 in Bangkok, Thailand. While in school, she studied English with both Thai speakers of English and English-speaking instructors. She also had a few opportunities to travel and attended short English summer schools abroad. On a personal level, she is friendly and approachable. She likes shopping and hanging out with friends.

### Mai's Poetry

When Mai was asked to compose a Thai poem, she did not write a new Thai poem, but instead she recited a *Kloon pad* (Poem 8) style poem that she wrote for her mother when she was in primary school. A *Kloon pad* (Poem 8) is considered to be one of the earliest forms to read, write and memorize (Gedney, 1989). This style of poem consists of two lines, with each line consisting of eight to nine syllables. Her childhood poem is as follows:

คุณแม่ เป็นผู้มี พระคุณ	คอยเจื้อจุน ให้เรา เป็นคนดี
มีแม่ คนเดียว ในโลกนี้	ที่รักเรา อย่างไม่ เสื่อมคลาย

(Mai, Thai poem)

<i>Mother is who have kindness</i>	<i>always suport for us be person good</i>
<i>have mother only one in world this</i>	<i>who love us without subside</i>

(Mai, Thai poem, my own translation)

The fact that Mai still remembered a Thai poem that she wrote when was young means this must be a very important poem for her. On her first line, she described that every mother is kind and is always supportive of her children. In the second line of her poem, she concluded that a mother is the only person that will always love us. As she

wrote in her Thai poem, the love that she portrayed in her poem, “*who loves us without subside*,” signified the type of unconditional love from her mother. From the last line of her poem, she also discussed her mother’s unconditional love by providing reasons through her choice of words such as “*kindness*,” “*support*,” “*only one*,” “*love us without subside*.” Reading these words, one can feel the innocent love that she has for her mother. In other words, she expressed unconditional love for her mother. This is especially evident from the word *serm-kry* (subside), which means “deteriorate” in English, but instead she wrote, “*without subside*.” This helps Thai readers understand that there is no way Mai will ever stop loving her mother.

Though the topic that she wrote about in her Thai poem was a personal one, her choice of words was vague and somewhat distanced. The distance that was expressed was because she did not share any personal or specific experiences in the poem she wrote. The mother that she referred to in her Thai poem could mean every mother in the world. Therefore, her Thai poem seems generic and impersonal.

When she was asked to reflect on her experience of composing a Thai poem, she stated the following:

“The Thai language is a very beautiful language. For example, if I mention the term “beautiful” in Thai, there are hundreds of ways in explaining the term such as elegant, graceful, etc. I think that if using the Thai language to compose a poem, the poem will be beautiful. It can also describe feelings like with one word; it can convey many emotions in many ways.”

(Mai, personal interview, my own translation)

In her interview, her understanding of the Thai language was apparent from the examples she gave in relation to the word “beautiful.” As she demonstrated in her Thai poem, the Thai language for her is a beautiful language. In her interview, she implied that the Thai language is suitable for poetry writing. With the combination of the language and the poetry genre, she concluded that poems written in Thai “can convey many emotions in many ways.” She showed her understanding of the nuances of the Thai language in her interview. In other words, she demonstrated her control over the ability to express her emotion in Thai. This could be because of her Journalism major that taught her to clearly understand and present her ideas in a concise manner.

When she was asked to respond to an English poetry-writing prompt, she did not write an original poem. She thought of a chorus section of an English song, *Baby, I’m yours* by Arctic Monkeys.

Baby, I’m yours, and I’ll be yours until the stars no longer shine.

Yours until the rivers all run dry.

In other word, until I die.

Baby I’m yours, and I’ll be yours until 2 and 2 is 3.

Yours until the mountain crumbles to the sea.

In other word, until eternity.

(*Baby, I’m yours* by Arctic Monkeys)

In her selection of an English song to express her understanding of love, she chose a chorus from the song *Baby, I’m yours*. From the lyric, she wanted to express her romantic love to her significant other, unlike in the Thai poem where she discussed the unconditional love of a mother. From this song, her romantic relationship was presented

as being blindly in love, as stated in the first line of the lyric: “until the stars no longer shine.” She expresses love as being illogical: “I’ll be yours until 2 and 2 is 3.” The logical sense in her Thai poem had disappeared in the English poem she recited. Based on the song, Mai presents the love that is never-ending.

Mai approached the poetry writing tasks both in Thai and in English by reciting existing poems that either she wrote or from an English song. Though she presented herself as a writer who has control over her Thai language, she did not compose a new poem in response to this written task. This could be interpreted that she felt that this emotion was very personal and that she did not want to share this with someone whom she did not know well. Another explanation could be that she felt unsure of emotional expression in general. Therefore, she had created some distance to express her emotion and decided to express it vaguely.

After her English poetry-writing experience, she shared her reasons for writing the English song lyric instead of writing an original poem in English.

“Writing an English poem was more difficult because I could not even write a poem in Thai, my mother tongue. So I chose this song by Arctic Monkeys. I like this band a lot. My friend sent me this song and told me that this song was cute. I listened to it. I felt that this is a simple song but has good rhymes. It also vividly describes the love that one person has to the other. I like it. I also think that this song is one of my all time favorites. I also think that I will give this song to my boyfriend because the meaning of the song is very good.”

(Mai, personal interview, my own translation)

Mai's reflection on her English poetry-writing experience was informative. She stated, "writing an English poem was more difficult"; she solved the problem by providing a chorus of a song that she liked. She also stated that she could not write a Thai poem, let alone an English one. From her interview, Mai paid more attention to the expression of emotion in response to the English writing prompt. The emotion she wanted to describe in the English song can be noted from words such as "cute," "simple," or "vividly describe love." The shift that she made in response to the English poem suggested that she knew what she wanted to express because she planned to "give this song to my boyfriend." By reciting an existing English poem to express her emotion, it may mean that she was less invested in the relationship. It could also be interpreted that she felt too embarrassed or shy to express her true emotion in responding to this written prompt. Therefore, she resorted to an existing poem to help her express her feelings.

### **Mai's Narratives**

After finished the poetry writing prompts, Mai came back to respond to a Thai narrative writing prompt. The excerpt provided below was from the first paragraph of her Thai narrative.

ช่วงนั้น ป่วยหนักมาก ต้องผ่าตัด จิตใจตก อารมณ์ไม่ดี และ ชักลัว ชี้อะแวง ตลอดเวลา  
มีอยู่ วัน หนึ่ง ได้ไป นอนบ้านเพื่อน ตอนสายๆ ก็ตื่น กันหมดแล้ว แต่หนู  
ยังนอนเล่น อยู่ใน เตียง ค รึ่ง หลับ ค รึ่ง ตื่น รู้สึกว่า ฝันอยู่ เห็นผู้หญิง ผมยาว  
ปิดหน้า นิ่ง คุกเข่าอยู่ หนูเลยถามว่า แก่เป็นใคร มาทำอะไร แก่ก็ไม่ตอบ แต่มานั่งข้างๆ  
เตียง แล้วยื่น มือมาหา หนูเลย ยื่นมือ กลับไป แก่ชวนหนู ตั้งแต่ มือถึงนิ้ว หนูตกใจมาก  
เลย ตื่น ขึ้น มา

(Mai, Thai Narrative)

*One time I was very sick. I had to have a surgery. I was moody, in fear, and was easily paranoid. One day I went to stay at my friend's place. Late in the morning, my friends woke up but I was still laying in bed, half asleep, half awake. I felt that I was in a dream. There was a lady with long hair. Her hair covered her face. I asked her who she was, what she was doing here. She did not answer. She was sitting beside the bed. Then she extended her arm to me. I extended mine back. She scratched me from my arm to my fingers. I was so frightened. So I awoke.*

(Mai, Thai narrative, my own translation)

Mai's Thai narrative described her feeling of being afraid of the unknown. She saw "*a lady with long hair*" in her dream. She tried to ask her questions, but that "*lady*" did not answer her. The conversation-like style that she employed in her Thai narrative helped readers imagine her interaction with the lady. She could not see the lady's face because "*her hair covered her face.*" These descriptions showed that she was not sure what to expect or what to see in this situation. She felt nervous interacting with this lady in her dream. The interaction that both Mai and the mysterious lady had was very vivid. She described each movement in detail. The most fearful event for her in this excerpt was the "*scratch*" that she felt while she was half asleep. Her use of terms, "*One day,*" "*Late in the morning,*" and "*then,*" showed her ability to arrange her narrative.

When she was asked to talk about her Thai narrative writing experience, she shared her thoughts on the word "fear."

"The work that I just wrote was an attempt to express my fear of ghosts. When I heard the word "fear," I always think of ghosts. It was in my mind that it is

ghosts. Fear is ghosts. The end. Apart from the fear that I wrote about, I was also confused of who that person was.”

(Mai, personal interview, my own translation)

Reflecting on Mai’s interview, she wrote in her Thai narrative about the ghost story that she experienced herself. Her fear of ghosts has been ingrained in her brain. She stated that the word “fear” was analogous to “ghost” for her. This could be the reason why when Mai heard of the term “fear” in Thai, it always meant “*ghost*” for her. Mai also stated that she was “confused” by the person in her Thai narrative. The sense of uncertainty in her Thai narrative and in her interview had led Mai to feel nervous and fearful.

After the interview, she was asked to write an English narrative to express her fear. She wrote about an experience of seeing a snake in her house.

One day I was about to get out of the house. I saw a snake toy on the floor so I thought it was my baby brother’s. I jumped pass it without hasitation. After XXXX, I went back to my house. As soon as I enter the hall, I saw the same snake moving, I screamed at the top of my lung. Because I thought it was just a toy. ... From now on I don’t feel comfortable with my house anymore ... Now I’m still scared of any dark corner of my house.

(Mai, English narrative)

The fear that she portrayed in her English narrative was somewhat similar to the Thai narrative, the fear of the unexpected/unknown, though this was not a ghost-related story. In her Thai narrative, she was nervous of the mysterious lady that she saw in her dream. Because she could not see her face, she was not sure whether she saw a ghost or a spirit.



In her English narrative, she was nervous of the dark corners of her house because she was not sure whether there would be snakes sitting there. The uncertainty of both situations led her to be afraid.

Her English narrative structure was also similar to the Thai narrative in that she used sequence words, “*One day*,” “*Late in the morning*,” and “*then*,” to prepare readers for what would come next. In Mai’s English narrative, she described her fear of seeing a snake at her house. The reaction of her fear in this English narrative was to scream because she had thought the snake to be a toy; instead it was a real snake. The unexpected movement of the “toy” startled her. After the incident, she felt that her house was not safe. She developed a fear of “dark corners” in her house. The choice of words in her English narrative was emotionally-related terms: “*without hesitation*,” “*screamed*,” “*don’t feel comfortable*,” “*scared of*.” These terms signalled readers the emotion she wanted to convey in her English narrative. In contrast, in her Thai narrative Mai did not use emotive terms to help readers understand her emotions: *a-rom-mai-dee* (moody), *kee-khur* (fear), *ra-whang* (paranoid), and *tok-chai* (frighten). These words did not explicitly tell her fearful emotion, but her fear came through from her description and the interaction she had with the mysterious lady in her dream.

When she was asked to share her experience of expressing fear in her English narrative, she commented on the act of writing.

“It felt like writing to express fear both in Thai and in English allowed me to release my fear. I felt like writing is another way of relieving the fear. I personally like to share stories of my fears to others. I felt like there was another person who

understood my fear. These stories are at the bottom of my heart, but I never forget.”

(Mai, personal interview, my own translation)

Her perception of writing to express her fear both in Thai and in English was that it had been a positive experience for her. She felt that writing about fearful events was a way to feel “relief” about her fears. She liked to share her fearful stories with others because she wanted them to understand her. It may be that she liked to tell her fearful stories because of her journalism major. Regardless, these fearful accounts were “at the bottom of her heart,” and she wanted to share her experiences to others. She felt more relieved when she talked or wrote about them. She felt that other people understood her. These narratives could be so traumatic for her that writing about fearful events in both Thai and in English was in turn therapeutic.

### **Mai’s Opinion Pieces**

When Mai was asked to respond to a Thai opinion-writing prompt, she shared her insider’s perspective on Thai politics. The excerpt below was from the first paragraph of her Thai opinion writing.

ทักษิณ เป็นใคร? ทำไม มีความ ยิ่งใหญ่ ส่งผลกระทบ ต่อคนไทย ได้มากขนาดนี้? ทำไม  
คนไทย จึงต้อง ยกย่อง และต่อสู้ เพื่อเขา มากขนาดนี้? ตั้งแต่เกิดมา XX ปี หนูไม่เคย  
เห็นเหตุการณ์ แบบนี้มาก่อน คนไทย ปิดถนน ตามความพอใจ ประท้วง กันตาม สบาย  
หลักการ ที่พอ ฟัง ขึ้น ก็ไม่ มี กฎหมาย ก็ไม่สนใจ แล้วบอกว่า ออกมาเรียกร้อง  
ประชาธิปไตย อยากทราบว่า ทุกคนในนั้น เข้าใจ คำว่า ประชาธิปไตย อย่างถ่องแท้  
จริงหรือ? ... สรุป ตอนนี้ ทักษิณ แปลว่า ประชาธิปไตย!!!

(Mai, Thai opinion writing)

*Who is Thaksin? Why did he have such power to create such an impact on the Thai people? Why did many Thai people praise and fight for him? Over XX years since I was born, I had never seen such incidents of Thai people blocking roads or protesting at will. There were no reasonable principles for such actions. No one cared about laws. They claimed that they came out to fight for democracy. I would like to know whether those people who were protesting truly understood the term democracy? ... As it stands now, Thaksin means democracy!!!*

(Mai, Thai opinion writing, my own translation)

Mai's anger is evident from the first sentence of her Thai opinion writing. She questioned the ex-prime minister of Thailand who was the cause of Thailand's political and social unrest. Her series of rhetorical questions convey her frustration and disapproval of the situation. She wanted to know the answers to those questions. Her sense of frustration was stronger when she tried to justify people's irrational actions, such as "*Thai people blocking roads or protesting at will.*" Reading her Thai opinion writing, her anger comes through her attempt to understand the situation. Her use of rhetorical questions in her Thai opinion writing helps readers perceive the anger she had: "*Who is Thaksin? Why did he have such power to create such an impact on the Thai people? Why did many Thai people praise and fight for him?... . I would like to know whether those people who were protesting truly understood the term democracy?*" Also her usage of exclamation marks at the end of the excerpt, "... , *Thaksin means democracy!!!*," can be perceived as another move to express anger. She also challenged the protesters to define the term "*true democracy*" for her. At the close of the excerpt, she ended the paragraph with a sarcastic definition of "*democracy.*" The use of punctuation in her Thai opinion

writing may identify her expressed emotion such as her use of question marks in expressing frustration, or the exclamation marks used for sarcastic anger.

After her Thai opinion writing, she spoke about her writing experience. Her frustration was also expressed when she referred back to her writing.

“I express my anger through this piece of writing. I am very angry. I hate him.

There is no difficulty in writing this piece. It comes from my ‘inner’.”

(Mai, personal interview, my own translation)

Mai’s anger and frustration with the situation shone through in her interview. She was extremely angry at the situation. As she stated in the interview, the word “hate” that she used in her interview suggested that she was “very angry” at the ex-prime minister. Her anger was shown in her Thai opinion writing through her series of rhetorical questions (“*Who is Thaksin? Why did he have such power to create such an impact on the Thai people? Why did many Thai people praise and fight for him?... . I would like to know whether those people who were protesting truly understood the term democracy?*”), and her sarcastic definition of “*democracy*.” Mai’s preference in this genre was noticeable because she stated, “There is no difficulty in writing this piece. It comes from my ‘inner’.” The ‘inner’ that she used in this interview was the insider’s perspective. In other words, she wrote her opinion writing with passion. She was very interested in this topic. She felt that she had enough information that she was able to critique the political situation.

In her English opinion writing, Mai criticized the news reporters about the political situation in Thailand. The following excerpt is taken from the second paragraph.

I'm not saying that I don't love Thailand but I just don't feel proud anymore. We used to be a beautiful country. But now all I hear about our Thailand is that our country is crazy, government kills citizens. I actually think that we have a problem with the information circulation in the world. They (other countries) don't see the event, they don't really know our country so it is better for them not to judge our country. They can criticize but they are not qualified to judge.

(Mai, English opinion writing)

In her English opinion writing, Mai did not express her rage like she did in her Thai opinion writing. In her Thai opinion writing, she was direct, to the point, and articulate in her writing. Her audience for the Thai narrative was the Thai people. When she was asked to respond to the opinion writing prompt in English, she shifted her audience to those who do not speak Thai as their first language. The shift that she made in her audience also affected her emotion being expressed in her writing. That being said, the feeling of anger in her English opinion writing was mixed with disappointment, "...I just don't feel proud anymore. We used to be a beautiful country." Her sense of national pride was diminished by the political turmoil and news reports on Thailand, which was "all [she] hear[s] about." Her sense of anger in her English opinion writing was subtle compared to Thai.

Mai also expressed a sense of national pride in her English opinion writing. She approached her writing from the diplomatic perspective by admitting "we have a problem with information circulation." However, she concluded her English opinion writing by stating that other countries have no right to criticize or "judge" Thailand because "they don't really know our country" or they do not have accurate information. The word

“judge” that she used in her English opinion writing was a strong word to express her emotion. When she wrote that “[foreign reporters] are not qualified to judge,” this may mean that she felt frustrated and angry because she felt like she was being “judged” by reporters from other countries whom she felt did not have the qualifications to do so.

After Mai finished her English written response, she was asked to reflect on her writing experience, during which she shared her reflection from a journalist’s perspective:

“For this one, I wrote somewhat similar to the [Thai] story. However, this was in English, so I thought that foreigners would read this piece. I stepped myself up ‘internationally’ by focusing on how foreigners viewed Thailand during the political turmoil. Okay I get it that the world has a freedom of expression. People can ‘criticize’ or have their own perspective or ‘opinion’. They can ‘express’ what they want. Nobody cares. However, they have no rights to ‘judge’ this country like this or that.”

