UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHAMPTON

FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

English as a Lingua Franca for Online Intercultural Communication among Thai International Students in the UK

by

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ABSTRACT

FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

Doctor of Philosophy

ENGLISH AS A LINGUA FRANCA FOR ONLINE INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION AMONG THAI INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS IN THE UK

By Chittima Sangiamchit

The use of English as the language of online intercultural communication among users of different first languages and cultures is an established phenomenon. However, there has been little research into the extensive use of English as a lingua franca (ELF) in more recent developments such as online and social network sites (SNSs) in particular. With regard to the myriad of linguistic and cultural resources that ELF users have brought into their online intercultural communication and the multimodality of online mediums, this thesis is concerned with complexity in the use of English for online intercultural communication. This thesis aims to explicate the roles of cultures and essential intercultural communicative competence (ICC) for successful online intercultural communication. It also investigates the perceptions of online English users towards English in the dynamic, fluid and emergent field of online intercultural communication.

This thesis is predominantly qualitative in order to probe the investigated phenomenon. The fieldwork took place over eight months at the selected UK university and also on Facebook, as this was the most popular SNS among the research participants. The participants in this thesis are Thai international students living and studying in the UK. Five of them formed the core of this study, as they were English users who had experienced using English online with people with different first languages and cultures.

Drawing data from multi-research methods (online questionnaires, observation of online conversations, interviews and a focus group), the findings of this thesis demonstrate that communicative meanings are not represented and constructed only through languages but also with the support of the multimodal features of the online medium. The findings further suggest that the participants contain

different levels of intercultural awareness in online intercultural communication through ELF and, as such, cultures and English language in this context are dynamic, fluid and emergent in each instance of online intercultural communication. Further, English language and cultures are not tied to native English norms for the former or nation based cultures for the latter; rather there are variations of English use online and cultures through English language are shuttled around within individual, local, national and global frames of reference. As a result, the role of intercultural communicative competence (ICC) has become clear in terms of its manipulation and negotiation of communicative meanings for successful online intercultural communication. The essential ICCs needed for communicating with multilingual and multicultural users successfully are knowledge, skills of interpreting and relating, skills of discovery and interaction, critical cultural awareness, attitudes and multimodal symbolism. Online intercultural communicative competence provides the knowledge for online English users to be aware of English variations and help them to improve their ability to communicate in English efficiently in a real world and currently popular context.

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DECLARATION OF AUTHORSHIP

I, CHITTIMA SANGIAMCHIT,

declare that the thesis entitled

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and the work presented in the thesis are both my own, and have been generated by me as the result of my own original research. I confirm that:

- this work was done wholly or mainly while in candidature for a research degree at this University;
- where any part of this thesis has previously been submitted for a degree or any other qualification at this University or any other institution, this has been clearly stated;
- where I have consulted the published work of others, this is always clearly attributed;
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- where the thesis is based on work done by myself jointly with others, I have made clear exactly what was done by others and what I have contributed myself;
- none of this work has been published before submission;

Signed:.....

Date:.....

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Abbreviations used

AmEng	American English
ARPANET	The Advanced Research Projects Agency Network
ASEAN	The Association of Southeast Asian Nations
BBS	Bulletin Board System
BrEng	British English
CGE	Centre for Global Englishes
CMC	Computer-Mediated Communication
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
EIL	English as an International Language
ELF	English as a Lingua Franca
ELFA	The corpus of English as a Lingua Franca in Academic Settings
ELT	English Language Teaching
EMIC	Electronically Mediated Intercultural Communication
ENL	English as a Native Language
ERGO	Ethics and Research Governance Office
ESL	English as a Second Language
ICC	Intercultural Communicative Competence
ICTs	Information and Communication Technologies
IELTS	The International English Language Testing System
IM	Instant Messaging
IMPs	Interactive Multimodal Platforms
IRC	Internet Relay Chat
ISC	The International School Consultancy

MCA	Membership Categorization Analysis
NESs	Native English speakers
NNESs	Non-Native English Speakers
NSE	Native Standard English
PCs	Personal Computers
POV	The Point of View
SNSs	Social Network Sites
StE	Standard English
TAT	The Tourism Authority of Thailand
TOELF	The Test of English as a Foreign Language
VOICE	The Vienna Oxford International Corpus of English
VoIP	Voice-over-Internet Protocol
WEs	World Englishes

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Background of the study

The rapid advancement of electronic communication technology has brought about the acceleration of globalisation in the world. Jenks (2013) highlights the fact that societies are now more mobile and interconnected than ever before because of technological advancements and the growth in online media consumption. People around the world are able to communicate across time and space without the limitations of geographical borders via wireless computers, mobile phones or other electronic tools, such as tablets on various optional online channels. The Internet is thus now commonplace, and indeed necessary, for people who either want to communicate with others for different purposes but are restricted by time and space, or 'get on in the world' beyond traditional community boundaries (Seidlhofer, 2011). It intertwines with social interaction across great geographical distances (Jenks *et al.*, 2013). Today, communication, therefore, can no longer be considered mainly in terms of face-to-face contact and the online option has become just as meaningful.

The fact that the Internet affords its users an unprecedented level of contact with people with different first languages and other cultures means that it has become a multilingual arena with cultural diversity. The Internet can then be considered as a medium of intercultural communication which fosters intercultural exchanges in foreign languages (Marcoccia, 2012). The way in which people from different linguacultural backgrounds use English for intercultural communication online has revolutionised the Internet, turning it into a broad multilingual arena where English has contacted with a myriad of local languages and cultures. It thus, moves away from monolingual and monocultural orientations towards multilingual and multicultural orientations. At this point, English is the 'lingua franca' of the Internet (Jenks, 2013;Marcoccia, 2012) and is used to make mutual intelligibility possible among people who do not share the same mother tongue in their intercultural communication (Jenkins *et al.*, 2011;Seidlhofer, 2011).

Considering all this, the nature of language and cultures in online communication is inherently complex as a consequence of technological advancements. Given the theoretical assumption of an inexorable link between language and culture (Whorf, 1939), the use of English globally via online communication technologies

by different linguacultural users is multifaceted, since language and culture move through both local and global arenas, being influenced and changed by both (Pennycook, 2007). The linguistic norms and cultural based frames of reference of native English speakers (hereafter NESs) are no longer tenable. Rather, English users need to be able to make use of linguistic and other communicative resources (e.g. accommodation) in the negotiation of meanings between different cultures in order to cooperate and achieve mutual understanding in communication (Baker, 2011).

The interest of this research, first and foremost, comes from the role of online social network sites (SNSs) in communication of Thai people. Bangkok University's poll reports that Facebook is the most popular SNS among Thais due to its multi friendly features, such as text-based communication, photos and videos (Thairath, 2013). As I, as the researcher, am Thai and have experienced online communication, I have realized that Facebook plays a critical role in people's daily lives and can be seen as another communicative community (apart from face-to-face) for updating lives, sharing information and contacting others, for example. Linking its role to the current status of Thailand as a member of the ASEAN (The Association of Southeast Asian Nations), SNSs should become an important channel of communication among people of ASEAN member countries as it is a recent phenomenon around the world and English is undoubtedly a popular means of communication (see 2.4 for English(es) in Asia). In accordance with the ASEAN Master Plan on ASEAN connectivity (2011), the Internet is important for sharing information through dedicated website(s) about people, culture, history, economy and places of interest of each ASEAN Member State. It also helps to promote greater intra-ASEAN social and cultural interaction between the peoples of the ASEAN. This was another influence on my choice of study. Finally, my experiences as an international student in the UK who uses English both face-to-face and online via SNSs further increase my interest in a study regarding the role of online communication among people in this setting. Even though the UK is a multilingual environment where English is commonly used in daily life both by NESs and non-native English speakers (hereafter NNESs), online communication is another significant channel of contact. While email, for example, is a primary means of communication between two or more people across time and place constraints, Facebook is another optional informal way for friends, colleagues and acquaintances to communicate in this setting. Through these experiences, the reality of people's English use, which differs from the US or UK materials I used for teaching English for communication in Thailand, is

noticed, but I also open up cultural learning and its relationship with multiligual and multicultural online communication. Current trends in online communication have raised concerns about re-examining English language use in the context of the complex nature of multilingualcultural interactions, especially in what way people use English online for being successful in online intercultural communication, how it relates to cultures as well as what they think about their English use for intercultural communication in this technological period.

1.2 Objectives of the study and research questions

Concerning the close connection between language and culture as mentioned earlier, substantial research on English as a lingua franca and intercultural exchanges has resulted in crossover between the two fields. For example, Baker (2011) relates the concept of intercultural awareness to an understanding of intercultural communication through English in global lingua franca settings. Canagarajah (2007) links recent research on lingua franca English (LFE) to language acquisition and raises concerns about revising, reformulating and refining models of acquisition in response to transnational and multilingual communication. Jenks (2013) examines the relevance of social categories to English interactions in chat rooms and to what extent interactancts consider themselves to be lingua franca speakers.

While the emergence of online communication between people around the world is a recent phenomenon, there has been an increasing concern with changes in the nature of communication, both modes and English languages, as a consequence of communicative technologies (Cogo and Dewey, 2012;Seargeant and Tagg, 2011;Seidlhofer, 2011). English has been adopted by people all over the world as a lingua franca means of achieving mutual understanding and this brings into question the complexity in the use of English for online intercultural communication. It forces researchers to reconsider the relationship between language and culture and to move away from language-culture-nation correlations (Baker, 2011) to fluid, emergent and dynamic ones.

In both the areas of ELF and intercultural communication, academic studies have been extensive in various settings but studies of these areas online are still in their infancy. Moreover, where complexity in the use of English for online intercultural communication is concerned, there are, at least until recently, very few empirical investigations and these are restricted to communication between

people with similar first languages and cultures.Seargeant and Tagg (2011), for example, examine the use of English in computer-mediated discourse and analyse the ontology of linguistic practice by drawing upon examples of communication between Thai speakers via SNSs and instant messaging services. In a later study of Seargeant *et al.* (2012), the strategies of language choice of Thai people in a particular SNS, Facebook, are examined along with the motivations that influenced their choice of code, script and register.

Given the vast number of ELF users and the reduced relevance of NESs to their communicative interactions, it is necessary to understand the wider view of intercultural communicative competences (ICC) which goes beyond national and fixed 'target' community to pluralistic communicative practices (Baker, 2011:211). Baker (2011) further explains that intercultural communication can be understood using knowledge, skills and attitudes towards communication. Therefore, this research aims to investigate the complexity of English language and cultures in online intercultural communication, considering the real use of English today via online communicative channels and its relationship with intercultural competence. Taking into account the fact that investigations of ELF in Thailand as an 'expanding circle' country (Kachru, 1992) have involved little empirical research, this study focuses on a group of Thai first language speakers who are experienced in using English in a global online context with others with different first languages and cultures. The objectives of this study are as follows:

1. To investigate the cultural representation and construction of Thai international students in the UK through their English online intercultural communication with people from different languages and cultural backgrounds.
2. To consider the intercultural communicative competences (ICCs) needed for online intercultural communication.
3. To investigate the perceptions of Thai international students in the UK regarding English in their online intercultural communication.

These objectives are formulated into the three main research questions and the sub-questions presented below.

1. What is the role of culture(s) in intercultural communication for online English users?

a. In what way do Thai international students in the UK represent and construct cultures through their online English intercultural communication?

b. How do cultures influence Thai international students' online communication in English?

2. What intercultural communicative competences do the participants apply and/or learn for meaningful and satisfactory online intercultural communication?

3. What are the perceptions of Thai international students in the UK regarding English(es) for online intercultural communication?

The first research question (RQ1) aims to explore the relationship between culture and English language in online intercultural communication contexts. The second research question (RQ2) attempts to find out whether online intercultural communication in English helps participants to develop ICCs and what they learn from it. Finally, the third research question (RQ3) aims to investigate how participants perceive English language and culture(s) in online intercultural communication. The answers to these three main research questions should make clear the significance of culture(s) for online intercultural communication using English(es) and reveal the way that English is currently used as well as how people think about the use of English.

1.3 Structure of the thesis

This thesis consists of ten chapters and these chapters are outlined as below.

Chapter 1 introduces the current situation of English use in this technological age, which inspired the researcher's interest in the use of English for online intercultural communication. It points out why English language and cultures should be correlated for an investigation, leading to the research objectives and questions.

Chapter two aims to provide an overview of the spread of English at a global level, particularly on the Internet. Relevant models of the expansion of English are applied in an attempt to frame its spread and better understand distinctions of English around the world. The issues then link to the discussion of English use globally; English as a lingua franca (ELF) and the characteristics of online English

in relation to ELF. In order to stress the importance of this thesis, research into ELF and the challenges of this are reviewed and interesting gaps in the study of online intercultural communication are noted. Finally, English(es) in Asia and particularly Thailand are investigated.

Chapter three focuses on the characteristics and nature of electronically mediated intercultural communication (EMIC). First it introduces terms relevant to EMIC and then defines what EMIC is for online intercultural communication. The essential characteristics of EMIC and SNSs are then described. Given the multilingual and multicultural nature of online mediums, an emerging term, 'translingual practices', is discussed its relation to this thesis. The use of the phase 'ELF online communities' is also conceived as appropriate to online intercultural communication through ELF.

Chapter four is predominantly concerned with intercultural communication and culture and their characteristics when used online. It also considers how cultures are represented and constructed in online intercultural communication through ELF. The relationship between cultures, languages and ELF is also discussed together with a re-examination of the concept of intercultural communicative competence for ELF communication in online contexts.

Chapter five explains the rationales for the methodological approaches to this study. It is noted that qualitative principles are appropriate for research into the use of English for global intercultural communication. The research setting and site are represented, followed by criteria for recruiting and selecting participants. Next, the researcher's role is discussed in relation to ethical issues and validity in order to make sure that the study is conducted appropriately and detailed data are obtained. The chapter then focuses on procedures and methods of data collection, including the online questionnaires, online observations, semi-structured interviews, and the focus group. Different approaches to data analysis for each data set are also made clear in this chapter.

Chapter six presents the quantitative results from the online questionnaires. The findings inform the selection of participants and the online medium for the fieldwork. The participants' backgrounds, experiences of intercultural interactions online and their perceptions of the use of English for online intercultural communication are also revealed.

Chapter seven presents the qualitative results from the first round of interviews and the focus group. It details the coding categories used for the analysis of each of the two data sets. The data are then interpreted and discussed in general.

Chapter eight again highlights the qualitative results from the two approaches, including online observations and the second round of interviews. Coding and categories relating to these findings are first presented, then the data are interpreted and discussed briefly in terms of the communicative meanings of online conversations based on the participants' explanations from the second round of interviews.

Chapter nine discusses the research findings in depth by correlating results from each method and applying analytical approaches. The discussion reveals several interesting points relevant to the objectives of this thesis and also emerging data. The discussion leads to answers to the thesis research questions.

Chapter ten consists of a summary and conclusion for this thesis. It reviews briefly rationales and motivation for conducting this research, followed by a research methodology. The chapter also summarises the findings of this thesis and the answers to the research questions. Research limitations are further indicated together with the implications and the contributions that the thesis has made to the field.

Chapter 2: Global English(es)

2.1 Introduction

This chapter aims to examine the emergence of English as the pre-eminent world language for online intercultural communication. The chapter commences with a description of the spread of English on a global scale via the Internet and in particular via online SNSs. English as a lingua franca (ELF) is then delineated and discussed and particularly why this term is appropriate to English use in online contexts. Afterwards, the role of English language in Asia and Thailand is discussed including both the uses of English in geographical contexts and in the wider sphere such as online. Theories and paradigms relevant to the study are drawn on to support the discussions.

2.2 English as a global language

This section aims to describe why English has reached the position of a 'global' language that no other language has ever reached in history. The description starts from a vast global scale and narrows down to the context of this study; SNSs. Relevant models of its spread are drawn on to frame how language used has expanded and by whom it is used.

2.2.1 The global spread of English

English language achieved a truly 'global' status in the first decades of the twenty-first century (Crystal, 2012). It is currently used by between 1,500 and 2,000 million people in hundreds of countries (Seargeant, 2012) and the majority of its users are NNESs rather than NESs with a ratio of 4:1 (Crystal, 2012). Crystal (2012) points out that approximately one in three of the world's population is now able to communicate at a useful level of English while its use continues to grow in countries where it is regarded as a second language as a result of higher population growth in these countries than those where it is used as the first language.

There are several plausible explanations for the dispersal of English and these are all relevant to the power of its speakers and can be grouped into two main categories in order to draw a clear picture of the phenomenon. These comprise of

(1) the migration of English speaking people from Great Britain to Australia, North America and New Zealand and (2) a consequence of colonialism together with political, economic, media and communicative technological factors (Crystal, 2012;Jenkins, 2009a;Kachru and Nelson, 2006).

As for the first main category, British people have been migrating to different countries, as mentioned above, from the early 17th century and have developed new mother-tongue varieties of English by altering their English dialects taken from their mainland to be suitable for their new sociolinguistic contexts. American English and Australian English are exemplars of these varieties. The second category relates to the colonisation of Africa and Asia during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. English has become the official language of several countries, for instances, Uganda, Zimbabwe and Nigeria from the former region and India, Singapore, Hong Kong from the latter region and has played an important role in government, education, law, and communication. Despite the fact that the use of English has decreased in some countries, such as Malaysia, as a result of the adoption of the local language, Bahasa Malaysia, it is still regarded as an important language, particularly for international communication (see detailed information in Jenkins (2009a)).

English use is rapidly expanding in the world today, responding to the economic and political power, either past or present, of English speaking nations, especially the United States. It is not only a nativised language that functions institutionally in such colonized countries as Nigeria, India, and Singapore, for examples, but it is also pre-eminent around the world in several domains, such as politics, economics, culture (Hollywood films, pop music, etc.), mass media (BBC and CNN news, advertising, etc.), education, and communication. The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) that comprises ten countries in Southeast Asia, is an obvious example. These ten member countries include Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Brunei, Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar (Burma), and Vietnam. Although this organization has the primary aim of mutual development of the member countries in diverse aspects such as economics, education, international cooperation, and culture, cooperation at international level allows them to enter the world markets where English speaking countries and the United States are in the dominant economic position and accelerates the regional economic growth English(es) in Asia (see detailed discussion about the role of English in Asia in 2.4). Entertainment such as films, music, singing contests and talent shows (e.g. Xfactor, Britain and America's got talent and the

Voice) are clear examples of the influence of English speaking countries on the spread of English, particularly among young generations. Advances in communication technology as a result of technical development in the United States have increased the speed and pervasiveness of English use (Crystal, 2012). The next section presents a discussion of the expansion of English on electronic networks in detail.