(Mai, personal interview, my own translation)

From Mai’s reflection, she approached her English opinion writing as an “international” news reporter. This explained her diplomatic style in Mai’s English opinion writing. Her anger in the English version was not as explicit as in her Thai opinion writing. This may be a result of her “stepping up ‘internationally’” in her writing. Mai needed to be less emotional in her writing because she could not express favor in one party over another. In other words, she had to limit her emotional expressions when writing in English. Her comments on the “freedom of expression” can be seen in her English opinion writing, where she wrote, “They can criticize but they are not qualified to

judge.” The terms that she used, “criticize” and “judge,” are two words that she focused on the most during the interview. With her Journalism major, she was able to differentiate the nuanced meanings between these two terms. She felt that the word “judge” had a strong and negative feeling attached to it; while the term “criticize” was not as negative because she was fine with people who “have their own perspective or ‘opinion’.”

Mai’s remark about “the freedom of press” indicates her understanding that individuals are entitled to share their opinions of political issues in the international news arena. From her journalistic viewpoint, she felt annoyed and frustrated when news did not accurately report the incident so she felt the need for her to wear her journalist’s hat to comment from a foreigner’s point of view “on how [they] viewed Thailand during the political turmoil.”

### **Summary of Mai’s Perception on Expressing Emotions Through Writing**

In response to the four research questions posted in this study, the summary of Mai’s understandings of expressing emotions through writing in Thai and in English is presented in the following section.

1. In what ways does Mai understand and experience/perceive emotional writing in Thai as her first language?

Mai’s understanding in expressing emotions in Thai was that Thai words were important in her written responses. To demonstrate her understanding, she showed her control over the Thai language in the Thai poem by choosing words that had nuanced definitions to express her emotions.

In her Thai narrative, she depicted her understanding by using descriptive words to describe her story. In her interview, she perceived that the ability to use

description helped her release stress in her Thai narrative. Mai stated that she felt “relieved” after she finished responding to the Thai narrative written prompt.

Mai’s perception of expressing anger through opinion writing was on a personal level. By using rhetorical questions and sarcastic comments in her Thai opinion writing, she showed her ability to critique and express her emotions.

Mai’s perception in Thai opinion writing was that Thai opinion writing should be emotion-laden through word choices and sarcastic comments. On a personal level, she felt passionate about political issues in Thailand.

2. In what ways does Mai understand and experience/perceive emotional writing in English as her second language?

Mai understood expressing emotions in English depended on the audience. In other words, she felt that she needed to tailor the English written responses according her audience. Her perception played out through poetry writing and opinion writing. She also perceived that English was not her language. She had less control over the English language when it came to expressing her emotions, especially at the sentence and lexical levels. For example, Mai did not write an original English poem, but instead recited an English song to help her express her emotions. This may mean that she did not feel confident to express her emotion in English in writing.

Mai approached her English narrative through the use of sequence words to help readers follow her story. Her use of English emotive words can be recognized that she wanted to express her fear in her writing. She considered



writing a fearful narrative to be therapeutic. She felt that she could release her tension and fear through writing both in Thai and in English.

Her understanding of audience was discussed again in her interview after her response to the English opinion writing by shifting her position as a writer to write for an international audience. Though she wrote her opinion writing in English, Mai's pride of being a Thai citizen led her to express her anger to the English-speaking media. Her understanding of expressing emotions in English was that she needed to be indirect and rational. For example, Mai's English opinion writing to express her anger was more diplomatic and less emotional.

3. Are there differences in Mai's understanding of emotional writing in Thai and in English?

Mai's perception on expression of emotions through writing in Thai and in English was informative. The differences in using Thai and English in expressing Mai's emotion were that she used Thai to express her emotions to herself while she used English depending on the audience she wanted to address. These differences can be noted throughout Mai's writing experiences. She felt that she was able to better control the expression of emotions through writing in the Thai language in than in English. Her confidence can be seen from her comments after she finished responding to the Thai poetry writing prompt. In her poetry writing experiences, she recited a poem that she wrote for her mother when she was in primary school; in contrast, she recited an English song that she planned to give to her significant other.

Another example is taken from Mai's opinion writing, in which language plays an important role in her written responses. She approached her audience differently based on the language she used. When she expressed her anger in Thai, she felt passionate about the situation. She expressed her emotion from the personal level when she wrote in Thai. In contrast, she expressed her anger in English from a more subtle level.

4. Are there differences in Mai's understanding in emotional writing in different genres?

Mai's understanding of genres can be summarized as follows. In poetry writing, Mai approached both Thai and English poetry from differing personal perspective. Though she recited a Thai poem that she had previously written, the poem itself followed the appropriate Thai poetry structure. In other words, she was aware of the Thai poetry genre, but she did not attempt to compose a new one. For her English poem, she showed an awareness of the genre through an English song. Her discussion of rhymes after responding to an English poetry writing prompt showed her awareness of the genre. She knew that she needed to have rhymes in her poems.

Mai demonstrated her understanding of narrative writing genre by using description and conversational style in her written responses. The openings of Mai's narratives set up the whole context of her stories. This showed that she was aware of the narrative writing genre. She also used time sequence words in her narratives to signal readers of what happens next. Interestingly, according to her responses to the written prompts, Mai perceived narrative writing as a form of

therapy. She shared this understanding after she finished writing her Thai and English narratives.

For Mai's perceptions of opinion writing, she presented her emotions based on her audience. She showed a nuanced understanding of opinion writing between two languages: Thai and English. By showing her awareness of opinion writing genre, she shared her personal opinion and her political stance in her opinion written responses. When she wrote in Thai, she was more explicit in expressing anger in her writing. In other words, she felt that she could be herself and spoke her mind about the political situation by using rhetorical questions and sarcastic tones in her Thai opinion writing. In contrast, she addressed her English opinion writing from an "international" perspective by addressing her emotions in a subtler way. Because her audience more than just Thai citizens, she believed that she needed to be careful in expressing opinions in her writing. Mai shared her awareness of different genres through her use of word choices, personal opinions, and her sense of audience in her written responses.

### **Parn**

Parn was a sophomore in the Science Department. Prior to starting at the university, she had attended a K-12 in Thailand. At her school, she studied English with both Thai- and English- speaking teachers of English. She had had a few opportunities to travel to English speaking countries with her family. On a personal level, she is a shy and soft-spoken person. She loves bird watching and hiking.

### **Parn's Poetry**

When Parn was asked to compose a Thai poem, she wrote a five-stanza poem in the style of *Kaab yanii* 11 (Thai Verse 11). *Kaab yanii* 11 consists of eleven syllables divided into five and six syllables to complete one line. Hudak (1990) notes that the style of *Kaab yanii* “is used for description of nature and beautiful objects” (p. 11). To summarize Parn’s poem, she wrote that our lives were competitive and busy; we forgot about things around us. We should take a break and enjoy lives by helping other people who are in need. The excerpt presented below is from the last stanza of her Thai poem:

เพราะโลก ขาดความรัก	เราควรพัก ช่วยกันต่อ
เปลี่ยนโลก อย่ารีรอ	มอบรักให้ กับทุกคน

(Parn, Thai poem)

<i>Because world lack love</i>	<i>we should rest help continue</i>
<i>change world don't delay</i>	<i>give love to with everyone</i>

(Parn, Thai poem, my own translation)

The concept of love that Parn tried to express in her poem was not on a personal level; instead she focused on a societal one as she commented on the “*world*” that needed love. She wanted everyone to share love with one another. Reading from her Thai poem, she defined love in this prompt as a sense of compassion. “*Because world lack love*” is the sentence in which she wrote about the lack of love in the world. She wants everyone to slow the pace of their lives when she wrote “*we should rest help continue.*” In other words, she wanted us to help each other or to be more compassionate with one another. That would help “*change world*” sooner rather than later. On the last line, she wanted everyone to share compassion with one another regardless of their differences. Her Thai words, *mhob ruk* (give love), helped readers understand the compassion that we should

provide to other people. In other words, she made a meta-comment about love or compassion.

When Parn reflected on her writing experience, she stated that it was difficult for her to express the feeling of “love” through Thai poetry writing:

“Love was very broad. It depended on which aspects of love we were looking at.

Also it was very difficult to write to express love so that others could feel the same way like I did.”

(Parn, personal interview, my own translation)

Parn showed that she had thought about different meanings of love because she stated in her interview that “love was very broad.” She said it was challenging to write a Thai poem to express “love” because she was not sure “which aspects of love” she wanted to write about. Therefore, she wrote her Thai poem to reach a wide audience, from a world citizen’s perspective that “*the world is lacks of love.*” Her difficulty in responding to this writing prompt was to convince other readers to “feel the same way like she did.” This could be her reason of approaching her Thai poem from the societal, as opposed to the personal, perspective. Thus, she wrote her Thai poem to express the feeling of compassion, which she thought could be understood by others.

After she finished responding to the interview, she went on to compose an English poem to express love as well. In her English poem, she encouraged people to go out and enjoy the world. Included below is the last two stanzas from her English poem:

Let’s take a day off,  
forget everythings in your office,  
and go out to see the world,

our world that you have never see.

Open your eyes,  
you will see how they're beautiful

Open your mind,  
you will love them, too.

(Parn, English poem)

The concept of love in her English poem was defined through the act of exploration. She wanted other people to take a break from their mundane activities to explore something new that they had not seen. What she tried to express in her English poem was that when people “*open [their] eyes*” to the beauty of something, she hoped that people would “*open [their] mind*” and love it. In other words, she tried to express that in order to “love” something, people need to be open-minded and willing to explore the unbeaten path of their lives to “*see the world that [they] have never see[n]*.”

Parn’s poems presented her emotion in the subtle, distant voice. In her Thai poem, she talked about a compassion that everyone should have to one another. She approached her English poem from a personal level through the use of *you*, which directly addressed readers. The abstraction of her expression of emotion may come from her Thai language proficiency. In other words, she is able to create or reduce personal distance to express emotion in her written responses.

When she was asked to reflect on her English poetry-writing experience, she shared some of the difficulties she had during the writing:

“This time I wrote poems in Thai and in English. The problems were a little different. For the Thai poem, the problem was the rhyme scheme. I could not find

words that rhymed. Finding Thai words to express my emotion was not difficult, but finding words that rhymed were very difficult. For the English language, sometimes I could not find words that I wanted to use to express my message/emotion. I also did not care much about the rhyme scheme because it was in the style of free verse. Another thing was English grammar. For Thai, I was not worried that I would make any grammatical mistakes.”

(Parn, personal interview, my own translation)

Parn’s genre awareness was evident from her reflection. She was aware of the differences in rhyming schemes between the style of the Thai poem she chose to write and the free verse of her English poem. When she was aware of the written genres, she shifted her focus to her choice of words both in Thai and in English to express her emotion. As Parn stated, expressing emotions through Thai poetry was easier because she had less difficulty in “finding words to express her emotion” and she is “used to” the Thai language. In other words, she felt comfortable and confident using Thai to express her emotion.

Writing poetry in English, on the other hand, was a challenging task for Parn because she “could not find words that [she] wanted to use” to express emotion. Since she was not able to find emotive words to fit into her English poem, this may indicate that she had a limited vocabulary of emotive words in the English language. Though she was not concerned much about the rhyming scheme in her English poem because she wrote it “in the style of free verse,” she still could not find English words to help her express her emotion. She was more worried about “English grammar” because she did not want to

make any mistakes in her English writing. Her discussion of English grammar and form may explain why there was a distance in her emotional expression.

### **Parn's Narratives**

When Parn was asked to write her Thai narrative, she shared an experience that she had when she was in high school:

ด้วยความที่ เป็นคนชอบนอน ในที่ มืดๆ เงียบๆ ข้าพเจ้า จึงมัก จะนอน ปิดม่าน  
หน้าต่างจนหมด ในคืนนั้น ก็เช่นกัน ข้าพเจ้า ที่กำลัง นอนหลับสนิท ภายในห้องของ ตัวเอง  
โดยไม่ได้ รับรู้ ถึงสิ่งที่ เกิด ขึ้น ภายนอกเลย จนกระทั่ง มีเสียง เคาะประตูรั้วๆ  
พร้อมกับ เสียงเรียก ของพ่อ ข้าพเจ้า ลุกไป เปิดประตู ก็ได้รับ คำบอก เล่าว่า บ้านตรงข้าม  
ไฟไหม้ จึงรีบวิ่งตามลงมา

(Parn, Thai narrative)

*Because I like to sleep in a dark and silent environment, I always shut windows  
and brought the curtain down. Tonight was the same. I slept soundly in my room  
not knowing what was happening outside until my dad repeatedly knocked on my  
bedroom door and called out my name. I answered the door and was told that the  
house on the other side was on fire. I rushed downstairs to see it.*

(Parn, Thai narrative, my own translation)

Parn's Thai narrative was descriptive. She did not use many emotive words in her narrative, but she managed to express her emotion by describing the situation. Her strategy was to introduce the sudden change of her normal routine from “*sleeping soundly*” until the moment her father “*called out her name and told her that the house on the other side was on fire.*” She also used action to describe her emotion in her English narrative such as “[her] *dad repeatedly knocked on her door*” or she “*rushed downstairs.*” These give the reader the impression that she had been caught by surprise by the fire.



When she was asked to reflect on this Thai narrative writing experience, she briefly stated the following:

“I was not sure whether readers would feel the same way like I did. At the moment, I was alarmed and felt sorry for that family.”

(Parn, personal interview, my own translation)

Parn was not sure whether her readers would understand the emotion that she expressed in her Thai narrative. She felt that she did not explicitly express her emotions in her Thai narrative because she expressed it through sudden movements such as her rush downstairs to see the fire. In other words, her expression of fear in her Thai narrative was subtle because she did not employ Thai emotive words, but instead used description to help in expressing her emotion.

After the interview, she was asked to respond to an English narrative writing prompt. She witnessed a motorcycle run over and crush a cat's skull. The driver of the motorcycle did not stop to look at the cat. She went to check on the cat whether it was okay. The cat did not make any movement. The excerpt below was from her last paragraph where she shared her personal thoughts:

“At that time, I was very shocked. I didn't think to meet this situation before. That was the first time I felt sorry that I wasn't a vet liked my dream when I was a little girl. I have been asking myself for this many time, every time when I saw the animals died. I just tell myself that no one can do everything they want, isn't it?”

(Parn, English narrative)

Reading Parn's English narrative, she states that felt sorry for the loss of the cat and was disappointed that she had not studied to become a veterinarian like she wanted to. She

was also “shocked” because she was not prepared to witness this incident. In other words, the feeling of fear that Parn tried to express was from the unexpected situation she saw. The feelings of despair and disappointment had overcome her when she “saw the animals died.” She then consoled herself by the thought that “no one can do everything they want.” When comparing her English and Thai narratives, the Thai narrative was more descriptive and expressed her emotion without using explicit emotive terms, while her English narrative invited readers to understand her feelings by describing how she felt and what she could have done.

When Parn discussed her narrative writing experiences both in Thai and in English, she stated that she preferred Thai to English in terms of the expression of emotion:

“In Thai [narrative] writing, it was easier because I did not need to think too much. I wrote whatever I wanted because I felt comfortable with the language. With the English language, I needed to think about word choices and sentence structures. For expressing emotion through writing, I think Thai might be more obvious.”

(Parn, personal interview, my own translation)

Parn’s perception in expressing fear in the Thai language was “more obvious.” In other words, she preferred the Thai language to the English language when expressing emotion through narrative writing. She stated that it “was easier” to express her emotion through narrative writing in Thai because she felt more confident and “comfortable” in Thai. Her Thai narrative was more descriptive than her English narrative. She was able to paint a picture with the words of her narrative. As she stated, she did not have to think too much

in terms of content and word choices. Because Thai is her L1, this could be one of the explanations of her ability to express emotions confidently. In her English narrative, she did not employ the same strategy as she did with her Thai narrative: using description. She wrote her English narrative to call her readers to emotionally participate in the emotion she wanted to convey.

However, Parn had faced a different challenge in expressing emotions when writing the narrative in English. As she stated in her reflective interview, she focused more on her vocabulary and the sentence structure than what she wanted to write about. Her focus on the grammatical structure and vocabulary was previously mentioned in her English poetry writing experience as well. This may imply that Parn was more concerned with the representation of her emotion in her English writing. She wanted to make sure that her readers understood her emotion that she expressed in her English written responses. From her focus on the accuracy of her English writing, this could infer that she tried to distance herself from discussing her emotion in her writing.

### **Parn's Opinion Pieces**

The excerpt below was from the third paragraph of her opinion writing where she stated her political view about Thailand.

ในความคิด ของข้าพเจ้า ปัญหาสำคัญ ที่สุด ของการเมืองไทย คือความไม่รู้ ไม่เข้าใจ และไม่เห็น ความสำคัญ ของประชาชน ชาวไทย トラบใดที่ คน ยังคง มีความเชื่อผิดๆ เหล่านี้อยู่ ประเทศไทย ก็จะย่ำ อยู่กับที่ ไม่สามารถ ที่จะ พัฒนา ไปไกลกว่านี้ เนื่องจาก โดนนิสัยของ มนุษย์ ย่อมอยากมี อยากได้ เห็นแต่ ผลประโยชน์ ส่วนตน มากกว่า ประเทศชาติ เมื่อ ไม่มี ประชาชน คอยตรวจสอบ การทำงาน นักการเมือง ก็ สามารถ โกงกิน ได้เต็มที่

(Parn, Thai opinion writing)

*In my opinion, the most important problem is that Thai people do not have enough knowledge, understanding, and the importance of Thai politics. As long as Thai people still have these misunderstandings/beliefs, Thailand as a nation will stand still and will not develop further. People, in general, have their own needs and wants for themselves before the nation. When the citizens do not keep an eye on the work of politicians, corruption will most likely be expected.*

(Parn, Thai opinion writing, my own translation)

Parn expressed her anger and a sense of frustration in Thai politics. She did not use any explicit words in expressing her frustration. Instead she rationalized her thoughts and her opinions on the political issues in Thailand. She also critiqued some Thai citizens who were not able to think critically about the situation. Parn used subtlety in her writing to express her frustration. When she wrote, “*Thai people do not have enough knowledge, understanding, and the importance of Thai politics,*” this statement implies that she was disappointed and wanted Thai people to pay more attention to and tried to gain more understanding of the Thai politics. She also wanted more people to get involved in politics by being watchdogs for the nation, “*When the citizens do not keep an eye on the work of politicians, corruption will most likely be expected.*”

When Parn was asked to reflect on her experience on the Thai opinion writing, she stated the following:

“The problem was how to organize my thoughts. There were many topics I wanted to discuss. However, the challenge was how to connect these topics together.”

(Parn, personal interview, my own translation)

Parn shared that she felt there were many topics to choose from after reading the prompt. Her statement indicates that she was interested in this topic. In other words, she had the right to choose topics or distance herself from topics she wanted to write in order to express her emotion. This explains her rationalization and the organization of her thoughts in her Thai opinion writing. Since her interview comment was not on the expression of emotion in her writing, this could mean that she felt comfortable in expressing emotion in her writing.

In her English opinion writing, her written response followed the same topic as the Thai version. The excerpt provided below is from the second paragraph where she discusses the “biggest problem” in Thai politics:

“The biggest problem of Thai politics is Thai people who never know or feel it is important. Many people go to the election and never think of politics again. Some people didn’t go to election because they think it’s matter for them. In my opinion, politics is our duty. All Thai people duty. Democracy isn’t an election but we must involve in every part of politics. If everyone don’t care about politics, who will determine there works, who will determine the payment of the country, who will protect benefit of our country.”

(Parn, English opinion writing)

From Parn’s English opinion writing, she expressed her dissatisfaction and disappointment for “Thai people who never know or feel it is important” to pay more attention to Thai politics. She felt frustrated when she discussed the misunderstanding of the term “democracy.” When she wrote, “politics is our duty. All Thai people duty”; her sense of frustration comes through her writing. The series of “who” questions implies that

she felt angry with those Thai people who do not pay much attention to the political issues. In her Thai opinion writing, she was more explicit in critiquing Thai politics. Her sense of frustration can be perceived from her Thai opinion writing. In contrast, Parn's English opinion writing was written to express her sense of disappointment in Thai people who did not fully participate in the political discussion.

After responding to the opinion writing prompt, Parn reflected on her writing experiences and shared some challenges in her writing.

“In responding to this emotional writing prompt [expressing anger in English], the word choice used in this writing might not best represent what I wanted to express because I sometimes avoided using some words. So the meanings of the words might not be the one I wanted. If I compared between Thai and English, Thai should be better.”

(Parn, personal interview, my own translation)

In this reflection, she discussed her difficulty in expressing anger through writing in English. Due to her limited choice of emotive words, she had to use different words when she wanted to express her emotion in response to the English opinion-writing prompt. When she stated that she had “avoided” some terms, she was not sure of any other words she wanted to use in conveying the emotion. We can infer from this that she had created distance in her expression of emotion. Another reason for avoiding some words was that she did not feel confident in using those terms in writing. She also felt that she could express her emotion better in Thai through writing because she has a larger choice of words to express emotion.

### **Summary of Parn's Perceptions on Expressing Emotions Through Writing**

Guided by four research questions posted in this study, the following section presents a summary of Parn's understanding of expressing emotions in different genres in Thai and in English.

1. In what ways does Parn understand and experience/perceive emotional writing in Thai as her first language?

Parn presented her understanding of expressing of emotion through writing in a distant tone, which can be noted in her choice of words and the organization of her writing. In other words, she did not express emotions at a personal level in her Thai written responses. During her interview, she stated that she was more competent in expressing her emotions in Thai because she knows the language. Her Thai language competence was shown when she discussed the use of Thai words to express emotions in her Thai poem. However, she was not as explicit as she thought she would be in her Thai written responses.

Parn's understanding of expressing emotion in Thai can also be noted in her comments on the organization of her written responses to the narrative and opinion prompts. Though she felt confident and comfortable in using Thai to express emotions; her Thai narrative did not use many Thai emotive words. Instead, she described her actions in the sudden event. Her description helped Thai readers understand the emotion she wanted to express. Parn's Thai opinion writing was well organized. In her Thai opinion writing, she had demonstrated her ability to express her rational as well as emotional sides through the Thai language. Because she had much information on Thai politics, she needed to

think, arrange, and select the situations, which she wanted to write about. Though she did not employ any emotion-laden words, her emotion was communicated through her reasoning in the Thai opinion writing response. She felt that she could best express her emotion in the Thai opinion-writing genre.

2. In what ways does Parn understand and experience/perceive emotional writing in English as her second language?

Parn's perception of expressing emotion in English focused on word choices and grammatical issues in her written responses. In her reflection, she was worried about English grammar in her English written responses. She paid more attention to the sentence level issues than content during her responses to the narrative and opinion writing prompts. Parn perceived that grammatical issues were important in responding to English writing prompts. Reflecting during her interviews, she stated that she was concerned with the sentence level of her written responses to express emotions. Parn felt that she was not able to express the emotions she wanted to convey in her written responses because of her English proficiency. In her English opinion writing, she felt that she could not express her emotions through writing because she could not find words that she wanted to use or she was not sure how to use the words in her sentences. In other words, she felt uncomfortable in using those emotive terms or unsure of how to use those words in her English written responses.

3. Are there differences in Parn's understanding of emotional writing in Thai and in English?



Parn's perceptions on the expression of emotions through writing in Thai and in English were insightful. The differences that were presented by Parn were that she paid attention to the emotions she wanted to express in Thai; however, she more was concerned with word choice and sentence level issues in her English written responses. For example, she was more concerned with the rhyming schemes in Thai poem, while in English she needed to find words that expressed her emotions in her English poem. She focused her attention to the sentence level when it came to the English poem; while in her Thai poem, she focused more on the content/emotional level. The concern with sentence structure was mentioned again after she finished responding to the English narrative writing prompt. Parn paid attention to her English grammatical structure in the English narrative. During the interview, she stated that she preferred Thai to English because she felt more confident and more competent in expressing her emotions in opinion writing. She reflected on her English writing and concluded that her English was less emotive because she had a limited vocabulary of English emotive words to help her express emotions in writing. Unlike the Thai language, she felt that she was not equipped with English grammar and appropriate vocabulary to adequately express her emotions in the written responses.

4. Are there differences in Parn's understanding in emotional writing in different genres?

Parn's understandings of expressing her emotions in different genres can be summarized as follows. In poetry writing, her perception of expressing emotions was on the societal level. Based on her responses, she was well aware of

the poetry conventions in Thai, but not in English. As her reflection after English poetry writing, she focused more on word choice and rhyming schemes in composing a Thai poem. In English poem, she focused more on the vocabulary level because she was not schooled in the conventions of English poetry. This was the reason why she chose to write her English poem in free verse.

Her understanding of narrative writing in Thai and in English was somewhat similar in that she needed to use descriptions and invitation of audience in her writing. Parn used her understanding of the use of description by listing actions in her Thai narrative. She did not use any Thai emotive words in her story. In English narrative, she also described her story with few English emotive words. Based on her understanding of narrative, she felt the need to invite her audience to participate in her emotional expressions, in which she implicitly expressed in her English narrative.

For the opinion-writing genre, Parn expressed her anger in a diplomatic way both in Thai and English. Her understanding of opinion writing can be noted from her interview when she stated that she needed to choose events that she thought it would be most relevant to the writing prompt. Her perception on expressing anger in writing was by showing her rationality, which was noticeable in her Thai opinion writing. Therefore, her emotion in opinion writing genre was not expressed from a personal perspective, but from a societal one. This may be one of the reasons she expressed emotions in a subtle way.

## Ton

Ton was a sophomore in the Department of Engineering. As with the other participants, he attended his K-12 in Bangkok, Thailand. He studied the English language with both Thai teachers of English and English-speaking teachers. He recently came back from a study abroad experience program where he had been in an English-speaking country for a few months. He recently subscribed to the English version of *Reader's Digest* magazine.

### Ton's Poetry

As did Aon, Ton responded to the Thai poetry-writing prompt in the style of *Kaap yanii 11* (Thai Verse 11). Hudak (1990) described the style of *Kaap yanii 11* by saying that it was used to describe “nature or beautiful objects” (p. 11). For this style of Thai poem, each line is divided into five and six syllables; hence, each line consists of eleven syllables. He wrote his poem to describe three types of love.

ความรัก ของผมนั้น	มีด้วยกัน อยู่สามสิ่ง
ทุกสิ่ง มันคงยัง	ไม่มีอิง แอบหนีไป
ครอบครั้ว คือความรัก	ที่ฟูมฟัก และรักษา
ห่วงใย และห่วงหา	ถึงแม้ว่า จะห่างไกล
เมื่อเรา มีความรัก	อีกซักพัก ก็เบื่อหน่าย
ไม่เป็น อย่างที่หมาย	มันจะสาย เกินกว่าถอน
สุดท้าย คือตัวเรา	ไม่มีเขา มาเกี่ยวข้อง
บางครั้ง น้ำตานอง	นับถึงสอง เดินต่อไป

(Ton, Thai poem)

<i>love of mine</i>	<i>have together is three things</i>
<i>everything strong very</i>	<i>no have lean hide escape go</i>
<i>family is love</i>	<i>that nurture and protect</i>
<i>worry and concern</i>	<i>even though far apart</i>
<i>when we have love</i>	<i>for a while then weary</i>
<i>not is as expect</i>	<i>it will late beyond withdraw</i>
<i>lastly is myself</i>	<i>no have others come involve</i>
<i>sometimes tears brim</i>	<i>count to two walk continue</i>

(Ton, Thai poem, my own translation)

Ton wrote his Thai poem to express love in three different contexts. The first stanza summarizes the poem. He stated that there were three things that he felt strongly about. The choice of words that he used, “*lean*,” “*hide*,” and “*escape*,” showed how serious he thought of how to express the concept of love. In Ton’s Thai poem, he expressed three different types of love: an unconditional love to his family, a romantic love to his girlfriend, and self-love/self-esteem. His second stanza talked about familial love. It was the unconditional love from family members since he was born because he was “*nurtured*” and “*protected*.” Though he was “*far apart*” from his family members, he was sure that their love would never fade. The third stanza showed unstable and uncommitted love because he expressed the love “*for a while*” then the love wore off. It was not what two people “*expected*,” therefore, they needed to be parted or “*withdraw*” before it was too late. The last stanza revolved around self-esteem/self-love. When he faced some difficulties in life, he needed to be strong by dealing with problems and “*continue*” his life even though it was tearful.

When he was asked to reflect on his Thai poetry-writing experience, he stated that it was more relaxing that he thought it would have been:

“It was fun. I had not written a poem in a long time. I meant I could vaguely remember the rhyme scheme. I was not really into the poems, but I was ‘in’ with the emotions. In the past, this was how I felt at that time. Also someone said that this kind of art helped sustaining souls. I never really believed in that. But awhile back when I was writing this, I felt less stressful. I meant I was very stressed before I wrote the poem. I felt it was fun to write, to change the activity, and to think about new thoughts--something like that.”

(Ton, personal interview, my own translation)

After Ton finished responding to the Thai poetry-writing prompt, he reflected on his writing experience, stating that he had not had a chance to compose “a poem in a long time.” Since he had not written for a long time, Ton tried to recall the Thai poetry structure. Though he stated that he could not exactly remember the rhyme scheme, he was able to compose a Thai poem in the style of Thai Verse 11. As he had not worried much about the rhyme schemes, he shifted his focus to the emotion he wanted to express in his Thai poem. The word “in” that he used in his interview meant that he paid attention to the emotional aspect of the poetry writing, which can be noticed from his Thai poem. Since he was emotionally involved in the writing task, he was able to differentiate the nuances of his emotion of love into three different aspects: an unconditional love to his family, a romantic love to his significant other, and a self-love perspective. He also stated that this poetry-writing task reminded him of the concept of art for “sustaining souls.” In this case, Ton had a chance to sit down, critically reflect on his experiences, and express

emotion through a poem. He realized that his poem also had a message that could be useful for others.

When focusing on expressing emotion in his poem, Ton also reflected that he felt more relaxed after he had finished responding to the written prompt. This may be because he took his mind off a stressful situation and focused his attention on an unrelated activity and topic. As he stated that he had switched to do something different, he felt that responding to this poetry writing task helped him relieve his stress.

When he was asked to respond to the English poetry-writing prompt, he wrote about his daily routine:

When I woke up, I think about shower  
When I'm taking a shower, I think about shirt  
When I'm dressing, I think about car  
When I'm driving, I think about friend  
When I'm with friend, I think about work  
When I'm working, I think about food  
When I'm eating, I think about home  
When I'm at home, I think about sleeping  
When I'm sleeping, I think about wake up  
When its all happened because I love what I do

(Ton, English poem)

Ton's English poem was different than in his Thai one. He used anaphora to show the repetition in his life. He presented a cyclical pattern to his life. Though he presented his mundane activities, he maintained that he enjoyed what he did. In other words, the "love"

that he presented here was the feeling of caring. When he thought of someone, activities, or objects, this could mean that he cared about those people or things in every moment of his life. When he was asked to reflect on this writing experience, he shared his reflection by comparing it to his Thai poetry writing experience.

“I imitated the format of my English poem from one of the poems I read in Reader’s Digest. ...I read the Thai poem once then I read this English poem. When I read the Thai poem, I felt that each stanza explicitly and clearly expressed the emotion. But this one [English poem], the emotion expressed was that I did this, then I did that, then I did, did, did, did until it was a day. What was the purpose of doing those? It’s because I liked what I did.”

(Ton, personal interview, my own translation)

As he reflected on his poetry writing experiences, he stated that he preferred Thai to English because he felt the explicit emotion that was expressed in his Thai poem. He stated, “When I read the Thai poem, I felt that each stanza explicitly and clearly expressed the emotion.” As he stated in his earlier interview, he vaguely remembered the Thai poetic rhyming scheme; however, he shifted his focus to be “in” with the emotion he wanted to convey in his Thai poem. It can be implied that the expression of love in Thai for Ton was more refined than the concept of love in the English language. In his Thai poem, he expressed three different kinds of love (the love of his family, his significant other, and himself), while in his English poem; he expressed only one kind of love (the care he gives to everything he does). He used more emotive words in his Thai poem such as “*love*,” “*nurture*,” “*protect*,” “*worry*,” “*concern*,” however, the word “*love*” only appeared in his English poem.

## Ton's Narratives

For the Thai narrative writing, Ton wrote about a ghost story that he had experienced himself. The excerpt presented below is from the middle to the end of the story:

วันนั้น ตอนประมาณ เกือบเที่ยงคืน เหลือคน อยู่ในห้องนั่งเล่น รวมประมาณ 4 คน คือ ผม และ เพื่อนร่วมห้อง กับ คนไทย ที่เพิ่ง มารู้จัก ที่นี้ อีก 2 คน เขาเป็น พี่น้องกัน ก็นั่งคุย กันไปเรื่อยเรื่อย แต่ตาม style คนไทย พอมืดๆ ก็ชอบเปิดประตั้น เรื่องผีกัน วันนั้น คุยกันเรื่อง กุมารทอง ก็คุนๆกันไป แชร์ประสบการณ์กันไป ปรากฏว่า คู่พี่น้อง คู่นี้ เลี้ยงกุมารทอง ทั้งคู่ แล้วน้องสาว ก็เอาติดตัวมาด้วย ผมและเพื่อน ตกใจมาก แล้ว ด้วยความอยากรู้ ก็ถาม ทุกเรื่อง ที่อยากรู้ต่างๆ เกี่ยวกับ กุมารทอง หลังจาก นั้น ก็แยกย้าย กัน เข้านอน พอ ขึ้น เติง ปิดไฟ จะ นอน โดยปกติแล้ว ผมและเพื่อน จะคุยกัน ก่อนนอนทุกคืน วันนี้ ก็เช่นเคย ผมและเพื่อน ก็คุยกัน เรื่องเจ้าของกุมาร เหมือนนิทานเขา แล้วก็พูด เหมือนทำทนายว่า “ถ้ามีจริงนะ ต้องช่วย พวกเรา เรื่องงาน ได้จริงสิ” หลังจาก พูดจบ มีเสียง เหมือนคนเดิน เหยียบถุ่ดังมาก พวกผม ตกใจมาก ทำอะไร ไม่ถูก เลยต้อง ไปบอกเจ้าของกุมาร และเปิดไฟ นอนทั้งคืน

(Ton, Thai narrative)

*On that day, it was almost midnight. There were about four of us left in the living room: myself, my roommate, and the other two whom we just made friends with. They were brother and sister. We sat there chatting. But Thai style, when it was getting dark, we like to talk about ghost stories. That day, we talked about Ku-man-thong (golden baby). We shared our experiences/stories. It turned out the brother and the sister that we just met raised the spirit of Ku-man-thong (golden baby). The sister brought one with her as well. My friend and I were surprised. With our curiosity, we asked the brother and sister everything we wanted to know*



*about Ku-man-thong (golden baby). After that, we went to bed. When we were in bed, we turned off the light. Normally my friend and I would talk before went to bed every night. Tonight was the same. My friend and I talked or sort of gossiped about the owner of Ku-man-thong. Then we somewhat challenged it, "If you are real, you must help us with the job." After I finished my sentence, there was a loud noise like someone stepped on a bag. We were frightened and did not know what to do. We had to go and tell the owner of Ku-man-thong and we slept with lights on for the whole night.*

(Ton, Thai narrative, my own translation)

Ton shared his ghost-related experience, or *Ku-man-thong* (Golden baby), that he and his friend encountered. *Ku-man-thong* is a type of talisman in the form of an effigy that looks like a baby boy. This was a part of a certain religious practice/belief in which the unborn fetus was surgically removed from the womb of the mother to do a certain ritual. This effigy was believed to be possessed by a spirit and he would bring good luck to those who worship it.