2.2.2 The spread of English on the Internet

It is undeniable that advances in communication technology have changed the way that people communicate so that fast communication without geographical borders is possible through electronic networks (see 3.2). Taking into account the fact that people can communicate with each other across the globe anywhere, anytime, it is interesting to consider how much of the world's everyday communication takes place in English on the Internet.

The Internet influences the spread of English around the world (Graddol, 2006). The initial spread of English emanated from the American invention of the Internet known as ARPANET, the Advanced Research Projects Agency network, in the late 1960s for interconnecting important American academic and government institutions and preventing local damage in the event of a major war. At that moment, English was chiefly used when people in other countries began to form links with this network. In the 1980s, the use of English was reinforced when the service was opened up to private and commercial organizations (Crystal, 2012). Since then, English language has been in a pivotal position on the Internet, with most information stored in its retrieval systems in English (Graddol, 1997;Jenkins, 2009a). Certainly, the rapid advancement of the Internet as a communication technology has given fresh impetus to the spread of English alongside political, economic, cultural and media influences in the twenty-first century. The Internet has bolstered not only ubiquity, but also multimodal communication and easy global mobility. Both NESs and NNESs are brought together and have formed interdependent international communication by using a common language; English (Yano, 2009). Therefore, the Internet is as another global community where people can contact each other without geographical borders quickly and conveniently.

For the moment, it is worth considering the figures regarding the use of English language on the Internet in order establish its dominance. According to Web Technology Surveys (W3Techs, 2016), English is mostly used as a content

language by 53.8% of all websites and it is also the most dominant language by about 872.9 million users for online communication as shown in Table 2.1 (Internet World Stats, 2015b). However, the presented figure is still problematic in that it is not clear if it means that English speakers are the largest proportion of Internet users or that English is widely used as the means of communicative exchange between people who do not share the same mother tongue.

Table 2.1 Top ten languages on the Internet, November 2015

Language	**Users (millions)**
English	872.9
Chinese	704.5
Spanish	256.8
Arabic	168.1
Portuguese	131.9
Japanese	114.9
Russia	103.1
Malaysia	98.9
French	97.2
German	83.7
All the rest	734.0

Source: Internet World Stats (2015b)

With regard to the problematic point raised above, it might be worth considering the geographic distribution of Internet users in order to figure out the identity of the majority of Internet users. According to Internet World Stats (2015a), Asia is the region with the most Internet users worldwide (48.2%). Europe has the second highest number of Internet users (18.0%), Latin America/the Caribbean has the third highest number (10.2%), followed by Africa (9.8%), North America (9.3%), the Middle East (3.7%) and Oceania Australia (0.8%). This is in line with Crystal (2006), who notes that the majority of the online population are from countries where

English is not the mother tongue. Therefore, the higher number of NNESs than NESs on the Internet needs no explanation.

Given the evidence that NNESs online are in the majority, there are more non-English sites and more languages coming online, particularly Chinese which is rapidly catching up English with a percentage growth rate three times higher than that of English (Crystal, 2012: 163). As such, other languages are employed as Internet users prefer to use them and this means that English use has been steadily declining (Crystal, 2006, 2012;Graddol, 2006). Even so, English still retains the leading position as a common language when people with different first languages communicate with each other online. Crystal (2012) further adds that although the number of websites in English is declining, website content is of a higher quality if it is produced in English, resulting in a disproportionate number of website hits in English.

As English is employed on a vast global scale by many users, it results in English variation, i.e. it is used in different ways in different contexts. Jenkins (2009b) argues that English departs from traditional English as a native language (ENL) form to become 'English in its new global form'. In the following section, models of the expansion of English are discussed in order to conceptualise the current English language phenomenon. The discussion is supported with some key concepts of different types of English users and their distinctions in order to better understand how English functions in communication among different types of English users or settings.

2.2.3 Models of the expansion of English

Linguistic scholars have proposed different models for the global spread of English and its effects in diverse contexts (albeit not directly in relation to the Internet). In this study, the well-known Kachruvian circles model (1992) is discussed as the starting point for framing an understanding of the spread of English based on its types, pattern of acquisition and functional allocation in diverse cultural contexts (Jenkins, 2009b), followed by Widdowson's model of distribution and spread (2003), as it is relevant to elucidate the global spread of English on the Internet.

2.2.3.1 Kachru's three concentric circle model of world Englishes

Kachru's (1992) three concentric circle model of world Englishes is widely accepted as a model that explains World Englishes. It is often called the 'World

Englishes paradigm' which roughly categorizes Englishes in the world into three concentric circles, comprising of (1) the Inner Circle where English is used as a native language (ENL), for example, in the United Kingdom and the United States and is considered as 'norm-providing', (2) the Outer Circle where English is used as an additional/ second language (ESL), for example in post-colonial countries, such as India, and Nigeria and is considered as 'norm-developing' and (3) the Expanding Circle where English is learnt and used as a foreign language (EFL), for example in, China, Russia, and Thailand and is considered as 'norm dependent'.

Kachru's (1992) model presents pluralistic Englishes. However, it has generated a number of criticisms, particularly regarding the complexity of predominant English use globally as an international language between speakers, known as English as a lingua franca (ELF).

One important critical point is that this model deals primarily with language at national level and legitimizes the language varieties based on English of particular countries, such as Indian English, Singaporean English or Nigerian English and overlooks language variation within other countries or regions. This is what Baker (2009a: 568) calls 'the static nationality-language association of monolithic English'. Jenkins (2009b) also agrees that this model ignores the lingual-cultural diversity of countries in each circle. In practice, the use of English is different due to a number of reasons, such as constant contact with local language(s), culture(s), education and/or, multilingualism (Kachru and Nelson, 2006). People often change English and/or mix it with other languages in an ad hoc manner. More emphasis on geographical regions rather than users of English results in a difficulty in understanding the fluid and diverse nature of English.

Another important critical point is that the model does not capture the overlap of English use as a convenient common means of communication among people across all three concentric circles (Jenkins, 2009b). Linking this criticism to the increasing extent of English use in the studied context; online communication, in which English speakers come into contact with diverse users from other languages and which involves multimodal features such as texts and photos, the neat categories of the model are disrupted. It cannot take adequate account of social differences and also fails to capture the dynamics of such English-speaking communities, for example English users from the Expanding Circle countries who may be bilingual or multilingual users who use English for online international communication with the countries from the other two circles.

Despite the limitations, this model is useful as a short hand for English worldwide (Bruthiaux, 2003: 159) and helps this study to make broad distinctions between English users in different contexts, with the caveats given above. Next, another model of distribution and spread of English (Widdowson, 2003) is discussed as it acknowledges the realities of the spread of English language.

2.2.3.2 Widdowson's notion of distribution and spread

Widdowson (2003) presents ideas relating to the spread of English with native-speaker authority through the 'distribution' of language. Regarding the 'distribution' view, English is an adopted international language but linked to NESs conformity. It is a 'franchise language' through which NESs preserve authority and other users have no right to own or alter the language. This idea shows the 'adoption view' of NESs in which English is distributed in the form of a code system of British English (BrEng) and American English (AmEng). With the extensive use of English for international communication by more NNESs than NESs in a diverse range of global settings, the 'adoption view', however, is becoming untenable because it is increasingly recognised that English is an international language belonging to all who use it (Seidlhofer, 2011).

Nevertheless, Widdowson (2003) also discusses 'the spread of English' along with the former view, which acknowledges the realities of language spread to a greater extent. This idea involves an 'adaptation' of language in different ways for different purposes by multi users (not just NESs) which is more useful for understanding the global spread of English on the Internet.

Therefore, Kachru's three concentric circle model focuses more on the geo-historical spread of English, even if a plurality of English(es) is delineated, whereas Widdowson's notions of distribution and spread relies more on functional language in different contexts.

In conclusion, the models discussed help frame an understanding of the spread of English. Both English use and its users are changing and becoming more widespread as the language is adapted and varied across different contexts and for different communication purposes. Therefore, Widdowson's notion of spread is directly relevant to the current English language uses investigated in this thesis and aids understanding of this new phenomenon.

2.3 English as a lingua franca (ELF) for online intercultural communication

The current use of English for intercultural communication by the majority of NNESs leads to a discussion of relevant concepts of English in this section, in particular English as a lingua franca (ELF). This section starts with a general concept of ELF. Then, the discussion is scaled down to the use of ELF for intercultural communication and in particular, focuses on SNSs. Research into ELF and challenges is presented afterwards.

2.3.1 English as a lingua franca (ELF)

The spread of English worldwide has resulted in several terms to describe emerging Englishes, such as World Englishes (WEs) (which present other distinct terms; ENL, ESL and EFL as previously discussed in 2.2.3.1), English as an International Language (EIL), and English as a Lingua Franca (ELF). Such naming of language obviously indicates a shift in perceptions of the status and validity of different English usage worldwide (Seargeant and Tagg, 2011). In online communication contexts, which inevitably involve multi users across the globe, ELF is the most relevant conception of English and this is clarified below.