An interesting observation that Ton made in his Thai narrative was a common practice that he claimed to be the style of Thai people: "*But Thai style, when it was getting dark, we like to talk about ghost stories.*" This sentence signaled to his readers that he was about to shift from exposition to conflict as a typical plot structure transition in his Thai narrative. The choice of his words, *yak-ruu-yak-hen* (curiosity) and *tok-jai* (surprised and frightened), were used to help him express the emotion he experienced at that moment. He did not expect that he would have a chance to experience this *Ku-man-thong (golden baby)* himself. After Ton and his friend "*challenged*" the existence of the

spirit of this *Ku-man-thong* by asking him to help them with the work they were doing: “*If you are real, you must help us with the job.*” He and his friend heard a mysterious noise that startled them; the source of which they could not identify. As he stated in his narrative, he and his friend “*were frightened and did not know what to do.*” This sentence expresses their feelings of fear or of being shocked by a loud noise.

When he was asked to reflect on the Thai narrative writing experience, he shared the difficulty he faced.

“There were many layers to this story. For example, normally when a movie wanted to create a ghost story, there would be a speaker/narrator of the story. We would not see ghost stories in print because they were more difficult to express this emotion in writing. Especially with ghost stories, they were impossible to write so that other readers would feel afraid by only reading them. These stories needed tones of voice. Sometimes the history of the story was needed in order to understand the incident. It was difficult to write this story.”

(Ton, personal interview, my own translation)

The challenge that he faced while writing his Thai narrative was how to convey his emotions, his fear, in writing. He reflected on his writing experience, noting that a Thai narrative needed to have a well-thought out storyline because each narrative had “many layers to the story.” He stated that ghost stories needed “speakers/narrators” that used different “tones of voice” to convey fearful emotion. He implied that writing frightening stories was challenging due to the difficulty in representing different tones of voice in print. Retelling ghost stories orally would make the story scarier than in writing because he was not sure how to present different sounds/voices in his writing. Besides

tones of voice, he also stated that the history of the ghost stories was also important because it helped readers understanding the events. In other words, he implied that if he were able to write out “tones of voice” in his Thai narrative, he would feel more satisfied with his story. This could be one of the reasons why he felt that his story was not as scary as he wanted it to be. In his story, readers who did not know about *Ku-man-thong* (Golden baby) would not be able to understand what he and his friend referred to. The history of *Ku-man-thong* (Golden baby) was left unsaid in his Thai narrative.

After the interview, he was asked to respond to an English narrative writing prompt, for which he wrote about his experience in a recent car accident.

“It’s all about car crash. Like a 6 months ago. I was driving back home with my mother. I did feel so sleepy, but I didn’t tell my mother because she was sleeping next to me. I tried so hard to concentrated a driving, but it was failed. I slept about one minutes. After that, I woke up because of a big impact forces and then I saw my mother was screaming. I was so nervous. I tired to ตั้งสติ [*be calm*] and found a free space to park my car. I came out from car and saw what I have made. I almost cry. I didn’t know what to do. Although, my mom said “Don’t worry, it just passed,” it made me claim down. And feel relax, so it is the most fearful events that I have experienced.”

(Ton, English narrative)

For Ton’s English narrative, he wrote about a car accident in which he dozed off while driving. He shared his experience by providing readers some background information that he was “tired.” While dozing off “about one minute,” he was awoken by the “big impact forces.” When he turned around, he saw his mother “screaming.” He felt

“nervous” because he did not know what to do. The emotion that he tried to express in this English narrative was fear from the car accident. The feeling of confusion can also be inferred from the story when he stated, “I didn’t know what to do.” The emotions presented in the English narrative were changing with every sentence he wrote. At the beginning of the story, he felt he was competent enough to drive his mother back home safely. Then the emotion shifted when he “dozed off.” He used transitional words “*After that*” in his English narrative to signal readers that the emotion was about to change.

When he was asked to reflect on his English narrative writing experience, he shared his thoughts on the choice of experiences he wanted to write when he read the prompt.

“This time I felt that writing in English seemed a bit easier than in Thai. I was like I needed to write a more difficult story when I wrote in Thai. Then I thought which story that I felt fear in the most. The word “fear” in Thai reminded me of ghost stories. When “fear” was written in English, I did not think of ghost stories. It looked like the meaning of the word “fear” was broader in the English language. It’s the same word, but I am not sure.”

(Ton, personal interview, my own translation)

Ton’s reflection was interesting in that he discussed the meaning of the word “fear” in Thai and English. Ton recognized a nuanced definition of the word “fear” in Thai and English. He felt that he had expressed his fear better in the English narrative because he had written from personal experience. For his Thai narrative, he chose to write a ghost story, in which readers needed more background information and different “tones of voice” to understand the emotion he tried to express. When he read the word “fear” in

Thai, he thought of ghost stories. This was the reason he wrote about his experience with *Ku-man-thong* (golden baby) in his Thai narrative. When he read the English prompt, he felt that it was not the same feeling of fear as in the Thai language. He felt that the meaning of the word “fear” was “broader.” His understanding of the word “fear” in English was not limited to a fear of ghosts, but also a fear of losing his life and his loved ones. This shows that Ton had an understanding of the word “fear” and was able to use this word in a nuanced way in his writing.

### **Ton’s Opinion Pieces**

For Ton’s opinion writing, he wrote about his perspective on the political situation in Thailand. The following excerpt is from the last paragraph of his Thai opinion writing:

ผมไม่เข้าใจว่า ทำไม ยังมีคน (ที่มี การศึกษา) สนับสนุนเขา รู้ทั้งรู้ ว่า ทักษิณโกง แต่ชอบ  
อ้างเหตุผลว่า โกง แต่ ประ ทศ เจริญ ซึ่ง ไม่ จริง เลย ปัจจุบัน พรรค\*\*\*\* ก็ได้  
เป็น รัฐบาล ซึ่ง ผม เดา ไว้ไม่ผิดหรอก คน ต่างจังหวัด ที่ไหน จะ สนใจ การเมือง  
ชื่อเสียง ทั้งนั้น แล้ว ยังจะ ให้ มี นายก หญิง ผู้ ซึ่ง ไร ประสพการณ์ และที่สำคัญ  
ยังบอกว่า ตัวเอง เป็น ตัวโคลน คุณทักษิณ ผม ผิดหวัง จริงครับ กับ ระบบ การเมืองไทย

(Ton, Thai opinion writing)

*I don't understand why (educated) people still support him. They knew that Thaksin was corrupt. People said, "Though he is corrupt, the country moves forward," which was not true at all. At the moment, \*\*\*\* Party is the government, which I had predicted. People who are in rural areas were not interested in politics. Their votes were bought by money. Also there is a female prime minister who does not have experience. She also claims that she is a clone of Thaksin. I felt so disappointed in Thai politics.*

(Ton, Thai opinion writing, my own translation)

Ton expressed frustration and disappointment in his Thai opinion writing. He tried to overcome his confusion and frustration by seeking reasons "*why (educated) people still support him.*" The use of the word, "*why,*" signified the rhetorical question. It also showed his sense of frustration in this situation. Furthermore, he felt annoyed by the irrational comment that he heard, "*Though he is corrupt, the country moves forward,*" because he disagreed with it. The use of contradiction in the previous sentence was an effective way for Ton to convey to his readers his feelings. His frustration is apparent in his sarcastic comment when he stated that some people "*were not interested in politics.*" He felt disappointed with Thai politics because people were not able to differentiate good politicians from corrupted ones. He also felt angry that some Thai people were "*bought by money*" during the election. The term that he used, "*bought,*" implied that some Thai people were easily influenced. In other words, they did not care about Thai society as a whole, but only thought about themselves. In his Thai opinion writing, his feeling of shame can be noted from his expressions of being "*disappointed in the Thai politics.*"

The word, *pid-wang* (disappoint), that he used in his Thai opinion writing showed how high his expectations were in Thai politics.

“My hand was tired from writing. When comparing speaking to writing, speaking was easier in expressing my thoughts. However, I believe that readers could understand my point because I provided reasons of my dislike, not just spoke about it without putting serious thoughts into it. It was my ‘first impression’ because I saw the incident with my own eyes. I could be wrong, but that was my ‘first impression’. It’s like I was a piece of white cloth exposed to black ash. I don’t want to say anything much because things can change. I tried to present myself in the neutral position, not to the extreme left or right.”

(Ton, personal interview, my own translation)

When Ton was asked to reflect on his Thai opinion writing experience, his first comment was that “his hand was tired.” This could be one of the difficulties that he had experienced while responding to the writing prompt. As he stated, he preferred speaking to writing to express his anger on this political issues because he could show his “tones of voice” when he spoke about this opinion. However, he felt he could express his frustration satisfactorily because he “saw the incident with [his] own eyes.” In other words, he experienced the incident himself. That direct experience had created his “first impression” regarding Thai politics. After he had formed his first impression, he started to pay more attention to the recent election. This could be the reason why he was opinionated about Thai politics, evident in the sarcastic comments or choices of words in his Thai opinion writing. Also, he employed the metaphor that he was “a piece of white cloth exposing to black ash” because he had not seen or thought that he would ever have

a chance to experience political-related violence during his lifetime. However, he presented himself in a “neutral position” because he was not sure about the future. In other words, he was being careful in stating his opinions in responding to this politically-related writing prompt.

After the interview, Ton was asked to respond to an English opinion-writing prompt to express his anger. The following short essay is Ton’s opinion written response:

“Now, In Thailand we have too many different political’s view I think it’s not good. It can make a best friend become a bad friend when they talk about political. For my side, I prefer \*\*\*\*. The reason why I don’t like \*\*\*\* [a political party] because they always care about themselves, but they always say like they care about us. They said they have a plan to help us after the electic. Although, now they said that they don’t have potential to do like they said. It’s mean ... they lied on us. When they won this last electic it make me cry. I can’t image what would happen to our country if \*\*\*\* is back and \*\*\*\* is our priministor. RIP Thailand.”

(Ton, English opinion writing)

Ton approached his English opinion writing from his personal perspective. He explicitly stated his preference in his written response, “*For my side, I prefer \*\*\*\*.*” The word “*don’t like*” that he used in his response showed his feeling of dislike for a particular political party. Then he stated his reasons for disliking that political party, telling us that they “*always care about themselves, but they always say like they care about us.*” In other words, the political party “*lied*” to Thai citizens. Ton’s anger and frustration came from the feeling of being lied to and the insincerity of the political speeches. He was so



upset about the Thai political situation that he cried because he felt lost and disappointed. He ended his English opinion written response with “*RIP Thailand.*” The “*RIP*” (or “rest in peace”) showed that he had lost hope in the Thai political situation. In Ton’s English opinion writing, mixed feelings of anger, frustration, and despair are apparent in his choices of word and his expressed opinions of the Thai political situation. He felt angry at the politicians because of the “*lies*” they told to people during their promotional campaign. As he wrote, “*When they won this last electic it make me cry,*” this sentence helps readers understand his disappointment in the results of the election. In other words, he was hoping that the other party would have won the election. He used the word “*cry*” to describe his despair when the election was over.

When he was asked to reflect on his English writing experience, he stated that he felt that he expressed his emotion better in the English language.

“For the writing experience this time, I felt that I could express my anger more explicit than in Thai. I meant I put many details in the Thai written response; it was difficult to point out where my angry was or why I was angry. But this time, it felt like it had emphasis such as ‘they lied,’ so I was angry.”

(Ton, personal interview, my own translation)

He felt that his readers would not be able to perceive his anger because readers may feel overwhelmed by information he provided in his Thai writing response. When Ton reflected on his English writing experience, he felt that his emotion was noticeable from his choice pf words. He felt that he was more direct in expressing his emotion in his English written response than in his Thai written response. As he wrote his English written response, he was more explicit in his opinion and his political preference. He also

confessed that he had cried when he learned the result of the election. The anger he had that he mentioned in his interview was directed toward the hidden agenda and promises that the politicians gave, *“because they always care about themselves, but they always say like they care about us.”*

When Ton was asked to elaborate on his English opinion writing regarding friendship, *“It can make a best friend become a bad friend when they talk about political.”* He stated the following statements.

“Writing this time [expressing anger in Thai and in English] seemed like a therapy session. It was like I felt this way, so I expressed my feeling as it was. The prompt spoke to me why I felt angry, but I did not burst it out like I was very angry. I was like I wanted to express this anger to my close friends. I told my girlfriend or my father who shared the same thoughts. I did not post any angry messages on Facebook or attack those who did not share my opinion because I had no idea what would happen in the future. I perceived the paper as my friend. I wrote to express my thought and it listened; it did not matter whether the message would be read or not. The paper had already listened to me. It heard my story and it would not tell anyone. I wrote on it and could write whatever opinions I have without worrying that it will talk back. Writing is better than sharing opinions in that papers cannot talk back. I could write or could yell at anyone on paper, it would listen to my yelling from the beginning to the end. In my opinion, it was like I had a chance to release my anger. I felt good.”

(Ton, personal interview, my own translation)

For Ton, expressing anger through writing seemed therapeutic for him. This was an interesting remark that Ton made regarding the therapy and writing to express his anger in both Thai and English. Ton's statement implies that he felt that he owned the languages (Thai and English). When Ton was passionate about a topic, he was able to express his feelings through the languages that he felt comfortable with. This could be that Ton saw the paper as a friend who listened to his frustration and disappointment without talking back to him. Ton looked for someone who was willing to listen but would not divulge his opinions to others. He perceived the paper to be a "friend" that he could freely express his opinions to and this "friend" would never talk back to him. He felt that he could speak his mind and be expressive about this political topic.

During the data collection in the summer of 2011, the new election in Thailand was about to be finalized. Political unrest was still going on, which may be one of Ton's reasons for being careful in sharing his political views and opinions. This sociopolitical awareness could play a part in limiting Ton's expression of anger in his writing. When he wanted to express his frustration relating to the political situation, he felt that he needed to be careful. In a sense, he needed to be more politically correct in writing about the political situation "because [he] had no idea what would happen in the future." As he stated in his interview that the "prompt spoke to him," he felt like the written prompt was someone he felt close to and he could share his anger with. He discussed his opinions, especially on political issues, with those who shared his views, such as his girlfriend or his father.

He also mentioned "posting angry messages on Facebook." Ton perceived that posting his political opinions on the social networking site could create tensions and

stress among his friends. He did not want to share his opinion on Facebook because it could affect his friendships if he and his friends had conflicting political opinions. In other words, he had developed good awareness about the social aspects of writing. He suppressed his opinions by not sharing them on social media because he was not sure about the future. Regardless of his self-censoring online, he felt relief when he was asked to express his anger on paper.

### **Summary of Ton's Perceptions on Expressing Emotions Through Writing**

To summarize, the following section presents Ton's understanding of emotional writing in Thai and English through writing in different genres based on four research questions posted in this study.

1. In what ways does Ton understand and experience/perceive emotional writing in Thai as his first language?

Ton showed two understandings of expressing emotions through writing in Thai: firstly, as a reflection on his Thai cultural understanding; and secondly, as a form of therapy. His understanding came after he finished composing his Thai poem. After he had written a Thai poem, he stated that he had focused on the emotions he wanted to convey in his Thai poem, rather than on Thai language or Thai poetry structure. He had never realized before that writing a Thai poem could help him release his stress and worries. During his reflection on opinion writing experiences, he gained an understanding of writing as a therapy. As he stated in his interview, he felt that writing helped him express his emotions privately. This was the reflection that he understood from responding to Thai writing prompts. Also his understanding of Thai language/culture was reflected.

He then discussed the concept of “fear” in Thai, which he associated with ghost stories. Based on his participation in the study, he realized that the word “fear” in Thai culture was related to ghost stories.

2. In what ways does Ton understand and experience/perceive emotional writing in English as his second language?

Ton’s understanding of emotional writing in English was presented through his acknowledged lack of emotional specificity. In his English poem, he felt that he could not deliver the emotion he wanted to. Unlike his Thai poem, he could not present the specific aspects of love that he wanted to express in English. However, he was able to focus on expressing fear when he wrote his English narrative. His understanding of expressing emotion in his writing was developed through his reflection of the definition of “fear” in English. He was also more focused when he responded to an English opinion writing prompt. He was more specific in choosing both the event and word choices in his English written response. In his interview, he pointed out the reason why he expressed anger in his English written response; he stated, “it felt like it had emphasis such as ‘they lied,’ so [he] was angry.”

3. Are there differences in Ton’s understanding of emotional writing in Thai and in English?

The difference in Ton’s understanding of emotional writing in Thai and in English is in the cultural representation of emotions. In Thai, Ton presented his understanding of expressing emotions through his lens of Thai culture. In his Thai poem, he expressed specific emotions to his parents, his significant other, and

himself. While in English, he felt that he was not able to express his emotion because he had limited cultural background in presenting emotion; therefore, he “imitated” his English poem from a poem he read in Reader’s Digest.

In his Thai narrative, he commented on the word “fear” in Thai that he associated with ghost stories. This was the reason why he wrote his Thai narrative on his experience with the *Kuman-Thong* (golden baby). For his English narrative, he felt that his understanding of the term “fear” was broader because he did not associate the term with anything in his Thai culture. Instead, he wrote his English narrative based on a life-threatening experience, rather than a ghost story.

In his Thai opinion writing, he stated in his interview that he “tried to present [him]self in the neutral position, not to the extreme left or right.” He attempted to present his Thai cultural background so that he did not favor one political party over the other. In English, he felt that he was more focused in his emotional writing. This may be attributed to his understanding that writing in English needs to be specific, concise, and to the point.

4. Are there differences in Ton’s understanding of emotional writing in different genres?

Ton’s understanding of emotional writing in different genres can be summarized in the following paragraphs. In poetry writing, his understanding of Thai poetry writing in expressing emotions is evident from his word choices and the specificity of emotions he expressed. In other words, he was more refined in choosing Thai emotive words in his Thai poem. In contrast, he had limited awareness of the conventions of English poetry. He was not sure how emotion

was expressed in English poems. This resulted in his imitation of an English poem he read in a magazine with simple word choices.

For narrative writing, Ton showed his understanding of this genre by using a conversational style of writing. Both in Thai and English narratives, he presented his awareness of the genre by using simple word choices and incorporating conversational conventions into his narratives. Another awareness that he showed in his narrative was the way his narratives unfolded. He set up the scenes for readers, then he started unveiling his stories until he reached the turning point. After that he concluded the stories by presenting the results of his own actions.

Ton's understanding of opinion writing can be discerned from the way he shared his personal experiences and his opinions of Thai politics. When he wrote his responses, he shared his opinions by pointing out specific issues that he thought needed to be discussed. He was also articulate in expressing his emotions in this genre. His choice of emotive words both in Thai and English in his written responses showed his understanding of the genre. Ton's understanding of emotional writing in different genre was insightful. He was aware of each written genre and appropriately responded to them.

### **Nop**

Nop was a sophomore in the Telecommunication Engineering Department. Prior to studying at the university, he had attended K-12 in Bangkok, Thailand. He studied English with both Thai teachers of English for four classes per week and English speaking teachers for one class per week. He likes to work on computer-related projects.

During his free time, he likes to go to computer stores to check out new programs and devices.

### Nop's Poetry

When Nop was asked to respond to a Thai poetry-writing prompt, he wrote it in the style of *Kloong Sii Subhab* (Quatrain verse). This style of verse is considered the earliest form of Thai poetry and was used by highly literate scholars (Gedney, 1989). The style of the *Kloong Sii Subhab* (Quatrain verse) is known to be the “oldest form of [Thai] poetry” (Hudak, 1990, p. 6).

ในคืน พระจันทร์ วันเพ็ญ	เดือนอ้าย
น้องนาง อยู่แห่งใด	ไม่รู้
จันทร์งาม ส่องหล้า	โฉมยง
คืนนี้ คิดถึงเจ้า	จักใคร่ โทรหา

(Nop, Thai poem)

<i>In night moon full</i>	<i>month one</i>
<i>sister beauty be where</i>	<i>not know</i>
<i>moon beautiful shine bright</i>	<i>beauty</i>
<i>tonight missing you</i>	<i>will call</i>

(Nop, Thai poem, my own translation)

He wrote his Thai poem explaining the feeling of longing to see his significant other. The feeling was based on his description of a full moon night, which reminded him about a girl he likes. Nop implied that the beauty of the moon reminded him of his significant other: “*night moon full*” and “*sister beauty be where.*” This is the metaphor that he used in describing the feeling of missing someone. The description of his



significant other also helped readers understand the feeling he wanted to convey in his Thai poem: *nong nang* or “sister beauty,” *chome yhong* or “ beauty.” He also referred to *deune aye* (Month one – January), which could imply that this was at the beginning of this relationship. This could be the reason he thought of his significant other. The Thai emotive word that he used to express his feeling of missing his love is *kid-teung* (to miss). Besides the emotive word he used, he compared the beauty of a night with the full moon to the girl that he likes. When he stated, “*moon beautiful shine bright...beauty*,” he used the moon as a metaphor of his “*beauty*.” The use of moonlight “*shine bright*” helped readers imagine how soft and gentle his emotion was towards his significant other.

After Nop finished responding to the Thai poetry writing prompt, he reflected on his experience as follow:

“It was difficult to write this poem because I did not know where to start. I wrote what I saw in my imagination. I wrote the Thai poem to express the feeling of missing someone.”

(Nop, personal interview, my own translation)

Nop stated that he had some difficulty in composing his Thai poem because he “*did not know where to start*.” In other words, he was not sure what aspects of love he wanted to convey in his Thai poem. In his interview, he did not discuss any Thai language issues when he was asked to compose a Thai poem. He may have felt comfortable and confident in writing his Thai poem to express his emotion. Since he could not think of “where to start,” he used his “*imagination*,” which could be knowledge from his previous Thai classes to help him respond to this written prompt. We can infer that he had experiences with Thai poetry. In other words, he did not feel the pressure in expressing his emotion in

his Thai poem. Thus, he decided that he wanted to express the feeling of “missing someone” in his Thai poem. This could be seen from Thai words that he used in his Thai poem such as *nong nang yhu nai* (Where are my girl?) or *kid-teung* (to miss).

When Nop was asked to respond to an English poetry-writing prompt, he composed two English poems.

After many years, I had left from school.  
I never met her again. What should I do?  
In a early morning I have a phone call.  
I don't know who is calling, and I'm not answer the call.  
My close friend call me after that time.

(Nop, English poem 1)

\*\*\*\*

In a early morning door bell is ring. I open the door  
And found that she is a woman from my office.  
She help me to clean room, cooking, do a housework.  
And then she go shopping, go to the cinema,  
After that I feel love with her.  
After a month I told her that “I love you.”  
She say thank you to me and answer that it's not real  
It's only a show that she have to do.

(Nop, English poem 2)

Nop's first English poem expressed the feeling of missing a call from a friend who attended the same high school. On the second line, he expressed nervousness because he

knew that he would not see her again. He stated, “What should I do?” This second line showed his anxiety: “I never met her again. What should I do?” He felt agitated because he did not know what to do. Someone called him one morning but he did not answer the phone because he did not recognize the number. Afterwards, he discovered that it was his friend who had called. In his first English poem, he expressed the feeling of missing someone, which was somewhat similar to his Thai poem. He employed the moon metaphor when he spoke of missing someone; however, he did not do so in his first English poem. Instead, he simply asked himself what to do. Besides that, the choice of words in the Thai poem was sophisticated, *nong nang* or “sister beauty,” *chome yhong* or “beauty,” while he referred to his significant other in his English poem only once with the word “her.”

In his second English poem, he wrote a short story that a female coworker appeared at his door. She came into his life by helping him with work around the house. Then when he decided to tell her that he loved her; she told him that it was “only a show that she [had] to do.” The feeling of love in the second English poem was developed from every day’s interaction for “a month” of her help to “clean room, cooking, do a housework.” The choices of word used in the second English poem were descriptive such as “clean room, cooking, do a housework...,go shopping, and go to the cinema.” These acts that she did suggested that she also had developed feelings for him. These are acts of caring and dedication that a person would do if he/she were in love with another person. Though the love was true to him, it was not for her. For her, this was just “a show.” In other words, he actually developed feelings for her, but she did not. The word that he

chose, “a show,” gave readers a sense that this was just a mock up scene; there were no emotions involved in this “show.”

When he was asked to reflect on his English writing experience, he explained some background information on his two English poems that he wrote:

“At first I was thinking of the time when I was in high school. I thought if I liked someone and I did not see her for a long time, then she called to say goodbye because she would be gone for good. However, I did not answer the phone. Then I ‘break’ that story because I could not finish it. I started a new poem. The second poem was inspired from a Thai song, *Phae khum wa ruk* by Calories Blah Blah. It was about a TV game show that a girl needed to be good to a guy until the guy said the word ‘love’ to her. After that she would reveal that it was only for a show. For my writing experience, I felt like I needed to go back to practice my English writing. I could not think of words to describe my emotion because of the language barrier.”

(Nop, personal interview, my own translation)

As Nop reflected, English language was the issue that he faced in responding to the English poetry writing prompt. As he stated, he had a limited choice of English words to compose his English poem. Therefore, he needed to “break” or stop writing his first English poem because he could not think of English words to express his emotion. Therefore, emotional writing in English was a challenging task for Nop. He was not confident in his English language; hence, he decided to stop writing his first English poem. Another explanation was that he needed more English emotive words to help him express his emotion in the English language.

His second English poem was “inspired by a Thai song.” The name of the song, *Phae khum wa ruk* (Defeated by the word “love”), suggested the feeling of loss when one is in love. The story that he described in his second English poem was the plotline from the music video. We can interpret from this “inspiration” that emotional writing in his L2 was a daunting task for Nop. He needed to stop writing the first English poem because he did not have the English vocabulary to express his emotion. For his second English poem, he summarized a plot from a Thai song to help him complete the task. In comparison, he had composed his Thai poem with sophisticated format and word choices. His emotion expressed in his Thai poem was also more multifaceted than in his English poems.

### **Nop’s Narratives**

After the poetry writing, Nop wrote a fear narrative in Thai. He wrote about his personal experience of being at school at night. The excerpt provided here was the ending of Nop’s Thai narrative.

ระหว่างเดินไป ทางเดิน ก่อนข้ามมีด เนื่องจาก ไม่ได้เปิดไฟ ผมจึงใช้ ไฟฉาย เปิด  
แล้วเดินไป พอเดินมาถึง สนามหน้า เสาธง ของโรงเรียน มีเสียง สุนัข เห่า หอนมากมาย  
พร้อม บรรยากาศ มีด ค รี ม แต่พอ ถึง ห้องพัก ปรากฏว่า อาจารย์ ไม่อยู่ที่ห้อง  
ผมจึงต้อง เดินกลับ คนเดียว หลังจาก เหตุการณ์ วันนั้น ผม ไม่ค่อยกล้า เดินภายใน  
โรงเรียน เพียงลำพัง ในเวลา กลางคืน อีกต่อไป

(Nop, Thai narrative)

*While I was walking, the walkway was dark because the lights were not turned on. I used my flashlight to lead the way. When I reached the school's assembly area, dogs were barking and howling. The atmosphere was gloomy. However, when I reached the office of my teacher, s/he was not there. I had to walk back by myself. After that day, I did not dare to walk around school by myself at night.*

(Nop, Thai narrative, my own translation)

The feeling of fear that Nop expressed in his Thai narrative was the fear of darkness and of a gloomy atmosphere. His fear of the dark is communicated through his emphasis of the darkness by using words such as “dark,” and “gloomy.” His description of dogs barking and howling also helped in setting up the scene for his narrative. From his description, he expressed his anxiety and his nervousness that he needed to walk in the dark by himself. The howling sound he described captured the feeling of being alert during the walk to his teacher's office. He concluded his Thai narrative by stating that he “*did not dare to walk around school by myself at night.*” The feelings were nervousness and an anxiety of walking alone in the dark.

When he was asked to reflect on his Thai narrative writing experience, he felt that his Thai narrative did not express as much emotion as he wanted to:

“I could express a moderate level of fear in my Thai narrative because the content was not much. I wrote too much background of the story.”

(Nop, personal interview, my own translation)

Nop felt that he wrote too much background of the story to set up the scene of the narrative. The excerpt taken from his Thai narrative was the only content that he mentioned in his interview. He felt that he should have focused his Thai narrative more

on the emotion that he wanted to express. Though he felt that he did not write much of the content, he felt satisfied with his “moderate” expression of fear. This can be noted in the choice of words that described his nervousness in walking in the dark by himself.

However, Thai readers would be able to recognize the emotion he wanted to express from his Thai narrative. His description of howling dogs and the darkness of the hallway were signals that Thai readers would be able to perceive the emotion he experienced in his Thai narrative.

When he was asked to write an English narrative, he translated the same story into the English language:

“When I was study on a 10<sup>th</sup> grade. I was a staff of a Computer Youth Camp at my school. In a late night I have to go to my teacher’s room that far away from my room. Because my school is closed for a month. So it’s have nobody around. I had to walk alone to my teacher’s room. While I walk to teacher’s room I heard a dog start to เฝ้า หอน (bark – howl). In my mind I think if I met my teacher I’d walk back with him. But when I arrive that room, nobody’s there. I have to walk back alone.”

(Nop, English narrative)

In this English narrative, he described the feeling of walking by himself to see his teacher at night. The feeling of fear that Nop expressed from his English narrative was the fear of walking alone at night. His feeling of fear heightened by the sound of a dog barking and howling; therefore, he planned to “walk back with [his teacher].” However, he was disappointed when his teacher was not there. He had to walk back by himself.

For the narrative writing, Nop wrote the same story twice; once in Thai, once in English. The act of translation can be interpreted as an act of insecurity in the expression of emotion through writing. In other words, he felt that he was not prepared to express his emotions in English because he did not know enough vocabulary, especially of emotive words. When he was asked to talk about his narrative writing experiences, he reflected that he preferred English to Thai in terms of content. However, Nop preferred the Thai language when it came to expressing emotion because he liked the choice of words he used in his Thai narrative.

“Expressing emotion in English writing could be better than in Thai in terms of content because the story is more complete, but the wording might not be as good as in a Thai narrative.”

(Nop, personal interview, my own translation)

In this reflection, Nop acknowledged that he wrote the Thai narrative before the English one. When he was asked to write a narrative in English, he decided to rewrite/translate the same story. He added more information to the English narrative because he had a chance to write the same narrative again. This may be the reason for his preference of the English narrative. He felt that the completion of the English narrative helped in the expression of emotion. However, Nop also stated that the choice of words in his Thai narrative helped him better express his emotion. The issue of English vocabulary that he struggled with in the English poem came back in his English narrative writing. This implies that his perceptions of expressing emotion focused on the vocabulary that he used in his written responses.



## Nop's Opinion Pieces

After the narrative writing, Nop came back to respond to opinion writing prompts in Thai and in English. The following excerpt was taken from the third paragraph of Nop's Thai opinion writing because it was based on his personal experience.

เหตุการณ์ ที่ได้สัมผัส โดยตรง คือ การชุมนุม ของกลุ่ม นปช ที่ สี่แยก ราชประสงค์  
เป็นการชุมนุม ที่ เป็ นการ ปิด ถนน สาย หลัก ทางเศรษฐกิจ สาย หิ่ น่ง ของ  
กรุงเทพมหานคร การกระทำ ของผู้ชุมนุม ที่ได้พบเห็น เช่น การขับรถ ฝ่าสัญญาณ  
ไฟจราจร การขีดเขียนผนังต่างๆ ภายหลัง การชุมนุม ยุติลง มีกิจกรรม ที่ทำ  
ความสะอาด ซึ่ง กลุ่ม นปช มาเข้าร่วมด้วย โดยส่วนตัว ไม่ทราบว่า  
เป็นการสร้างภาพ หรือ ต้องการอะไร

(Nop, Thai opinion writing)

*The incident that I experienced myself was the red shirt demonstration (National Democratic Front) at Ratchaprasong intersection. The demonstration blocked one of the major financial roads in Bangkok. Other actions that these demonstrators did were going through red lights and vandalizing walls with spray paint. After the demonstration was over, there was a clean up activity, for which some red shirt demonstrators came to help as well. Personally I was not sure why these people came to help with the cleanup. Was it an act of building image or something?*

(Nop, Thai opinion writing, my own translation)

In this excerpt, Nop expressed his dissatisfaction with the situation that he had experienced. He felt that the actions of the demonstrators, such as *blocking the road, running through red lights, and vandalizing public property, were inappropriate*. Nop mentioned the demonstrators' inappropriate actions because he might have been affected

by these acts himself. His word choice in describing these protests indicated his frustration. He had conflicted feelings when he saw the “*red shirt demonstrators*” help cleaned up the damage they had done. He suspected that their help might be “*an act of building image or something.*” From the last sentence of this excerpt, Nop expressed his frustration toward the situation and questioned the intention of the demonstrators.

When Nop was asked to reflect on his Thai opinion writing, he briefly stated the following statement:

“I write to express my dissatisfaction that the demonstration had affected many factors including the economy, society, and mentality of the Thai people.”

(Nop, personal interview, my own translation)

Nop stated that he wrote to express his dissatisfaction with the demonstration. He was concerned about the demonstration’s impact on Thailand’s economy, society, and population. He wrote in his Thai opinion writing: “*the demonstration blocked one of the major financial roads in Bangkok.*” He repeated this statement in his interview regarding the economic situation. Nop also indicated in his interview that he did not favor the destruction of public property and law violations, stating that “*blocking the road, running through red lights, and vandalizing public properties were inappropriate.*” He expressed his disappointment and frustration with the situation through his Thai opinion writing. The impact of the mentality of the Thai people can be noted in his Thai opinion writing when he referred to the cleanup that was done after the demonstration. His choice of words in his interview when he referred to the “factors including economy, society, and mentality of Thai people” suggested that he did not only think of emotion on a personal

level, but also on a societal level. In other words, the inappropriate acts that he wrote about in his Thai opinion writing affected the emotions of the Thai people as a whole.

After finished his Thai opinion writing, he went on to respond the English opinion writing prompt.

“About 5 years ago. Thailand start having political incidents start with people called “yellow shirts” start to ชุมนุม until they start to closed roads and finally they closed the airport’s runway. After that, it’s began to have people called “Red shirts” start to do the same way like closed roads for an opposite situation. More than that they had burn the building. In my opinion after these situation Thailand’s economy became แย่ลง สภาพสังคม แย่ลง. They should care about another people that have effect with. In my opinion they should step backward to see themselves. It’s better than see each other’s ข้อเสีย.”