Seidlhofer (2011: 7) defines a functional meaning of ELF as "any use of English among speakers of different first languages for whom English is the communicative medium of choice, and often the only option". This definition is in accordance with her earlier definition and the definitions of other scholars (Cogo and Dewey, 2012;Jenkins, 2006a;Seidlhofer, 2005), but she makes clear that ELF includes NESs who, while minority users, also adopt ELF as an additional language for intercultural communication. Jenkins (2006b) extends ELF the definition, noting that it also involves communication in English between users who have different linguacultures. Considering functional ELF, the geographic location is not clear cut in communicative situations, but rather it concerns the different linguistic and cultural backgrounds of English users. As Jenkins (2007: 2) clarifies, "ELF is not limited to members of the expanding circle, and those who also speak English intranationally, whether they come from an inner or outer circle country, are not excluded from ELF communication". English communication between Japanese and Nigerian participants at the international conference in London, for instance, can be described as ELF interaction in this regard.

The functional meaning of ELF as described above generates a question here if EIL can be used as an interchangeable term for ELF. EIL refers to English as a common language in international communication. English is used both in a global sense for international communication between countries and in a local sense as a language of wider communication within multilingual societies (McKay, 2002). Although EIL refers to the use of English in a globalised sense and is not merely limited to localised English, some scholars believe that ELF is a more appropriate term than EIL when English is used for intercultural communication between people from different first language backgrounds across linguacultural boundaries (Jenkins, 2006b, 2007). They argue that the word 'international' is misleading as there is one clearly distinguishable, codified, and unitary variety of international English (Seidlhofer, 2004: 210).Moreover, Jenkins (2006b) supports the view that 'international' English is often used to refer to native English varieties. Very few researchers (e.g. Trudgill and Hannah, 2013) use the phrase 'international English' to describe both native English varieties and non-native varieties and they do not include English use in Expanding Circles. The ambiguity of the term EIL as discussed makes EIL an inappropriate term to describe the current use of English. Therefore, ELF is a preferable term and used in this thesis to investigate the use of English for intercultural communication in an online context.

Seidlhofer (2011) points out that ELF has been used in unprecedented linguistic situations in different domains across regions and continents for international communication, mostly by NNESs. The Internet has rapidly spread the use of ELF since English users are able to communicate online with others across the globe quickly and easily without geographical borders. These people may be bilingual, plurilingual, or multilingual, making this communication setting a multilingual environment. Brumfit (2002) believes that the use of English through such electronic communication technology as the Internet, mobile phones, etc. is potentially independent of the controls offered by traditional educational systems, publishing outlets and radio/television. When they communicate with others who do not share a mother tongue, the norms of such communication are not influenced by NESs. Rather, they may remove their communication from 'monolithic' language norms for orienting towards each other and accept plurality of forms (Baker, 2009b). English therefore, involves a natural process of variation and change.

Even though English is currently used at least as much by its NNESs as by its NESs, there are contradictory issues as a consequence of the spread of English, including a normative impact on the language, conformity to ENL, the question of ownership, and reconsiderations of communicative competence in English (Brumfit, 2001;Jenkins, 2009b;Leung, 2005;Seidlhofer, 2011;Widdowson, 2003). Jenkins (2009a) suggests that native varieties of English are not exclusive models of communication given the sociolinguistic fact that NNESs are the majority of English language users who shape and change the language (Brumfit, 2001). Seidlhofer (2011) also critiques the normative models as untenable in the current phenomenon of English language and believes that they remain an impediment to an understanding of ELF for communication in international contexts. As NNESs adopt ELF for a diverse range of purposes and needs in intercultural communication, they adapt their languages to meet the requirement of participation on an ad hoc basis. Interestingly, it is noted that even within ENL communities there are lots of different varieties of English such as Standard English (StE), American English, Australian English, Northern English (Manchester and Liverpool, for example), Scottish, Irish and so on. NESs should, therefore, no longer be seen as the only owners of the language (Brumfit, 2001).

2.3.2 The use of ELF in globalisation

Given the rapidly evolving nature of communication technology, people across the globe are able to contact each other without geographical borders through web-based network communication, particularly on social network sites or SNSs, such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, WhatsApp, Line and so on (see 3.5 for SNSs in detail). Without doubt, English as an online lingua franca is used as a means of communication between people who do not share the same mother tongues (Seargeant *et al.*, 2012). This section aims to discuss relevant theoretical frameworks of ELF use in globalisation and characteristics of the use of English online in order to conceptualise the current use of English in the global world.

2.3.2.1 Theoretical frameworks of ELF use in globalisation

Held and McGrew (2001: 324) define globalisation as a process (or set of processes) which embodies a transformation in the spatial organisation of social relations and transactions, expressed in transcontinental or interregional flows and networks of activity, interaction and power. It can be linked to a speeding up of global interaction and processes, as the development of worldwide systems of transport and communication increases the velocity of the diffusion of ideas,

goods, information, capital and people. The phenomenon of online lingua franca can be understood from the broader socio-political concept of globalization and its relation to the recent increased use of ELF. It is noted that the flows of capital, goods, people, images and discourses in globalization are driven by media and information and communication technologies which interconnect the world today on the international levels of economy, politics, education, and culture and results in new patterns of global activity, community organization and culture (Appadurai, 1996;Castells, 1996;Dewey and Jenkins, 2010). In addition, English is undoubtedly intrinsically connected or closely tied to these processes of globalization (Blommaert, 2010;Pennycook, 2007;Seidlhofer, 2011).

A general conception of globalisation elaborated by Scholte (2008) is useful for an understanding of ELF use in online contexts. He divides 'globalisation' into five approaches, consisting of 'globalisation as internationalisation'; 'globalisation as liberalisation'; 'globalisation as universalisation'; 'globalisation as westernisation'; and 'globalisation as the spread of transplanetary'. First, 'globalisation as internationalisation' refers to a growth of transactions and interdependence between countries (p.1473). The flow of messages, ideas, investments, money and people between national-state-territorial units exemplifies this approach. Secondly, 'globalisation as liberalisation' emphasizes an open world economy by reducing and/ or removing official restrictions on the movement of resources between countries, such as trade barriers, foreign-exchange restrictions and visa requirements. Third, 'universalisation' is conceived as a process of distributing different objects and experiences to people around the world, assuming a homogeneous pattern. Superheroes, suitcases, business suits and so on are examples of 'globalisation as universalisation'. A fourth conception of globalisation is westernisation which is considered as a particular category of universalisation where social structures of Western modernity influence humanity by destroying pre-existent cultures and local self-determination. This approach of globalisation is interpreted as colonisation, Americanisation and 'westoxification' (p.1477). A fifth conception identifies globalisation as the spread of transplanetary, recently focusing more particularly on the supraterritorial and connections between people. This approach reconceptualises the nature of social space in which people are more able to engage physically, legally, linguistically, culturally and psychologically with each other across the globe.

Among these conceptions of globalisation, the spread of transplanetary (or 'global' and 'transworld' as synonyms) (Scholte, 2008:1478) situates current ELF use in the vast global scale of online contexts. According to this conception, globalisation refers to social links between people occurring anywhere in the world: in a place, a location, a domain and/ or a site. The earth is seen as a single space in this sense and people's interactions can happen not only in local areas, countries and/or regions, but also in transplanetary spaces where territory is not a restriction. The transplanetary conception indicates a dense interconnection which results in a reconfiguration of social geography and shifts patterns of production, interactions, communication and so on. It makes sense of online ELF use through electronic communication in that the Internet has brought people from different first languages and different cultures into borderless contact without time and place constraints. They enter 'ELF online communities' where they bring dissimilar purposes, ideas, interests and so on come into contacts in order to fulfil their desires (see 3.7) while English has become their tool to make sense of their interlocutors who do not share the same mother tongue.

Particularly relevant to English language and culture, globalisation results in a reconsideration of the very substantial role of English and culture in this transplanetary flow and networks of activity, interaction and power. Seidlhofer (2011) chooses 'transformation' as a key word to describe the use of English in the recent age. She claims that globalisation causes rapid change, mainly as a result of the ever-increasing pace of technological developments. Social relations, transactions and networks have become much more extensive and cut across conventional communal boundaries, transforming the original concept of discrete community and English, as both a result and a reinforcement of this process, naturally gets transformed accordingly (Seidlhofer, 2011:83). Blommaert (2010) elucidates language in globalisation through the concept of 'geocultural globalization'. This concept refers to the effect of new communication technologies on sociolinguistic patterns of language in society. He notes that English users from different first languages combine their linguistic resources and skills for collaborating and accomplishing their communication purposes. In this way, new forms of language innovation are generated in their online communication, resulting in emerging new multimodal forms of communication and super-diverse patterns of multilingualism. Taking the notion of 'transcultural flows' proposed by Pennycook (2007), this can be also linked to the use of ELF in online global communities. According to this notion, English is a translocal language which is fluid and moves across contexts. It is bound up with

transcultural flows, so it, similarly to cultures, moves, changes and is reused to fashion new identities in diverse contexts. Therefore, language and cultures do not merely spread particular forms, but rather involve the process of borrowing, blending, remarking and returning to the processes of alternative cultural production (p.6). Hip-hop is a clear case in point, because it is influenced by different languages across many parts of the world and reproduced in multimodal forms according to local identity formation. In other words, the local takes up and reorganizes linguistic and cultural forms. All this inevitably entails the consideration of the way English is used for communication, particularly in online experiences in which people across the globe contact each other interculturally and bring their languages and culture(s) into such communications, resulting in not only orientation to others but also in adaptation and changes to their communicative interactions.

According to Seidlhofer's (2011), Blommaert's (2010) and Pennycook's (2007) arguments above, it is worth considering the nature of English as an online lingua franca, drawing on naturally occurring empirical evidence. Although the dominance of English on the Internet has gained much attention among applied linguistic scholars, few studies have empirically investigated English use on the Internet. The next part presents a discussion of the general characteristics of English use in online intercultural communication.