(Nop, English opinion writing)

At the beginning of Nop’s opinion writing, he focused more on the history of the situation. He wrote, “*In my opinion after these situation Thailand’s economy became แย่ลง สภาพสังคม แย่ลง [worse, social condition became worse].*” In his expression of emotion, he expressed his opinion that the political unrest activities had destroyed the image and the social condition of Thailand. His word choices echoed his disappointment because he used the word “*worse*” repeatedly. He also wrote that these demonstrators should be more considerate of other people. In other words, these demonstrators should be more mindful to others. His expression of emotion is noticeable in the following statements: “*In my opinion they should step backward to see themselves. It’s better than see each other’s ข้อเสีย [negative aspects].*” The use of “*In my opinion*” suggested that he

personally felt frustrated and wanted to articulate his opinion. The use of “*step backward*” could imply the frustration he felt when he listened to political news. He felt disappointed in these political leaders because they only thought of their own interests and benefits before the society.

After responding to opinion writing in English, Ton reflected on his writing experience.

“In writing to express my emotion [expressing anger in English], it might not be what I wanted because of many factors. I did not know what words to use.

Personally, I felt, like, I let this matter go because many events of unrest happened for the past years. Though I let it go, I still cared.”

(Nop, personal interview, my own translation)

Nop stated that there were “many factors” in his English opinion writing. One of the factors that he pointed out was the choice of word that he used in his English opinion writing. As it could be seen from his English writing, he switched back to the Thai language when he could not come up with English words to use in his written response. This switching of L1 and L2 in his English written response could be seen as the challenge that Nop faced in expressing his emotions in writing. He did not feel confident using his L2 repertoires in expressing his emotion. It could also be inferred that he needed to know more English words to describe his emotion in his English written response. Furthermore, Nop got so fed up with the protests that he felt annoyed and bored. Another explanation could be that he was disheartened to talk about the violent events because he experienced the situations himself. Instead of expressing his anger, he expressed his disappointment toward the political situation, which had impacted

“economic, social, and personal levels” (Nop, personal interview, my own translation). He concluded his interview stating, “Though I let it go, I still cared;” he felt tired of following the news. However, he could not ignore the news about the political situation.

### **Summary of Nop’s Perceptions on Expressing Emotions Through Writing**

Based on four research questions posted for this study, the following section presents Nop’s understandings on emotional writing in Thai and in English in different genres.

1. In what ways does Nop understand and experience/perceive emotional writing in Thai as his first language?

Nop’s understanding in expressing emotions through writing in Thai was through their specificity. The choice of emotive words in his Thai poem was very specific in expressing his emotion that he was “missing someone.” Though he did not write from his personal experience, he was able to express specific feelings in his Thai poem. He used a moon metaphor in his Thai poem to help readers perceive the emotion of “missing someone.”

For his Thai narrative, he felt that the emotion he wanted to express could not be perceived by Thai readers because he had written too much background information. He did not think that the description in his narrative would be able to convey the emotion that he wanted to express. In other words, he felt that he needed to use specific emotive words to express emotion in his written response.

In his opinion writing, he shared an event that he had witnessed. He felt that he was able to express his emotion in his Thai opinion writing because he used a sarcastic tone when he questioned the intention of the protesters.

2. In what ways does Nop understand and experience/perceive emotional writing in English as his second language?

Nop presented his understandings on emotional writing in English through emotive words. After he finished composing his English poem, he mentioned that he needed more English words to help him “describe [his] emotion.” In other words, he felt that to be successful in expressing emotions in English, he needed to use English emotive words. His understanding on the use of English emotive words came back again when he finished responding to English narrative writing prompt. He felt that his Thai narrative expressed emotion better than his English narrative because of the emotive words used in his Thai narrative. For Nop’s English opinion writing, he mentioned that he “did not know what words to use” when he wanted to express his anger. This can be observed in his use of Thai words in his English opinion written response. He felt the need of using exact emotive words to express his emotions in English.

3. Are there differences in Nop’s understanding of emotional writing in Thai and in English?

Nop’s understanding of emotional writing in Thai and in English was relatively similar in that emotive words in Thai and English are important. The difference between expressing emotions in Thai and in English was the level of specificity of emotive words. In Thai, Nop felt that he needed to use specific emotive words to express emotions in his written response. In other words, he felt that his written responses to express emotions would be better if he could use specific emotive words. In English, he felt that he needed to learn more about

English emotive words. In other words, he felt that he did not have the vocabulary to describe his emotions in English. This can be observed in his English written responses and his interviews.

4. Are there differences in Nop's understanding in emotional writing in different genres?

Nop's understanding of emotional writing in different genres varied depending on the genre. In poetry writing, Nop presented his awareness of the poetry genre in Thai, but not in English. He presented his Thai poem following one of the Thai poetry structures. His word choices were appropriate to the poetry genre. He was able to find words that rhymed according to the Thai poetry rhyme scheme. However, he was less aware of English poetry writing genre; thus, he used a story line of a song as a point of reference for him to finish the written task.

From Nop's reflection, he was aware of the narrative writing genre because he mentioned that he provided "too much background information" in his Thai narrative. In other words, he knew that he needed to tell his stories to express his emotions. Instead, he wrote his narratives like a summary of a story. He felt that he should use more emotive words in his Thai and English narratives. Even though he felt that he was not able to express his emotion well in his narratives, the word choices were appropriate for the genre.

For his opinion writing, his awareness of genre was prevalent across all three genres. He employed descriptions of inappropriate actions to help express the emotion in his Thai and English written responses. He shared his personal

experiences as well as his opinions towards the event to express emotions in his writing. His comments were focused on the events and political situations showed his understanding and awareness of this written genre.

### **Mod**

Mod was a sophomore in the English Department, International Program. She attended K-12 education in Bangkok, Thailand. She studied English with both Thai teachers of English and English-speaking teachers. She also had a few opportunities in traveling and attended short English intensive courses abroad in England and the United States. She is in a relationship with a Thai speaker for over 5 years.

### **Mod's Poetry**

When Mod was asked to compose a Thai poem to express love, she composed her poem in the *Kaap Yanii 11* (Thai Verse 11):

พูดถึง รักของฉัน	เราคบกัน มาหลายปี
เราไม่ เคยตบตี	มักจะมี แต่นอนใจ
เรารัก กันมากมาย	แต่ไม่วาย แม้ห่างไกล
เพราะใจ เรายูใกล้	ห่างแค่ไหน เราไม่กลัว

(Mod, Thai poem)

<i>speaking of love of mine</i>	<i>we see each other many year</i>
<i>we never slap hit</i>	<i>yet have but feel slighted</i>
<i>we love together so much</i>	<i>but not end though far away</i>
<i>because heart our is near</i>	<i>how far distance we not fear</i>

(Mod, Thai poem, my own translation)



Mod's Thai poem described the long-term relationship that she and her boyfriend have built together. In doing so, she expressed her concept of love as a romantic love. When she wrote that they never *tob* (slap – the act of hitting heavily with palm or flat objects) or *tee* (hit – the act of hitting by using palm or stick) each other, this meant that the love that they have is built on compromise and the understanding that both of them give to one another. Though they understand each other, the feeling of *noi jai* (slighted) still occurs in their relationship. Because of their long relationship, “*we see each other many year,*” they were not afraid of being away from one another, as she stated on her third line, “*not end though far away.*” The last night of her Thai poem, she stated, “*how far distance we not fear;*” she implied that her love was built on their mutual trust.

When Mod was asked to reflect on her Thai poetry-writing experience, she stated that she felt happy to write this poem:

“When I saw the prompt asking me to express the feeling of love, I thought of everyone that I cared about. However, it was difficult to write about everyone in a poetry format. I chose to write about one person. I felt that I could express my happy feelings.”

(Mod, personal interview, my own translation)

As Mod stated, she had thought of many people when asked to “express the feeling of love.” When she knew that she needed to write in a poetry format, she knew that she could not write about everyone. Therefore, she “chose to write about one person.” More importantly, she reached a point where she could think of one person that is significant for her at the moment. This could mean that she put serious effort into composing her Thai poem. When she wrote about her boyfriend, she stated that she felt “happy” that she

had a chance to express her feelings in poetry. The feeling of happiness could be noticed from the choices of word she used in her Thai poem such as “*love*,” “*we love together so much*.”

After the interview, Mod was asked to compose an English poem. She composed a short poem based on her relationship as well:

My love is deeper than the depth of the ocean.

My love for you is brighter than sunshine.

My love for you is eternal.

Together you and I could light up the world.

(Mod, English poem)

Mod’s English poem was written in free-verse. She used metaphor in her English poem. It may be, because of her background as an English major, that she had some previous exposure to English poems. In terms of expressing her love, she described her relationship with her boyfriend. As she stated, her love is “deeper than the depth of the ocean;” which implies that her relationship with her boyfriend has been built over many years. In other words, the love that she has for her boyfriend is limitless. The second line when she compared her love to the “sunshine” can be connected to a previous interview when she mentioned her feelings of happiness. With her “depth of the ocean” and “sunshine” metaphors, she came to the conclusion that her love for her boyfriend is “eternal.” The last line that she wrote, “Together you and I could light up the world;” this could imply that being in love is not only from one person. It needs two people to build a relationship.

Comparing Mod's Thai and English poems, her Thai poem is more personal and conveys emotion in a meaningful way. She provided more contextual information in her Thai poem than in the English one. Her English poem, in contrast, is generic. She does not give personal information in this poem compared to the Thai one. In other words, her English poem seems more distanced than the Thai poem.

When she reflected on her English poetry-writing experience, she stated that she preferred the English language:

“I felt that using English in expressing this emotion [love] is better because I mainly read English books, listened to English songs. It could be that I liked to listen to English songs more. I knew more English words and understood emotions that the songs tried to convey. Those songs had good and deep meaning. I meant I was more used to the English language.”

(Mod, personal interview, my own translation)

As she stated, “using English in expressing this emotion [love] is better”; Mod felt more competent in expressing the feeling of love in English. She preferred to express her emotions in English because she felt that she had more exposure to English materials including “English books” and “English songs.” She mentioned that she “understood emotions” that were presented in English songs. This could be because she “was more used to the English language.” This helped her feel more confident in her English language proficiency. Because of her educational background, all of her classes use English as a medium of instruction, which means that English is used in classroom lectures and discussions, written assignments, and textbooks. Mod also had a few

opportunities to travel abroad, which may be why she felt she could understand and express her emotions better in English.

### **Mod's Narratives**

When Mod returned to write her Thai narrative, she wrote about a personal experience that she had had with her violin teacher. She had been studying with this violin teacher for ten years. The violin teacher came out to her and told her that she loved her. The excerpt below came from the middle section of the story:

สุดท้าย คุณแม่ ก็จัดการ ยกเลิก การเรียน การสอน ไวโอลิน ในวันเสาร์ และได้สั่ง ให้ฉัน  
บล็อก เบอร์ โทรศัพท์ ของครูคนนี้ เนื่องจาก เธอดู เหมือน คนจิตใจ ไม่ปกติดี หลังจากที่  
คุณแม่คุยกับ ผู้จัดการโรงเรียน และยกเลิก การเรียนไวโอลิน ไป ครูคนนี้ ก็ได้ส่ง ข้อความ  
มาหา คุณแม่ฉัน ถามว่า “คุณแม่ ให้น้องมด เลิกเรียน ไวโอลิน หรือคะ” และได้ส่ง  
อีเมลมาหา อีกสอง ฉบับ เขียนพรวดเพื่อ พรรณาโวหาร ว่า เสียใจ และรัก ฉัน มาก  
ซึ่ง ยิ่งฉัน ได้อ่าน ฉันยิ่งกลัว กลัว ว่าครูคนนี้ จะเป็นพวก โรจิต และอาจจะ ตามมา  
ดักเจอ ฉันที่คอนโดได้ ฉันจึงมี อาการเครียด และกลัว มาเป็นเวลา สัปดาห์ กว่าจะควบคุม  
อารมณ์ ตัวเองได้

(Mod, Thai narrative)

*At last my mother managed to cancel my violin lesson on Saturdays and had told me to block that teacher's telephone number because the teacher seemed like she had mental issues. After my mother had talked to the principal of the music school and had canceled violin lessons with this teacher. The teacher sent my mother a text message asking, "Had you canceled Mod's violin class?" She also sent me two more emails describing how sorry she was and how much she loved me. After reading the emails, I felt afraid even more. I was afraid that this teacher could be*

*a psychopath and could come see me at my condominium. After four days of being stressed out and very afraid, I could control myself again.*

(Mod, Thai opinion writing, my own translation)

Mod expressed a fear of her violin teacher after the teacher confessed having feelings for her. She had been shocked to learn about this because she had never expected to receive such news. She had known the female violin teacher for over ten years and had never suspected that her violin teacher was a lesbian. Mod was afraid of this teacher, stating that she could “*have mental issues*” or was “*a psychopath*.” By suggesting her violin teacher might have “*mental issues*,” these words suggested that she was very concerned about her own safety. She did not feel safe to be around her former violin teacher.

Reading Mod’s Thai narrative, the choice of Thai words that Mod used in expressing her fear is *klua* (fear/afraid of). She used *klua* three times, which suggested the feeling of fear that she had experienced and conveyed in her Thai narrative. The feeling that she expressed in her Thai narrative was a feeling of extreme fear because of the following reasons: her violin teacher had “*mental issues*” which “*stressed [her] out*” for four days. She shared the feeling of fear that her life was not safe because she was afraid that her violin teacher would “*come see [her] at her condominium*.” In other words, Mod felt that her life was threatened by her previous violin teacher. Her description of the event vividly painted a sense of fear in her Thai narrative.

When Mod reflected on responding to the Thai narrative writing prompt, she shared her experience as follows:

“I wrote to express fear. It’s sort of like a bit anxious. I was very paranoid by this incident.”

(Mod, personal interview, my own translation)

As Mod stated in her interview, she was afraid and felt “paranoid” about the situation. Her feeling of extreme fear could be inferred from the word choices in her Thai narrative; i.e., “*afraid*,” “*a psychopath*,” and “*very afraid*.” The words that she used in her Thai narrative were well chosen to express the feeling of fear she had experienced. In addition to fear, she also expressed the anxiety she had felt during the incident through her word choice of “*being stressed out*.”

After the interview, Mod was asked to respond to an English narrative writing prompt. She translated her Thai narrative into English. The following excerpt is from the middle section of her narrative:

“I’d feel insecure and uncomfortable if I went to study with her again. So, I talked to my mom about this and find a way out. My mom cancelled all my lessons and told me to block her phone number so she can’t contact me. Moreover, my violin teacher knew it right after my mom cancelled the violin lesson. She sent message through my mom’s mobile phone asking my mom “Did you cancel Mod’s violin lesson?” I thought she would stop contact me but she did not. She sent me other two emails saying the same old thing which is nonsense. And I think she has mental ill or psychosis. So, I was so scared to go home alone and I was afraid that she would stalking on me because she keeps sending emails, Facebook chat and whatapp.”

(Mod, English narrative)

Mod used her English narrative to express a fear of her violin teacher. Unlike in her Thai narrative, she employed different words to express her fear such as “insecure,” “uncomfortable,” and “scared.” This could be because she knew the nuances between these words to describe her fear. In terms of grammar, she employed conjunctions that helped readers follow her English narrative smoothly.

Reading the excerpt from Mod’s English narrative, the feelings of fear and anxiety are made clear in the last sentence, “I was so scared to go home alone and I was afraid that she would stalking on me because she keeps sending emails, Facebook chat and whatapp.” As a result, Mod did not feel secure to go anywhere by herself. She felt that she had no privacy and was afraid that the teacher would be waiting to see her at her place. Her list of web and software applications also communicated to her readers her fear because she needed to block every communication channel with her former violin teacher.

When she was asked to talk about her English narrative writing experience, she shared her reflection:

“Writing to express my feeling in this English narrative, I felt that it was not 100% because some terms couldn’t be translated into the English language because of its culture, such as “suspect” which was different from one culture to another. I did not use that term; instead, I used “scare” or “afraid.”

(Mod, personal interview, my own translation)

Mod mentioned that she was not sure whether she could express her fear “100%” in the English language. In other words, she implied that she was better able to express her fear in Thai. This was because she was not sure of nuanced meanings of the emotive term,

“suspect,” that she wanted to use. Therefore, she avoided using that term and used different terms such as “scare” or “afraid,” that she felt more comfortable with in her English narrative. Besides the English emotive terms, Mod further shared that writing in English was like telling a story to her friends. “I wrote this English narrative like I told a story to my friends whom I went abroad with” (Mod, personal interview, my own translation). This could be one of the reasons she was careful in choosing English emotive words in writing her English narrative.