2.3.2.2 Characteristics of English use in online intercultural communication

Generally, the use of English in online communication varies depending on the medium and the particular situation (Lewin and Donner, 2002). Laamanen (2004) notes that English features vary between particular users and their interlocutors. As text-based form is traditional and the prime site of online communication (Herring, 2010) and also the focus of this study, it is important to review its features in order to make sense of the way people generally use English for communication online.

Gimenez (2000) finds that features of language use in e-mail messages are the same as those in conversational discourse. These features include simple and straightforward syntactic structures, short sentences, abbreviations, contracted forms, informal lexical items, punctuation and capitalization. Nevertheless, it should be noted that such features diverge from standard conventions but are common in personal messages. Other features of communication in email and

other modes of online communication, such as bulletin boards include more than one punctuation mark at the end of the sentence, and run-on sentences which lack full stops at the end of sentences, omission of subjects or verbs in sentences, spellings, acronyms, emoticons and emphasis by capitalization or enclosure by asterisks are also special online usages (Laamanen, 2004;Lewin and Donner, 2002). Lewin and Donner (2002) further note that some characteristics of online communication are oral features, including pause fillers ("Hmmm" and "well") and transcribed sounds, such as "heh" to indicate laughter.

Danet and Herring (2007a) point out that the majority of English online users mix English with other languages. An obvious example can be seen from a recent study of English exchanges between Thai English users via social network sites and instant messaging services (Seargeant and Tagg, 2011). In this study, it is apparent that Thai English users mix their mother tongue with the discourse of another (English) and adapt their linguistic resources by using communication strategies, such as code-mixing to achieve their communicative purposes. Furthermore, they extensively use English-related characters if they wish to write in Thai but the input of Thai script is unavailable. Seargeant *et al.* (2012) conducted another study about English exchanges online between Thai English speakers via the social network site, Facebook. It is interesting that the mixed use of Thai and English discourse is apparent, particularly when people wish to render Thai into English. They employ colloquial words, known as karaoke language (this refers to Thai words in English form) in their ad hoc online communication. Along with the mixed discourse, code-switching within utterances or sentences is also performed in online communication.

Considering these empirical studies about the use of English for online communication, it appears that English has become an intrinsic element of online exchanges, and is incorporated into a wider semiotic mix of communicative practices. Its forms are oriented to an international level by sharing semiotic resources from both English and the first language to establish a translocal community online. In other words, English is not only localized but also emergent in an ad hoc manner in order to achieve the communicative demands of a particular interaction, embedded in a local context. It can, thus, be summarized here that English for online communication is evolving due to emerging communicative genres and the adaptation of communicative practices (Crystal, 2012).

In conclusion, language use online involves different online features, which are quite similar to oral conversation. Given the fact that this communication is traditionally made through texts, some features are employed as replacements for oral sounds and show the users' feelings. However, it should be remembered that electronic communication is fast evolving, so styles of communication still vary and may not be taken as final forms (see 3.3, 3.4 and 3.5.3).

2.3.3 Research into ELF and challenges

The focus now is on how recent research into ELF has responded to the global spread of English online and the challenges that arise therefrom. The way in which language operates in society is examined in ELF research. The number of studies is increasing dramatically at a range of linguistic levels, particularly pronunciation, lexis, lexicogrammar, pragmatic in various domains but most extensively in education and business (Jenkins *et al.*, 2011). However, ELF research in online contexts is still in its infancy, with only a few empirical studies in this area. In addition to those discussed above a number of other key studies are presented here.

Jenks (2013) examines the social categories of speakers of English as an additional language in online voice-based chat rooms. Considering the significant role of communication technology in the current age of globalisation, this paper focuses on what it means to be an English speaker in a globalised world or, in other words, to what extent they consider themselves to be ELF speakers. Two main social categories are examined, which include EFL and ELF. Membership categorization analysis (MCA) is applied to examine how social categories are created as a result of the participants' interactions (the discursive construction of social categories). The MCA methodology is used to analyse social categories constructed in the communication context. This paper obtains data from a large corpus of multi-party voice based chat room interactions (Jenks, 2009). The participants are speakers of English as an additional language who are from many regions, including Korea, Japan, Turkey and Egypt. The results show that the participants construct their social categories during their online interactions by considering whether they are language learners, non-native speakers or foreigners. They do not consider themselves as lingua franca speakers, English speakers or speakers of English as an international language. The paper, however, argues that social categories can be interpreted in many ways according to social relevance and by incorporating research participants in the decision-

making process. The results also represent what happened in a particular context (voice-based chat), and in fact social categories can be different in other contexts and settings, such as written based online communication which involves a variety of English language users.

Ke (2012) discusses online written based ELF intercultural communication among university students of different first languages and cultures. His study is drawn from the findings of his five ELF intercultural projects conducted in 2010 and 2011. The main participants were Taiwanese students who participated in each project with students from other first linguistic and cultural backgrounds, including Turkish, Indonesian, Iranian, and Japanese respectively. Data was collected from students' communication records from emails and forum posts, and their reflections on the experience. The findings in general indicate that students' motivation and attitudes are more significant for their online communication than their English proficiency level. However, a lower English proficiency level still influences some participants in terms of whether they can make themselves understood or express themselves successfully. The results further demonstrate students' use of English, cultural differences, ethnocentrism and stereotypes. The researcher relates what he found in this discussion to English language pedagogy in that ELF should not be overlooked and English language teacher should raise students' cultural awareness and develop their intercultural communicative competence rather than simply emphasising Anglo-American cultures or other national cultures. They should also provide students with opportunities to use English in ELF situations.

In their recent article, Ke and Cahyani (2014) investigate how ELF online communication activities among NNS affect learners' belief of English, including their ideas about and attitudes towards English native speakers, cultures, identity and their relationship with English. Participants in this two-semester study included 58 Taiwanese students and 48 Indonesian students, using ELF. Data were collected, using multi methodological approaches, consisting of questionnaires conducted before and after the experience, students' correspondence records, messages from online exchanges in forums, students' reflections after each semester and students' retrospective interviews. Findings demonstrate that most students pay less attention to traditional native English after using ELF in their written communication. They are more concerned with ELF for successful communication.

Vettorel (2014) investigates to what extent, how and for which functions English is used as a lingua franca via a specific weblog (LiveJournal) by the bloggers and those with whom they interact. LiveJournal was chosen due to its international scope, the age range of its users who are in their twenties and early thirties, and its social networking characteristics. The investigated corpus is taken from fifteen personal journals produced by young Italian adults communicating internationally via LiveJournal. The analysis is based on a qualitative approach and seeks to uncover which linguistic processes and communicative mechanisms create effective communication. The findings show that bloggers deploy different resources in their blog interactions, such as processes of regularization, economy of expression and redundancy reduction, increased explicitness, lexical creativity, the exploitation of plurilingual resources and code-switching/mixing. The participants appear to make effective use of linguistic resources to make communicative meanings, establish relationships, express themselves and interact with others in their blogs.

According to recent research about online intercultural communication through ELF above, it is apparent that this research context has gained increasing interest in response to advanced electronic communication in the age of globalisation. These studies share their main findings in that the participants are more concerned with mutual understanding in communication through English than conformity with NESs and employ different communicative strategies for successful communication. Nevertheless, research into ELF for online intercultural communication is still limited to pedagogical issues (Ke, 2012;Ke and Cahyani, 2014) and empirical data from a specific mode of online communication (Vettorel, 2014). Given the fact that SNSs are the most popular form of electronic communication today, this thesis investigates the use of ELF on these electronic platforms for intercultural communication. The next section discusses English(es) in Asia and Thailand.

2.4 English(es) in Asia

Turning now to a discussion of English in a narrower context, the use of English in Asia, and Thailand in particular, is emphasized in order to contextualise the research and establish the relevance of ELF to Thai English users in online contexts.

2.4.1 Asian English(es)

English has been used in almost every Asian nation for more than 500 years (Moody, 2007) for both intranational and international communication on a global scale and/or between Asian countries. Its history has presented in South, East and South East Asian (Baker, 2015).

English is regarded as an Asian language (Kachru, 2005;McArthur, 2003). The number of English users in Asia is massive and this region contains the largest number of 'consumers' of English in the world (Kachru, 2005;Kirkpatrick, 2007;McArthur, 2003). Although it is difficult to accurately measure the number of English users (with regard, for instance, to levels of proficiency (Baker, 2009b)), there are approximately 812 million people who use English for communication (Bolton, 2008). In particular, the two largest Asian countries, India and China, have a large number of users of English as a result of the growing Indian population and the number of students enrolled on English as a foreign language programmes in China. The number of English speakers in these countries is larger than the total number of English speakers in the USA, the UK and Canada (Kachru, 1998, 2005).

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), in addition, increases the number of English users. This association consists of ten nations (Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam) which purposely mutually cooperate to ensure regional development in a number of respects, for instances, economic growth, societies and cultures in the region, and the promotion of regional peace, stability, active collaboration, mutual assistance and Southeast Asian studies (ASEAN, 2011). As most of these countries have different first languages, English has become a means of mutual communication in this region. In accordance with Deterding and Kirkpatrick (2006) and Kirkpatrick (2003; 2007), English is adopted as the working language of ASEAN and has played different roles in ASEAN nations. Baker (2008) also supports the idea that English has played a crucial role in finance, trade and tourism in this region, particularly after the establishment of this association.

Kirkpatrick (2007) elucidates that the roles of English in Asia differ significantly. In parts of ex-colonized countries, such as India, Singapore and the Philippines, English is used as an official language along with the first languages of these countries. For example, it is one of the four official languages together with

Malay, Mandarin, and Tamil in Singapore and is practically used as a colloquial variety 'Singlish' because of the first language influence (Foley, 2006;Jenkins, 2009b). Therefore, it functions as a 'second first language' (McArthur, 2003) in these countries. However, in other non-colonized Asian countries such as Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos, English is a language of trade and tourism (Kirkpatrick, 2007).

English has become a core subject from primary school in all ASEAN countries, except Indonesia. It is further used as a language for teaching maths and science in some schools in a number of countries, such as Malaysia (Kirkpatrick, 2010; 2011). What is more interesting is that English as a medium of instruction has played a crucial role in this region. The International School Consultancy or ISC (2015) indicates that there has been a dramatic increase in bilingual and English-medium international schools in Asian countries in recent years. Among 21 countries worldwide with over 100 international schools, 11 are in Asia. The UAE leads in the world with 511 international schools, followed by China with 480 while other countries such as India, Pakistan Japan, and Saudi Arabia have over 200 international schools. Other countries in Asia with over 100 international schools include Indonesia (190 schools), Thailand (172 schools), Malaysia (142 schools) Hong Kong (176 schools) and Qatar (152 schools). The main reason for such dramatic growth is parental consideration of international schools as a valuable investment and an important preparation for their childrens' success in higher education and the future.

Regarding the different roles of English in Asia, there are varieties of Asian Englishes, especially in colonised countries, such as Indian English, Singaporean English and Filipino English (Kachru and Nelson, 2006;Kirkpatrick, 2010). English has become a lingua franca for communication in ASEAN countries (Baker, 2009a) and ASEAN + 3 which includes China, Japan and South Korea (Baker, 2015). It functions to fulfill trade and tourism purposes. It is still accepted and used for its use for mutual communication in this region despite the fact that there are other language choices, such as Malay and French for regional communication. The current situation of English use in Southeast Asia illustrates that the use of English involves people from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds. It can, thus, no longer be seen as English for EFL communication, nor can it follow ENL norms, but should rather be seen as a means of mutual communication between ASEAN members, which people orient to each other and adapt as well as adjusting their communication to achieve communicative purposes.

English is also used significantly for online communication among Asians. Gupta (2007) notes that Internet users, particularly those from ex-colonized countries, use English widely for informal communication across ASEAN and the world either at home or overseas. What is interesting is that StE is used in such formal communication as on the government websites of the ASEAN nations; nevertheless it appears to have a density of errors. Given the fact that the region has been developing into internationalization, online communication appears to be an important means of connecting Asia to other countries in terms of educational cooperation, business investment, and international association, for instance. The use of English online is, therefore, as significant as physical communication.

Other languages are also widely distributed on both Asian regional and global levels, including Chinese, Japanese, Hindi-Urdu and Arabic. However, none of these languages have come close to English in terms of its role and the extent of its usage. They have been recently used and learnt as additional languages after English. For example, most students choose to learn English as the first foreign language and Chinese as a second in Thailand. According to Baker (2009b: 15), these languages are used within concentrated geographical areas and are not a pan-Asian language like English. Therefore, English retains the status of the dominant language of the region. Oher languages apart from English are increasingly being used online; however, English is still in the leading position (see 2.2.2) and interestingly, is mixed with other languages, such as Thai (see 2.3.2.2).

2.4.2 English in Thailand

Thailand is known officially as the Kingdom of Thailand and formerly Siam. The country is an independent nation situated in Southeast Asia. The official language is Thai and this is spoken by over eighty percent of the country's sixty-million people. It is used in all official domains in Thailand, including government, education and the media (Studylands, 2015). English is an 'unofficial' or 'de facto' second language of the country (Baker, 2015) and has been used as the first most important foreign language (Wongsothorn *et al.*, 2003).

The history of English in Thailand started in the reign of Rama III (1824-1851) (Baker and Phongpaichit, 2005;Baker, 2012a;Foley, 2005;Wongsothorn *et al.*, 2003) as a response to the increasing power of British colonisation and a force for modernisation. In order to cope with the threat of Western colonisation, King

Rama IV (1851 to 1868) further developed the role of English. He started to learn English and became the first King who could use English for communication with foreigners by himself (Darasawang, 2007). The first English textbook, consisting of elementary lessons, the first workbook, and the first dictionaries both English-Thai and Thai-English were published during his reign (Darasawang, 2007). According to Darasawang (2007), English became the most prestigious foreign language in the reign of King Rama V (1868-1910). Many foreigners visited Thailand and this made King Rama V realise the significance of the English language. He required more Thais to study foreign languages and pursue their education abroad. The Ministry of Education was founded in his reign and more schools for commoners were established. In 1891, Standard English (StE) was included in the curriculum and examinations. It was a six year programme with an emphasis on reading, writing and translation. Between 1910 and 1925 under King Rama VI, a Compulsory Education Act was passed which required all children aged four to eight (grade 1 to grade 4) to attend school. The first university of Thailand was also formed. English was a compulsory subject after grade 4. At that time, English language teaching was based on repetition and grammar translation. A new English syllabus was introduced in secondary schools during the reign of King Rama VII (1925 to 1935), which focused on reading aloud with correct pronunciation and text comprehension, grammar and translation. The study of English was temporarily banned during World War II (1942-1945) when the Japanese occupied the country. After World War II, English became the most important language for international communication and for the first time Thai teachers taught English in order to respond to an increased need for English study.

Foreign institutions provided English language teaching in Thailand in the 1950s. These included, for example, the British Council, the Columbo Plan and the United States Foundation (Darasawang, 2007). In 1996, English became a compulsory subject for all primary schools (Baker, 2015). However, it was not a compulsory subject at secondary level, according to the National Education Act of 1999. Rather it was regarded as the most important elective foreign language and was used in the National University Entrance Examination (Darasawang, 2007). Therefore, students needed to acquire English scores as high as possible in order to gain a place in a higher education institution. The National Education Act of 1999 radically reformed Thai education. Thai students are now provided with a twelve-year basic education. English is used to drive the country into effective

economic competition and to allow international cooperation on regional and global scales.

As the main purpose of studying English is to pass examinations, teacher-centred learning is the traditional teaching style and limits students' use of English in class. As Thai is the national and official language of the country (Ministry of Education Thailand, 2004), most students do not use English for their daily communication, but it is used by those who have English competency for particular purposes, such as in classrooms, for informal communication with friends and for work. Consequently, Thais have lower English proficiency in comparison with their neighbours and other ASEAN countries (Bangkok Post, 2012;Education First (EF), 2013;Matichon Online, 2012). However, this is usually based on very selective measurements, such as the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) scores. The Thai government has paid serious attention to this issue due to being in the ASEAN community and has responded with educational reforms in English language teaching and various English programmes. For example, 'English Speaking Year 2012' advocated English competency amongst Thai students. Its aim was to enable students to communicate in English whether or not their English was similar to ENL. This programme, nevertheless, may have been limited to bilingual or private institutions where English teachers are sufficient (Matichon Online, 2012). This indicates the Thai government's concerns, regarding the importance of practical English use for successful international communication (Ministry of Education Thailand, 2004).

There was an expansion of international schools and English programmes in both public and private schools after the reform of education by the National Education Act 1999. As stated earlier in 2.4.1, there are currently 172 international schools in Thailand and these run on British and American instruction systems. International schools in Thailand not only provide the opportunity for children to acquire knowledge and develop their English communication skills, but also bring income to the country from foreign students (Darasawang, 2007). Furthermore, an increasing number of Thai students pursue their education abroad in response to the policy of the Thai Ministry of Education which distributes annual scholarships for studying abroad and for exchange programmes with other countries with the aims of raising educational standards and enhancing Thailand's competitiveness on an international level, for example in terms of its cooperation with other governments, international organizations and institutions as well as other relevant bodies (Ministry of Education Thailand, 2004: 54). This

stresses the importance of English learning because these students require English competency as validated by such English tests as TOELF (The Test of English as a Foreign Language) and IELTS (the International English Language Testing System) in order to meet the conditions of either scholarship applications or international institutions. Approximately 6,000 students are funded annually by the Thai government to study abroad in the US and the UK (The Nuffic Neso Office Thailand, 2010) and in addition a number receive scholarships from private institutions or self-fund.

In response to the recent social changes brought about by globalisation, English has played a crucial role in other diverse domains of the country, particularly in urban areas, such as international business, media, careers, etc. Being a member of ASEAN, on the one hand, increases the importance of English as discussed in the previous section (2.4.1). On the other hand, in the tourist business, English is used as a means of communication because Thailand, as one of the world's most popular tourist destinations, is visited by large numbers of foreign tourists. The Tourism Authority of Thailand or TAT (2015) reports that a total of 12.4 million visitors arrived in Thailand between January and May 2015 and estimates that there were 28 million visitors in the entire year. Most visitors are from Asian countries, including China (3,273,695), Malaysia (1,397,241), Japan (575,186), Korea (546,520), and Lao PDR (459,225). TAT makes clear that Thailand has an increasing number of visitors from East Asia, South Asia, the Middle East and America. The most visited provinces were the capital city; Bangkok (18,137,860), followed by Nakhon Ratchasima (5,481,327) in the Northeast, Phuket (5,337,616) in the South, Chon Buri (4,862,017) in the East, and Chiang Mai (2,771,407) in the North of the country. It is mentioned that these different regions have their own dialects of Thai language. That is to say, there are four main regional dialects, consisting of Southern Thai in the southern provinces; Northern Thai in the northern provinces; Northeastern Thai in the northeast provinces (similar to the Lao language) and Siamese Thai in the middle provinces of the country. Given the tourism situation in Thailand, English is widely used by Thais, although more so in Bangkok and the major tourist areas by people from different backgrounds and with varied Thai dialects in such working areas as business, service and trade (e.g. restaurants, hotels, travelling places and even street food selling). In consequence, the way in which Thais use English for communication with people from other countries varies between individuals and differs from NESs norms.