### **Mod’s Opinion Pieces**

After the completing narrative writing, Mod came back to write her Thai opinion writing. The following excerpt came from her second paragraph where she addressed the political situation in Thailand:

ระบอบ ประชาธิปไตย ในประเทศไทย ก็ไม่ใช่ ประชาธิปไตย อย่างแท้จริง เพราะผู้นำ  
คอร์รัปชั่น ไม่ว่า ใคร จะ ขึ้น มา เป็น นายกรัฐมนตรี ก็โกงกัน ทั้งนี้ ไม่รู้ว่า  
จะโยนความผิด ไปให้ใคร ผู้คนที่ ไม่พอใจอะไร ก็ออกมา ประท้วง ก่อให้เกิด ความไม่สงบ  
ในกรุงเทพฯ อีกทั้ง ยังส่ง ผลกระทบ ต่อทางด้าน เศรษฐกิจ ของประเทศ อีกด้วย นอกจากนี้  
เรื่องทั้งหมด ที่นำมาออกสื่อ ก็ ไม่รู้ว่า จริงเท็จแค่ไหน ใครที่เป็นผู้บงการ อยู่เบื้องหลัง  
ไม่รู้ว่าสื่อ ได้รับเงิน ใต้โต๊ะ กันมากเท่าใด ประเทศไทย ดูไม่มี ระเบียบ โกงกันเอง  
ไม่รักกัน และแตกความสามัคคี

(Mod, Thai opinion writing)

*The Democracy in Thailand is not a true one because leaders are corrupt. No matter who came to be the prime minister was corrupted. I do not know who to blame. When Thai people did not like anything, they came out to protest and created unrest in Bangkok. These unrest situations also impacted Thailand’s economy. Apart from that, I was not sure whether the news reports were accurate.*



*Who were involved in the background? How much did the media get paid/bribed?*

*Thailand looked unorganized, corrupt, disheartened, and separated/disunited.*

(Mod, Thai opinion writing, my own translation)

Mod expressed her frustration and dissatisfaction with Thai politics in her Thai opinion writing by writing that “*The Democracy in Thailand is not a true one because leaders are corrupt.*” Her frustration was intensified by the corrupt leaders because there was no way to identify “*who was to blame.*” She felt annoyed with protesters who created problems on both societal and national levels, including “*unrest situations*” and “*Thailand’s economy.*” She further questioned the media coverage of this particular issue. She felt disappointed in the reporters because she felt they could be “*bribed.*” Her last sentence, “*Thailand looked unorganized, corrupt, disheartened, and separated/disunited,*” showed how disappointed she was with the political situation in Thailand. She felt that a major change in the political scene had left her dissatisfied with what was going on in Thailand. Looking at her word list, her perception of Thailand used to be the exact opposite. She felt that the belief that society was “*unorganized*” and “*separated/disunited*” came from the unrest and violent situations that were occurring in Bangkok. With the word “*corrupted,*” she could refer to the ex-prime minister who had fled the country and caused all of these events.

When she was asked to share her Thai opinion writing experience, she simply stated the following:

“In terms of writing to express my emotion in this piece, I was not sure what emotion I expressed here. It was like confused and boring. Eh, politics again. Boring.”

(Mod, personal interview, my own translation)

Mod was not sure whether she could express her emotion well in her Thai opinion writing because she was “*bored*” and “*confused*” with the discussion of politics. As Mod stated, she felt “bored” with the political issues in Thailand. This is evident in her Thai opinion writing where she wrote that she felt disheartened with the role of Thailand’s prime ministers. In other words, she had no trust in Thailand’s politicians. Her use of the interjection, “*Eh*,” signified that she was bored when she talked about politics.

When the interview was finished, she was asked to write an English opinion writing response. The following excerpt came from her middle section of the second paragraph where she started to share her personal opinion on the situation:

“...This situation have many affect on business sector and Thailand’s economy.

At first, I was so frustrated about the protest because I can’t go hang out with my friends or do other activities. However, I got to read some messages which not so many people know the story behind the scene. I felt the things that I saw and knew, it might be real and it might not be able to trust the news from medias. I felt that there might have someone who play all these games and cause lots of problems behind this turmoil.”

(Mod, English opinion writing)

Mod approached her English opinion writing from her personal perspective. Her use of “*I*” and her experiences suggested that she expressed her frustration at a personal level.

She felt “frustrated” with the political situation in Thailand because she could not “go hang out with my friends or do other activities.” In other words, she felt bored with the situation because the protests disrupted her “activities.” This may explain the boredom that she mentioned in the earlier interview when she was prompted to talk about politics. She also felt frustrated by the media that they should not take sides when it came to reporting political news. She stated that she could not “trust the news from medias.” The reason Mod was unable to trust the media in their news reports was because she received “messages that not so many people know the story behind the scene.” She felt disappointed in the media industry because the media became puppets for “someone who play all these games and cause lots of problems behind this turmoil.”

After Mod finished responding to the English opinion writing prompt, she shared her experience as follow:

“I wrote about Thai politics to express my complaint and my dissatisfaction. I could express my emotion moderately in English. When I wrote while I was angry, writing in my mother tongue was more satisfying. I felt that I could express it faster and easier.”

(Mod, personal interview, my own translation)

Mod stated that she preferred to express her anger in the Thai language because she reflected that she was only “moderately” able to express her intended emotions in English in response to the opinion-writing prompt. In other words, she felt that she could express her “complaints and dissatisfaction” better in Thai, most likely because she felt personally connected to the Thai language. She further stated that if she was “angry,” it was “more satisfying” to express the emotion in Thai because it is her first language. This

is common among L2 learners that expressing anger was more satisfying in the L1 when compared to L2 (Dewaele, 2004). However, her approach to the English opinion writing prompt was opposite to her Thai one because she wrote it from a personal viewpoint. She shared her personal stories and experiences, which she did not do in the Thai opinion writing. She felt “bored” with Thai politics; therefore, she expressed anger in her written responses both in Thai and in English.

### **Summary of Mod’s Perceptions of Expressing Emotions Through Writing**

The following section summarizes Mod’s understandings of emotional writing in Thai and in English based on four research questions posted in this study.

1. In what ways does Mod understand and experience/perceive emotional writing in Thai as her first language?

Mod demonstrated her understanding of emotional writing in Thai through her contextualized/personalized experiences and descriptive word choices. Her understanding can be observed from her reflection after she finished responding to the Thai poetry writing prompt. At first she wanted to write about “everyone that [she] cared about”; however, she chose to write about one person, her significant other. When she wrote her Thai poem, she provided more contextualized information about her relationship when compared to her English poem.

Mod vividly described a personal experience through her Thai narrative. She shared her personal experience with a former violin teacher. She provided contextual information for her Thai readers so that they could sense her emotions from the description she provided.

For Mod's Thai opinion writing, she employed different words to describe the situation. These words, "*unorganized, corrupt, disheartened, and separated/disunited*" helped readers perceive the emotions she wanted to express in her writing. In other words, she presented her understanding of expressing her emotion through specific Thai emotive words.

2. In what ways does Mod understand and experience/perceive emotional writing in English as her second language?

Mod showed an understanding of emotional writing in English through English emotive words and the cultural specificity of English words. Mod's understandings can be observed from her discussion of emotive words when she responded to English prompts. She felt comfortable with English words presented in her English poem; however, she contradicted herself when she discussed some nuanced meanings of "suspect," "scare," and "afraid," when she responded to the English narrative writing prompt. She mentioned that she was not sure how to express her emotions because she had less exposure to English culture and limited cultural understanding of the English language. In other words, she felt that the more she understood the culture, the better she could express emotions in her written responses.

3. Are there differences in Mod's understanding of emotional writing in Thai and in English?

The differences in Mod's understanding of emotional writing in Thai and in English were the issue of cultural specificity and the nuanced definitions of English emotive words. For the cultural specificity, Mod commented on this issue

both in Thai and English. Based on her understanding, the knowledge of the language culture would help her express emotions satisfactorily. She needed to make sure that she conveyed her emotions in a culturally appropriate way. As she demonstrated in her writing and in her reflection, she felt that her emotional written responses would better convey her intended emotions if she understood how English language and its culture.

Another difference was the nuanced definitions of English emotive words. She made several comments during her interview that she was not sure about the definitions of English emotive words in relation to other terms such as “suspect,” “scare,” and “afraid.” She was unsure of the nuanced difference in meanings of these English terms. However, she did not have such problem when she wrote her written responses in Thai. In fact, she stated that she preferred to express her emotions in Thai to English, especially when “[she] was angry.”

4. Are there differences in Mod’s understanding of emotional writing in different genres?

Mod demonstrates an understanding of the differences in expressing emotions in genre writing in English. In poetry writing, Mod showed her understanding of the Thai poetry genre by composing a poem based on the use of specific Thai emotive words. She also made an effort to express her emotion to the one she loved because she was aware that she needed to be concise in poetry writing. In her English poem, she used metaphor to help her express the emotion. By showing an awareness of metaphor, this indicates Mod’s understanding of English poetry writing and how it is used to express emotions.

In her narrative writing, she presented her understanding by retelling her stories with descriptions. She painted her Thai and English narratives, which helped readers of both languages imagine the situations she had been in. She employed punctuation marks to identify a specific text message that she received. Her use of descriptive words both in Thai and English and her strategy in revealing each action step by step showed that she was aware of the conventions of narrative writing.

Mod presented her understanding in opinion writing by sharing her opinions and criticisms on Thai politics both in Thai and English. Though she stated that she was not sure how emotion was expressed in opinion writing, her criticisms and personal viewpoint indicated that she was aware of the opinion-writing genre. She also shared her personal opinions and her first-hand experience in the English written responses, which helped communicate her feelings of frustration with Thai politics.

### **Concluding the Individual's Understanding of Emotional Writing**

To conclude this chapter, the participants' understandings of emotional writing are influenced by the vocabulary as a marking tool; of difficulties in expressing emotions; the distance between emotions and languages based on linguistic expressions in L1 and L2; the cultural specificity of languages; and the therapeutic process through emotionality writing.

### **Vocabulary as a Tool of Marking Emotional Difficulties**

Another emergent category is the use of vocabulary in both L1 and L2 as a marker of expressing emotional difficulties. In this category, L2 learners have

experienced difficulties in choosing the best or appropriate lexical items to express their emotions. L2 learners might have difficulties in come up with their L1 to capture their emotions because their L1 might not have the exact emotive words to express such feelings. They might also have difficulties in choosing L2 lexical items to express their emotions because they might not have enough word choices to choose from. Another possible explanation is that L2 learners might know lexical items in their L2 to express their emotions but cannot translate the terms into their L1.

### **Distance of Emotions and Languages Based on Linguistic Expressions in L1 and L2 (Awareness and Perceptions)**

For L2 learners, the advantage of learning another language is to be able to choose languages to express emotions. When expressing themselves in the L1 is too personal and laden with emotions L2 learners have the option of using another language to express such feelings in a less personal way, detached from their L1. Oftentimes, L2 learners do not have the “best” representation or linguistic repertoires in their L1 to express the emotions they would like to share; they think in their L2 and then do the back translation into their mother tongue. This phenomenon can be explained simply by the fact that L2 learners are explicitly taught emotive words in L2. Therefore, they may be able to name emotions in another language. However, they might not be able to “physically feel” the emotions expressed in L2. In other words, these L2 learners are consciously aware of their ability to express their emotions in their L1 and L2, it depends on their perceptions of being able to use and express emotions between their mother tongue and their L2.



## **Cultural Specificity of Language**

Cultural aspects of language play an important role in expressing emotions in L2. When L2 learners learn another language, they also learn the culture that is attached with it (C. Kramsch, 1998; Claire Kramsch, 2009; E. Ochs, 2002). When L2 learners are asked to express emotions in another language, they have the ability to reflect on their own culture and how they express such emotions in their mother tongue. When they attempt to express emotions in another language, they come to realize that the way emotions are expressed in their mother tongue might not be appropriate or might not be able to capture emotions they want to express. L2 learners will feel ambivalent in expressing their emotions in L2 because their perceptions tell them that expressing emotions in L2 is not exactly similar to expressing emotions in their L1.

## **The Ability of Writing to Enact Emotional Responses for Therapeutic Process**

When L2 learners are asked to express emotions through writing in both L1 and L2, the writing tasks also allow L2 learners to release stressful emotions that they might not be willing to share with others (Anderson & MacCurdy, 2000; Berman, 2001; Bishop, 1993; Bolton, 2004, 2008; Bolton, et al., 2004; Chandler, 2007). In other words, the concept of audience plays an important role in the writing tasks. L2 learners may not want to share these emotional stories with others; however, they might not think that writing could be helpful for them to release such emotions. In a sense, linguistic medium helps release the physical and psychological tensions that L2 learners have. The benefit of expressing emotions through writing in both L1 and L2 can be helpful for therapeutic purposes (Bolton, 2008; DeSalvo, 1999; Dewaele, 2006).

### **Concluding Remark**

This chapter documents the perceptions of the participants' emotionality writing focusing on genre writing and on expressing emotions in L1 and L2. The next chapter presents the conclusion of the study, its contribution to second language writing scholarship, and its ramifications for second language writing pedagogy.

## CHAPTER SIX

### CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to explore an under-researched issue in the field of L2 studies and emotionality writing, namely the perceptions of L2 writers in expressing their emotions through writing in both L1 and L2. To achieve this goal and to present the findings of the current study, this chapter is organized into three sections. The first section addresses the answers to the research questions in this study. The second section discusses the contributions of this study of emotions in relation to the field of composition and second language writing. The last section states the ramifications of emotions in composition and second language writing.

#### **Summary of Research Findings**

The summary of the findings is presented according to the research questions posted in this study. The research questions were as follows:

1. In what ways do undergraduate Thai students understand and experience/perceive emotional writing in Thai as their first language?
2. In what ways do undergraduate Thai students understand and experience/perceive emotional writing in English as their second language?
3. Are there differences in undergraduate Thai students' understanding of emotional writing in Thai and in English?
4. Are there differences in undergraduate Thai students' understanding of emotional writing in different genres?

The participants' perceptions and understanding of their experiences in expressing emotions through writing in their L1 and L2 could be summarized as follows. In general,

expressing emotions through writing in L1 and L2 are valuable for L2 writers by providing opportunities to reflect on their linguistic and cultural backgrounds, gain more understanding about themselves, and express themselves in different genres. That being said, challenges in expressing emotions through writing in different languages include word choice in English writing and cultural understanding. The participants' perceptions of expressing emotions through English writing were affected by their inability to find the exact words to use in expressing their emotions.

Another challenge that the participants faced was the transferability of cultural concepts in their written responses. Cultural understanding, as demonstrated by these participants, is important in expressing emotions in their written responses. Many participants stated that they were not sure how emotions are expressed in English; others stated their concerns whether their Thai cultural concepts would affect their emotional expression for their English-speaking audience. Overall, the participants reported that being able to express their emotions through writing in both languages had been a positive experience.

For the third research question, the participants had differing understanding of expressing emotions in Thai and in English. Overall, most of the participants felt that expressing emotions in English was more challenging than in Thai, and the majority preferred to express their emotions through writing in Thai. Based on the data analysis in chapter 5, the differences in expressing emotions through writing in L1 and L2 are linguistic features (emotive words) and cultural references. The participants perceived emotive words were to be one of the most important aspects of expressing emotions in

their Thai and English written responses. Especially in English, the participants were challenged by a limited vocabulary of emotive terms to express their emotions in writing.

In addition to emotive words, participants were challenged by English language pragmatics because they were not sure of how to use the terms in their written responses. They were uncertain of the meanings of the words or how to use them in different contexts. Lastly, the participants also mentioned cultural references that they could not translate or transfer in their written responses. The participants felt frustrated by a lack of understanding of the cultural terms and were not satisfied with the emotions they expressed in their English written responses.

In response to the fourth research question, chapter 5 addressed the participants' perceptions of written genres in relation to expressing emotions in writing in L1 and L2. All participants demonstrated their awareness of Thai poetry by composing different styles of poems. They also used Thai emotive words in their poems with different levels of sophistication. In terms of English poetry writing, the participants showed a general understanding of English poetry in that it needs to rhyme. Several participants shared their understanding of English poem by referencing the lyrics of English songs.

For narrative writing, the participants felt that they needed to provide background information in order for readers to understand their emotions. They recognized and demonstrated their understanding by providing general statements at the beginning of their narratives. They also used quotation marks to indicate a conversational style of writing. Although some participants wrote in a simplistic format, they expressed concern over the word choices they used in their English narratives, which resulted in an overuse of the same words in their stories.

The participants showed their understanding of the opinion writing genre both in Thai and English by expressing their opinions, stating their political stances, and commenting on audience. The participants expressed their opinions of Thai politics. Some of them employed vulgar terminology to express anger in their written responses. Others stated their preferences in favoring one political party over the other. This showed that they have awareness of the opinion writing genre. Also the issue of audience was mentioned during the interviews by several participants. They were aware that the aim of opinion writing was to share their opinions to others. Some of them reduced their emotional intensity in their written responses by choosing different word choices, depending on the audience.

### **Contribution of Emotions and Writing to Second Language Composition**

As reviewed in chapters one and two, previous studies on emotions and L2 writing focused on analyzing the memoirs of immigrant writers (Schrauf & Durazo-Arvizu, 2006; Schrauf & Rubin, 2004), lexical aspects of narrative writing by L2 writers (Pavlenko, 2006, 2008a; Pavlenko & Driagina, 2007), and L2 poetry writing (Hanauer, 2010, 2012). This study attempts to expand the conversation of emotions and L2 writing to the sense of self-perceptions of expressing emotion through writing in different languages, the use of different genres in emotional writing tasks, and the “meaningful literacy” (Hanauer, 2012) of emotions and writing.

The goal of this qualitative study was to investigate how L2 writers perceive themselves through their expressed emotions in their L1 and L2 writing. Previous studies on emotions and L2 writers were conducted by using quantitative methods to investigate how L2 writers expressed their emotions (Dewaele, 2006, 2010; Pavlenko, 2005, 2006).

This study provided in-depth qualitative research on perspectives of the participants' writing experiences in expressing their emotions in L1 and L2. As discussed in chapter five, emotions played a significant role in the writing process. The complexity of expressing emotions in writing for L2 writers involved not only emotive words, but also due to linguistic and cultural aspects of the languages. When L2 writers were not able to express their emotions, they frequently stated that part of the problem was that they did not have the language to communicate. L2 writers have to negotiate the linguistic/cultural representations in their writing. As this study has shown, the participants' L1 cultural background had an important role in how they presented their emotions in writing. For example, L2 writers needed help in making word choices in their writing, as they stated that they were unsure of the nuanced meanings of the L2 words they wanted to use in their papers.

Based on this study, the cultural norms of how Thai people express emotions through linguistic media played a role in the participants' experiences of emotionality writing. This study also demonstrated that Thai student writers were able to express emotions in different writing genres. In terms of language preferences, the participants also supported prior second language research in that they preferred to express their emotions in their L1 (Dewaele, 2006, 2008, 2010). The current study of emotional writing adds to the richness of the L2 studies by expanding on the field of L2 writing. This study argues that emotional writing is a useful tool for EFL students to reflect on their cultural and linguistic use in their daily lives.

In addition to the cultural and linguistic aspects of writing, genres and emotions also played important roles in L2 writing. Previous studies focused on narrative writing

(Pavlenko, 2007, 2008a; Pavlenko & Driagina, 2007) and poetry writing (Hanauer, 2003, 2010, 2012). This study added another genre, opinion writing, to the scholarly conversation. As shown in the fifth chapter, participants preferred the opinion writing genre to express emotions in their L1 and L2. This suggests that opinion writing is a suitable venue for L2 writers to express emotions. It can also be utilized as a form of argumentative writing in writing classrooms.

Another point to be made is that when L2 writers were asked to write about passionate topics, they shifted their writing focus from grammatical structures to the content level. This demonstrates that when L2 writers are passionate about or emotionally involved in a topic, they are able to express their ideas and opinions well. English teachers in Thailand should take this into consideration, especially those teaching writing (Chamcharatsri, 2010a). Chamcharatsri describes English classrooms in Thailand where the instructional focus is on the grammatical/structural aspect of English language teaching, even in writing classes. This study argues that the shift from a structural to a content aspect of teaching English needs to be made. By asking students to write about topics that they are passionate about, Thai students can implicitly learn how to express their ideas in English. This also leads to their realization of audience in their written responses. They can create arguments based on topics that they are passionate about. In this sense, learning English writing will be more authentic for Thai students.

The last contribution of this study to the field of L2 composition is the use of “meaningful literacy” (Hanauer, 2012) in composition classrooms. As this study has shown, the participants in this study did not run into the problem of writer’s block because they were asked to write about significant experiences. The participants in this



study responded to the written prompts and narrated their stories based on experiences that were meaningful to them, in both their first and second languages. It can thus be argued that emotional written prompts may provide an opportunity for L2 writers to be more reflective in their own experiences. Hanauer (2010, 2012) asserts that the use of creative writing, poetry writing to be more specific, helps L2 writers to be more focused and more reflective on significant language learning experiences; creative writing also allows L2 writers to shift the focus of their writing from structural to content concerns (Chamcharatsri, 2009).

### **Ramifications of Expressing Emotions and Writing in Composition Pedagogy**

Based on the previous research on emotions in relations to the field of composition (Chandler, 2007; Clachar, 1999; Daly & Miller, 1975b; Fox, 1994), poetry in second language writing (Chamcharatsri, 2009, 2010b; Hanauer, 2003, 2004, 2010, 2012), narrative writing with multilingual writers (Pavlenko, 2005, 2007), second language learning (Dewaele, 2004, 2006, 2008, 2010; Dewaele & Pavlenko, 2002; Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2009; Claire Kramsch, 2009), and clinical psychology (Pennebaker, 1990, 1991, 1997; Pennebaker & Beall, 1986; Pennebaker & Chung, 2007), the significance of this study is to add empirical evidence into the fields of composition, applied linguistics, and second language writing as follows:

- Emotions and writing allow L2 writers to explore their sense of self linguistically, culturally, and politically;
- Emotionality writing allows L2 writers to critically examine their cultural understanding of expressing emotions in their L1 and their L2;
- Expressing emotions through writing is context-specific;

- Writing about emotional topics can be used as a tool for teaching the concept of “audience” in writing classrooms;
- With the appropriate emotional writing tasks, the authenticity of language use in L2 writing can be developed.

L2 writers do not have many opportunities to reflect on their language learning experiences. Asking the participants of this study to express their emotions in both their L1 and L2 and different genres allowed them to reflect on their language use linguistically and culturally. In other words, the participants had opportunities to reflect on their linguistic use in different situations across languages. At the same time, they also reflected on their cultural practices in expressing emotions from their own standpoint. In responding to these written tasks, they had the opportunity to learn about themselves on how they used language, either their L1 or L2, to express their emotions through writing.

### **Emotions and Writing in the Future L2 Composition Classroom**

Incorporating emotional writing in curricula, in addition to encouraging reflection on language use, will afford L2 writers the chance to learn more about the cultural differences between their L1 and their L2. By asking L2 writers to respond to similar written prompts in their L1 and their L2, they will be able to perceive the cultural differences in relation to expressing emotions. They will also learn more about cultural terms and concepts that they otherwise take for granted. They will also have a chance to learn about the nuanced definitions of the words they use to express emotions through writing in different contexts. This will be a chance for L2 writers to assess their writing proficiencies and emotive words. This can be used as a self-motivation tool in L2 writing classrooms.

Another aspect of the use of emotions and writing is the specificity of contexts that L2 writers bring to their written responses. The emotions that L2 writers write about are linked to significant personal events and narratives. As a result, they will learn how to use language in context-specific ways that other writing assignments may not encourage. L2 writers will also have a chance to develop their own sense of selves in expressing emotions in their writing responses. These L2 writers may also develop an awareness of the concept of private and public discourses, which may influence the decisions they make in terms of sharing their emotions and stories with others through their writing responses.

When L2 writers learn about private-public discourse, they will also consider their audience. The sense of audience in writing can be a difficult concept to teach in L2 writing classrooms (Casanave, 2004). By asking them write about their emotions, L2 writers will think about their audience in their written responses. Depending on the emotions and events they are asked to write, L2 writers will have a chance to reflect on what events or stories to share and with whom to share them. They will learn that writing is not only for themselves, but also other audience that they may have never considered before, if they were asked to respond to other types of writing prompts in other courses.

When these L2 writers become aware of audience in their writing, the authenticity of language use can be developed. Introducing authenticity in L2 writing classrooms through appropriate prompts is useful for L2 writers to meaningfully express their thoughts and ideas. Appropriate prompts can be developed in response to any broad topics related to L2 writers' meaningful experiences. When L2 writers are introduced to

appropriate written prompts, they will shift the focus of their writing from an act of structural practice to one of purposeful written communication.

### **Future Research Agenda**

As stated in chapter four, this study was conducted with a qualitative framework to study participants' perceptions of their experience in expressing emotions and writing through different genres in their L1 and their L2. One of the concerns of conducting this study is the focus on one language population. One possible avenue for future research is to collect data from diverse student populations in different languages. A few questions that may guide data collection involving a diverse student population are:

- (1) In what ways do diverse student populations perceive/experience the emotional writing in their L1?
- (2) In what ways do diverse student populations perceive/experience the emotional writing in their L2?
- (3) Are there any differences in expressing emotions through writing in their L1 and L2?

Another possible approach for future research is at the methodology level. The study may use the quantitative research design, such as a self-perception survey. The current empirical study employed phenomenological qualitative methods to gain a better understanding of the perceptions of L2 writers in expressing their emotions through writing. By employing a large-scale quantitative study design, the result of this current study can be theorized in the field of second language composition.

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## Appendix A

### Informed Consent Form

#### เอกสารประกอบการตัดสินใจในการเข้าร่วมงานวิจัย

You are invited to participate in this research study, Emotionality in Thai and English. The following information is provided in order to help you to make an informed decision whether or not to participate. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to ask. You are eligible to participate because you are a Thai students studying at Bangkok University.

ขอความร่วมมือเกี่ยวกับงานวิจัยเรื่อง การแสดงอารมณ์ผ่านการเขียนในภาษาไทยและภาษาอังกฤษ กรุณาอ่านข้อมูลต่อไปเพื่อการตัดสินใจในการเข้าร่วมงานวิจัยนี้

The purpose of this study is to investigate the perception of second language users in expressing their emotions in another language. Participation or non-participation will not effect the evaluation of your performance in this class. Participation in this study will require participating in writing 6 written responses (3 in Thai and 3 in English) and brief interviews after each written response. Each meeting will be approximately 2-3 hours. The procedures for each meeting are 1) you will respond to a Thai written response, 2) brief interview. After that 3) you will respond to another writing prompt in English followed by 4) another brief interview. Finally, you will be asked to 5) hold a post-writing interview relating to your experience in this research.

จุดประสงค์ของงานวิจัย

งานวิจัยนี้ต้องการศึกษาเจตคติของผู้เรียนไทยที่เรียนภาษาอังกฤษเป็นภาษาที่สองในการแสดงอารมณ์ผ่านทางงานเขียน

ขั้นตอนของการเก็บข้อมูล ผู้เข้าร่วมงานวิจัยจะพบกับผู้วิจัยเป็นจำนวน ๓ ครั้ง

ในแต่ละครั้งจะใช้เวลาประมาณ ๒-๓ ชั่วโมง ผู้เข้าร่วมจะต้องทำตามขั้นตอนดังต่อไปนี้

๑) ผู้วิจัยจะให้เอกสารคำถามภาษาไทยแก่ผู้เข้าร่วมงานวิจัยเขียน

๒) หลังจากเขียนเสร็จเรียบร้อยแล้ว ผู้วิจัยจะสัมภาษณ์ผู้เข้าร่วมงานวิจัย เกี่ยวกับประสบการณ์

การเขียนแสดงอารมณ์ โดยใช้ภาษาไทย

๓) ผู้วิจัยจะให้เอกสาร คำถามภาษาอังกฤษแก่ผู้เข้าร่วมงานวิจัยเขียน

๔) หลังจากเขียนเสร็จเรียบร้อยแล้ว

ผู้วิจัยจะสัมภาษณ์ผู้เข้าร่วมงานวิจัยเกี่ยวกับประสบการณ์การเขียนแสดงอารมณ์ โดยใช้ภาษาอังกฤษ

๕) หลังจากพบกับผู้วิจัยครบทั้ง ๓ ครั้งแล้ว

จะมีการสัมภาษณ์ครั้งสุดท้ายเกี่ยวกับประสบการณ์ในการเข้าร่วมงานวิจัยนี้

As for the compensation of your valuable time, I will provide five one-to-one writing lessons with you. Each lesson will last for an hour. The lesson time will be according to your own convenience.

เพื่อเป็นการตอบแทนในการเข้าร่วมงานวิจัยนี้ ผู้วิจัยจะสอนการเขียนภาษาอังกฤษตัวต่อตัวเป็นจำนวน ๕ บทเรียน ในแต่ละบทเรียนจะใช้เวลาประมาณ ๑ ชั่วโมง

Your participation in this study is **voluntary**. You are free to decide not to participate in this study or to withdraw at any time without adversely affecting your relationship with the investigator and without fear of having your information/identity revealed. If you choose to participate, you may withdraw at any time by notifying the Project Director, Pisarn Bee Chamcharatsri at [MTKN@iup.com](mailto:MTKN@iup.com) or the Dissertation Advisor, Dr. David I. Hanauer at [hanauer@iup.edu](mailto:hanauer@iup.edu). Upon your request to withdraw, you may also request to have all information pertaining to you destroyed. If you choose to participate, all information will be held in strict confidence and no attempt to reveal your responses and identity to others will be made. The information obtained in the study will be published in either an academic journal or a book, or presented at scholarly meetings but your identity will be kept strictly confidential and only available to Pisarn Bee Chamcharatsri. Finally, I will not store, either electrically or in print, documents with your name on them.

การเข้าร่วมงานวิจัยนี้เป็น**การเข้าร่วมมือแบบสมัครใจ** หากผู้เข้าร่วมวิจัยต้องการถอนตัวออกจากงานวิจัย กรุณาติดต่อ ผู้วิจัย (ปี) ทางจดหมายอิเล็กทรอนิกส์ [MTKN@iup.edu](mailto:MTKN@iup.edu) ในการเข้าร่วมงานวิจัย ผู้วิจัยจะเก็บชื่อและ ข้อมูลส่วนตัวของผู้เข้าร่วมงานวิจัยเป็นความลับ ในการถอนตัวนั้น ผู้วิจัยจะทำลายเอกสารงานเขียนและบทสัมภาษณ์

You will receive two copies of this form. If you are willing to participate in this study, please sign the statement below and deposit in the designated envelope. Keep another copy to yourself. If you choose not to participate, deposit the unsigned copies in the designated envelope.

ท่านจะได้รับเอกสารสองฉบับ ถ้าต้องการแสดงความสมัครใจในการเข้าร่วมงานวิจัย กรุณาลงนามในเอกสารหน้าต่อไป แล้วนำเอกสารหนึ่งฉบับไปใส่ในซองที่จัดไว้ หากท่านไม่สนใจในการเข้าร่วมงานวิจัย กรุณานำเอกสารหนึ่งฉบับไปใส่ในซองที่จัดไว้ แล้วเก็บเอกสารอีกฉบับไว้กับตนเอง

If the research is a student project, please include identical information for the researcher and the Faculty Sponsor. The student researcher should identify him/herself as a student of Indiana University of Pennsylvania.

Project Director:  
Mr. Pisarn Bee Chamcharatsri  
PhD Candidate  
English Department  
110 Leonard Hall  
Indiana, PA 15705  
Phone: (662) 706-6048 (Thailand)  
+1 (724) 840-1571 (US)  
Email: [MTKN@iup.edu](mailto:MTKN@iup.edu)

Dissertation Advisor:  
Dr. David I. Hanauer  
Professor of English, IUP  
Email: [hanauer@iup.edu](mailto:hanauer@iup.edu)  
Phone: (+1) 724-357-2274  
Office: 215D Leonard Hall, 421 North  
Walk  
Indiana, PA, 15705, USA

This project has been approved by the Indiana University of Pennsylvania Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects (Phone: 724/357-7730).

Informed Consent Form (continued)

**VOLUNTARY CONSENT FORM:**

เอกสารแสดงความสมัครใจในการเข้าร่วมงานวิจัย

**I have read and understand the information on the form and I consent to volunteer to be a subject in this study. I understand that my responses are completely confidential and that I have the right to withdraw at any time. I have received an unsigned copy of this informed Consent Form to keep in my possession.**

ผม/ดิฉันได้อ่านและได้รับข้อมูลเพียงพอกับการตัดสินใจเข้าร่วมงานวิจัยนี้

ชื่อ (ตัวบรรจง) \_\_\_\_\_

Name (PLEASE PRINT)

ลงนามผู้เข้าร่วมวิจัย \_\_\_\_\_

Signature

วันที่ \_\_\_\_\_

Date

เบอร์โทรศัพท์ติดต่อ หรือสถานที่ติดต่อ \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number or location where you can be reached

วันและเวลาที่สะดวกในการติดต่อ \_\_\_\_\_

Best days and times to reach you

I certify that I have explained to the above individual the nature and purpose, the potential benefits, and possible risks associated with participating in this research study, have answered any questions that have been raised, and have witnessed the above signature.

ผู้วิจัยได้รับข้อมูลและได้ตอบคำถามเกี่ยวกับจุดประสงค์ ผลประโยชน์  
และความเสี่ยงของการเข้าร่วมงานวิจัยนี้

วันที่ \_\_\_\_\_

Date

ลงนามผู้วิจัย

Investigator's Signature

## Appendix B

### Written Prompt 1.1

#### Poetry Writing Prompt in Thai

กรุณาเขียนบทกวีไทยแสดงความรัก ภายในเวลา ๑ ชั่วโมง



## Appendix C

### Written Prompt 1.2

#### Poetry Writing Prompt in English

Please compose a poem expressing your love in English in one hour.

## Appendix D

### Written Prompt 2.1

#### Narrative Writing Prompt in Thai

กรุณาเขียนเรียงความเกี่ยวกับเหตุการณ์ที่น่ากลัวที่เคยประสบ หรือเห็นด้วยตนเองประมาณ ๑ ถึง ๒ หน้า

ภายใน ๑ ชั่วโมง

## Appendix E

### Written Prompt 2.2

#### Narrative Writing Prompt in English

Please write a one-two page about your (most) fearful events that you have experienced or witnessed in English in one hour.

## Appendix F

### Written Prompt 3.1

#### Opinionated Writing Prompt in Thai

กรุณาเขียนเรียงความแสดงความโกรธหรือความไม่พอใจ เกี่ยวกับเหตุการณ์การเมือง ความยาวประมาณ ๑

ถึง ๒ หน้า ภายในเวลา ๑ ชั่วโมง

## Appendix G

### Written Prompt 3.2

#### Narrative Written Prompt in English

Please write a one-two page expressing your anger toward the political events in the form of opinion piece in English. You are given one hour to write this piece.

## Appendix H

### Interview questions after responding to Thai written prompts

- Could you tell me about your poem/narrative story/opinion piece?
- กรุณาพูดถึงบทกวี หรือ บทร้อยแก้ว ที่เพิ่งเขียนไปเล็กน้อย
- What are emotions that you try to do in this piece?
- งานที่เขียนไปนั้น คุณพยายามที่จะสื่ออารมณ์อะไร

## Appendix H

### Interview questions after responding to English written prompts

- Do you think you convey emotion successfully?
- คุณคิดว่าคุณสื่ออารมณ์ผ่านทางการเขียนได้อย่างที่ตั้งใจไว้หรือไม่
- What are the challenges you face in emotional writing?
- คุณประสบอุปสรรคอะไรในการเขียนสื่ออารมณ์
- What is the experience of writing emotionally?
- กรุณาเล่าถึงประสบการณ์ในการเขียนแสดงอารมณ์โดยรวม

## Appendix I

### Post-Writing Interview

- Reflect on poems/narrative stories/opinion pieces in Thai and English, do you think there are differences in expressing emotions in Thai and English?

- กรุณานึกย้อนกลับไปถึงงานเขียนทั้ง ๓ ชิ้นที่เป็นทั้งภาษาไทยและภาษาอังกฤษ

คุณคิดว่าภาษาที่ใช้มีความแตกต่างในการแสดงอารมณ์หรือไม่

- Think back over the 3 texts you wrote, what is the difference between writing these 3 genres and how good are they in expressing emotions?

- กรุณานึกย้อนกลับไปถึงงานเขียนทั้ง ๓ งาน คุณคิดว่าการเขียนแบบไหนที่แสดงอารมณ์ได้ดีที่สุด

และงานเขียนทั้ง ๓ แบบ มีความแตกต่างอย่างไร