Noytim (2006) indicates that English is in great demand in these two particular areas; the IT and tourism industry. For entertainment, such as newspapers, magazines, some TV programs, and radio programs, English is the second most commonly used language in media after Thai (Wongsothorn *et al.*, 1996). Furthermore, it is also a language used to access a wide range of knowledge and information and communicate online (Foley, 2005;Prapphal, 2004;Wongsothorn *et al.*, 2003). Atagi (2002) indicates that English is particularly used online among Thai users of English such as graduates of bachelor degrees with an English major (Glass, 2009) but this is a small percentage of the total population. Draper (2012) discusses this point, interestingly arguing that the spread of English in Thailand is very uneven in that while it is used by middle class urban workers, in tourism and academia as earlier discussed in this section, there is very little use of or need for English in other areas.

Until recently, there was no clearly identifiable variety of Thai English (Butler, 1999, 2005). This may be a result of the above discussion, in that the use of English is limited to a particular group of users, such as those who have graduated in English major programmes or overseas. As Thailand is not a colonized country, this is another reason why English is perceived as the language of 'others' and Thais have felt no need to make it their own. With regard to the role of English in Thailand without a clear identifiable variety of 'Thai' English, any setting where Thais participate in communication, may be best characterised as a lingua franca context in which English is the main language of intercultural communication (Baker, 2015).

2.5 Conclusion

This chapter discusses the development of English use on a vast global scale and for online communication, including Asian and Thai contexts. Electronic communicative technologies connect most people around the world without any limitations in terms of geographical borders or time. As such, English is adopted as a means of international communication among people with different first languages and cultures to fulfil communication purposes.

With the widespread use of English among people from various socio-cultural backgrounds, it would seem that the language and culture has become diverse and fluid as a result of the diversity of English users and contexts of communication. In relation to this, the use of English moves away from a single

ENL variety and allows local variety and diversity to be included in communication, emerging variation and change in its use on an ad hoc basis.

As discussed in 2.3.2.2, it is important to consider that the characteristics of online communication are quite similar to oral communication, although they are in written form. English has become an important part of online communication as it is the most extensively used language online and incorporates both a localized and global semiotic mix.

In Asia and in particular Thailand, English has played a significant role in communication between countries and even within the one country. English as a lingua franca is also used online by Thai English users, but still by a rather small group, such as those who graduated with an English major or who have studied abroad. It is an important tool to connect Thais with the rest of the world for their economic, intellectual and cultural benefit (Baker, 2009b). It is also worth noting that Thailand does not have its own established variety of English as English is not the official language of the country and people do not use it in daily communication. Rather, it is used for business, for example. Dependent norms of English, therefore, are not the case of Thailand (Baker, 2009b) and English can be suitably described as a lingua franca which is used and adapted in communication for a diverse range of purposes. This study attempts to illustrate how English is used in online contexts among Thai users of English for representing and constructing their own local, hybrid and emergent worldviews or cultures to the global community. The next chapter presents a discussion of a recent popular medium for English use globally; electronically mediated intercultural communication (EMIC).

Chapter 3: Electronically Mediated Intercultural Communication

3.1 Introduction

As discussed in Chapter 2: the Internet has made communication across territories possible and ELF constitutes the most common linguistic means of communication among English online users of different first languages and cultures. This chapter examines electronically mediated intercultural communication (EMIC) and its characteristics in order to ground this thesis in a proper understanding of the nature and basic principles of online communication. It also discusses the relevant factors influencing the mediums' popularity among people around the world, particularly in terms of a specific type: social network sites. Considering the diverse environment of online communication, the chapter extends the discussion of ELF as online translingual practice and the notion of ELF online communities.

3.2 Defining electronically mediated intercultural communication: an introduction to the field

When looking at communication among users with different linguacultural backgrounds on the Internet, 'electronically mediated intercultural communication' (henceforth EMIC) is an emerging term and refers to varied intercultural interactions through computer mediated networks on electronic communication devices, such as computers, laptops, mobiles/ smart phones and tablets. In less than a few decades, the Internet has facilitated communication across the world. Communication on the Internet or 'digital communication' is not limited to a geographical sphere, rather it is mobile and can happen wherever the Internet is accessible in any number of ways, such as personal text messages in private chat rooms or public messages, photos and videos posted on social network site walls using electronic communication devices as mentioned above. The term EMIC is, thus, proposed instead of the more general term for communication via networked computers; 'computer-mediated communication or CMC' in this thesis in order to depict more varied digital communication, particularly among online users with different mother tongues and first cultures.

Communication by means of computer technology has been around since the invention of the first electronic digital computer during World War II, or at least when the Internet was invented as stated in 2.2.2 and the first prototype email was exchanged in the 1960s (Thurlow *et al.*, 2004). CMC started with email, which was restricted to users in the military, government, universities, and businesses (Herring, 2010). It was developed further to the bulletin board system (BBS), a central system, in the late 1970s and people were able to download files and post messages to other users. After Internet Service Providers enabled people to access online material from their homes in the late 1980s and early 1990s, text-based CMC became popular (Herring, 2010) and other forms of CMC emerged, including blogs, Internet Relay Chat (IRC), instant messaging (IM) and blackboard along with search engines such as 'Yahoo' and 'Google'. Afterwards, social network sites (for instance, Friendster, MySpace, LinkedIn, Facebook, and Twitter) and Voice-over-Internet Protocol (VoIP), such as Skype were launched in the early 2000s. These emerging forms have been developed so that they are multi-functional and have facilitated fast and convenient communication alongside the advancement of electronic communicative devices. EMIC, therefore, has become an integral part of daily life for many people in modern society.

3.3 Introductory terms of EMIC

EMIC encompasses the entire range of online communication resources with which English language users interact. These include modes, modal affordances and network resources. This section aims to introduce these terms as they are mentioned throughout this thesis and to explain how they have a fundamental effect on the use of English and culture in online intercultural communication.

3.3.1 Modes

The concept of 'mode' is clearly explained and discussed by Gunther Kress in the Routledge handbook of multimodal analysis (Kress, 2013). Mode is a socially shaped and culturally given resource for making meaning, for example image, writing, layout, music, gesture, speech, moving image and soundtrack. Mode emphasises two aspects, including the social in social semiotics and the formal requirements of a social semiotic theory of communication. These aspects mean a community socially takes or regards something to be a mode and uses it to meet representational and communicative needs. Semiotic resources can be considered as modes if they meet these three requirements; first, 'the ideational

function' or a representation of what 'goes on' in the world, such as actions and events; second, 'the interpersonal function' or a representation of social relations engaged in communication; and third, 'the textual function' or a representation of the prior two aspects through messages. As semiotic resources, modes can differ from culture to culture in their potential for representation. For example, the Thai posting of photos on SNSs is common practice, but this may not be the case in another culture, such as British culture, where photos are usually only posted when they are needed.

In this thesis, mode is used to refer to the diverse semiotic resources available on SNSs for online intercultural communication, such as texts, photos and videos. It is worth noting that modes contain different affordances, for example, writing has text and images depict elements (Kress, 2013). The next part elucidates what modal affordances should mean for online intercultural communication using English.

3.3.2 Modal affordances

The term 'affordances' was initially introduced by Gibson (1986: 127) as follows:

> The affordances of the environment are what it offers the animal, what it provides or furnishes, either for good or ill. The verb to afford is found in the dictionary, but the noun affordance is not. I have made it up. I mean by it something that refers to both the environment and the animal in a way that no existing term does. It implies the complementarity of the animal and the environment.

Gibson points out that an affordance is a relationship between an animal and the environment and concerns the way in which the animal behaves in response to certain properties offered by the environment. His ideas provide a background concept for understanding people's actions in ecological settings. However, his ideas about affordances are problematic in that he overlooks ways of acting resulting from everyday activities in new technologies. Lee (2007) considers "perceived affordance" proposed by Norman (2002) as a more appropriate way of understanding the perceptions and experiences of users in instant messaging (IM). According to "perceived affordance", perceptions of what resources can or cannot do for communication shapes users' text-making practices. Their text-making practices are not determined by what the resources naturally offer (Lee, 2007: 227). In accordance with Seargeant *et al.* (2012: 511), affordances refer to

the possibilities and potential constraints offered by a new technology. An example of semiotic affordances is the way in which computer software offers multimodality or possibilities for semiotic affordance in mixed written English and Thai discourse, so called 'pasa karaoke' or 'karaoke language'.

The above concepts of the relation between affordances and users' perceptions (Lee, 2007;Norman, 2002;Seargeant *et al.*, 2012) fits in well with the use of English for online intercultural communication in SNSs. Selfe and Hawisher (2004) state that social practices are embedded in the larger cultural ecology and are shaped by a set of interrelated factors. In the same vein, affordances are used and negotiated among users and thus have a significant influence over the structure of their communication and the employed language resources (Seargeant *et al.*, 2012).

In this thesis, the term 'affordances' refers to English users' perceptions of the possibilities and constraints offered by SNSs resources, for example languages and writing systems. Although other modes have their own affordances, these are beyond the scope of this thesis and are not investigated. The users perceive and interpret what is afforded based on their technical competence and communicative purposes. In addition to the modal affordances offered by the Internet and SNSs, other communicative resources can be accessed on the global computer network and this is discussed in the following part.

3.3.3 Network resources

Network resources in online communication refer to communicative resources offered by the Internet, which increase online English users' performance when engaging in online intercultural communication on SNSs. Apart from the various modes available on SNSs, the users are able to use other resources on the Internet to facilitate their online intercultural communication. Androutsopoulos (2013) indicates that there are two distinct network resources and these include 'Google translation' and 'copy/paste language'. In detail, 'Google translation' and other web-based translation services, such as 'Bing' are popular on a particular SNS called Facebook. Facebook users can translate their first language into another languages or vice versa, using the web-based translation services. For instance, Thai online users of English can copy Greek comments in their posts to 'Google translation' in order to understand their interlocutors' communicative meanings. This links to another type of network resource which is 'copy/paste language'. Online users can copy comments, song lyrics, aphorisms and proverbs

of interest to them from other websites and paste them onto their profile walls. Other available network resources on the Internet are, for example, online dictionaries, external links for looking up and checking information, Google maps, and so on. These network resources offered by the Internet increase the potential for linguistic heterogeneity in networked practices (Androutsopoulos, 2013) and facilitate mutual understanding among English users with different first languages and cultures in their online intercultural communication. The next section discusses the important characteristics of EMIC.

3.4 Characteristics of EMIC

EMIC contains four distinctive characteristics; multilingualism and multiculturalism, multi-way communication, multimodality and mobility. These characteristics are elucidated in detail in this section.

3.4.1 Multilingualism and multiculturalism

> "While English may continue to be the lingua franca in many contexts of intercultural communication in the twenty-first century, recent years have seen rapid changes in the distribution of English and other languages online."

(Lee, 2015: 118)

Multilingualism refers to the co-existence of two or more languages, or 'codes' in any communicative context, including various representations of a language (Lee, 2015: 119). For example, a number of languages, especially Thai, are used instead of and/or alongside English for communication on Facebook (Seargeant *et al.*, 2012). According to Androutsopoulos (2013), English is often used for status updates by Facebook users whose first language is not English for communication with their international friends. This is in order to make their status updates available to their entire networked audience, although the responsive comments can be in other languages and explicitly challenge the initiative choice of English. Multiculturalism is the manifestation of diverse cultures in communicative events.

Although the terms multilingualism and multiculturalism are used to describe a characteristic of EMIC, the limitations of these terms are that languages and cultures are not always multiple, rather they may also be hybrid and more fluid

than the multi prefix (Baker, 2016: 7). For example, the use of multilingual resources is fluid and unpredictable. As Androutsopoulos (2013) states, networked language practices can involve multiple authors, are addressed to different recipients, and draw on network resources (3.3.3). Similarly to cultures, they are not necessarily tied to the target languages, but move around nationally, locally and globally according to the users' preferences. Translingual practices for EMIC are discussed later on in 3.6 to elucidate the translingual nature of online intercultural communication.

For the moment, the Internet consists of multilingual and multicultural global online communities (see 3.7). The rapid advancement of digital communication technologies has connected people more closely in a number of ways as shall be seen in the following EMIC characteristics (3.4.2 to 3.4.4). According to the Internet World Stats (2015a), 46.4% of the world are internet users (see 2.2.2 for regional proportions of the world Internet users). This statistic indicates that Internet users with different first languages and cultures are significantly involved in the Internet and online communication. They have undoubtedly used a range of language choices in their online communicative events, at least their mother tongues, English and/or a mixture of languages (Danet and Herring, 2007b;Lee, 2015;Vettorel, 2014). English is the first of the top ten languages on the Internet (2.2.2), followed by other regional and local languages, such as Chinese, Spanish and Arabic. Digital communication in English and other languages is on the rise.

While English remains in a pivotal position for online communication, other languages also contribute to multiple linguistic resources for Internet users. They can negotiate their language choices and/or combine linguistic codes when communicating online with people with or without shared languages. English is, thus, a linguistic option to connect online for particularly internationally-oriented purposes, either to retrieve information, when, for examples, the contents are not available in local languages, or to communicate with wider internet users with linguistic and cultural differences, including NESs and NNESs (Vettorel, 2014). Kelly-Holmes (2004: 74-75) notes that English is used both for passive understanding and for active communication. From this perspective, English as a lingua franca appears to be the most frequent choice in online wider networks (Vettorel, 2014). To investigate the ways in which people use English for online intercultural communication, I shall return to a discussion of translingual practices (3.6) to consider how the different languages available online affect and/or influence their communication.

3.4.2 Multi-way communication

Asynchronous and synchronous communication are two major types of online communication. Asynchronous communication does not rely on simultaneous access. Internet users are able to interact with communication messages and can read and reply to the messages when they are available. They can also edit and check messages at different times (Androutsopoulos, 2006;Herring, 2010;Morse, 2003). Examples of this type of online communication are emails, blogs, discussion boards and social network sites. On the contrary, synchronous communication refers to real time communication, most commonly in the form of text chat (Johnson, 2006), for example on social network sites. It is also available in voice and video chats in some web programs, such as Skype, Facebook Messenger and Line. Considering the advancement of communication technologies recently, there are no longer clear cut distinctions between these two types of online communication. Many online communication mediums have been transformed into communication centres where asynchronous and synchronous modes are combined and encourage the Internet users to engage in a number of interactions. For instance, they can chat personally and/or in a group, post their activities in multimedia forms of texts, photos, and elsewhere on their favourite online mediums and interact with these publicly. From this perspectives, EMIC offers multi-way communication.

3.4.3 Multimodality

Multimodality offers a choice of modes (Kress, 2013). It involves the full range of communication forms for understanding communication and representation, including language, image, gaze, posture and so on and the relationships between them (Jewitt, 2013). EMIC is multimodal with the availability of a range of different communicational forms, such as text, photos, audios, videos, file sharing and so on (3.3.1).

Herring (2015) discusses multimodal modes of digital communication using the concept of 'interactive multimodal platforms' (IMPs) which allow social media users to interact with multimodal content in different ways on a single website and/or in a single conversation. IMPs comprise texts and at least one other asynchronous or synchronous mode, such as audio, video and/or graphics. Language is considered as one mode among a multimodal ensemble of modes (Herring, 2015;Jewitt, 2013). IMPs are suitable to explain online intercultural communication on any digital devices, ranging from personal computers to

laptops to mobile devices, such as tablets and smart phones. Examples of IMPs are Facebook, Twitter and YouTube where users can exchange text messages, images and videos with other users. WhatsApp and Line are other examples of IMPs on tablets and/ or mobile devices.

It is undeniable that more IMPs are emerging and opening up new communicative possibilities for EMIC. EMIC is not only limited to one mode, instead it involves the use of a combination of diverse modes such as text, speech, graphics, videos and file sharing. Internet users can communicate by combining these different modes or choose one that is appropriate for their communicative goals. Jewitt (2013: 15) succinctly notes that the meanings in any mode are always intertwined with those of each other. Therefore, the interaction between modes co-presents and co-operates the production of communicative meanings. For example, images are supportive of writing and vice versa. The multimodal features, therefore, provide an extended repertoire of meaning-making resources which people use to construct meanings. From this perspective, communicative meanings are produced and presented in new and significant ways (see 5.6.4 for a multimodal analysis).

3.4.4 Mobility

Today, it is true that our communication has become increasingly mobilized by the impacts of the Internet and information and communication technologies (ICTs) development on the process of EMIC. Another essential characteristic of EMIC then is 'mobility' of communication.

The concept of 'mobility' is defined differently. According to the Oxford Dictionary, mobility refers to "the ability to move or be moved freely and easily". It is "the ability to move physically from place to place, from job to job and from one social class or level to another" on Dictionary.com. 'Mobility' then implies a physical change from one point to another in different types of space. Jackson (2007), however, considers 'mobility' as the characteristics of a device to handle the access of information, communication and business transactions in the state of motion. Interestingly, Makimoto and Manners (1997) state that 'being mobile' means human movement that is independent from geographical constraints.

Referring to these varied definitions, the notion of 'mobility' should be considered beyond a rigid understanding in order to ascertain the reason why 'mobility' influences EMIC and social interaction among people today. In this

thesis, 'mobility' is then understood in a fluid sense of communication. It refers to the mobility of not just people, but also objects (communication devices), symbols (for examples, information, images and videos), contexts and space of online intercultural communication in accordance with Kakihara and Sørensen (2001). These things are interwoven in that most current mobile digital communication devices are designed for movement and use various types of media, including the Internet, which expands the space of EMIC from personal computers (PCs) and further facilitates social activities between people without geographical proximity. EMIC is then a new space which enables people with different languages, social positions (or status) and functions (or roles) to interact with others in diverse contexts anytime and anywhere via PCs or various mobile digital communication technologies such as laptops, mobiles or tablets. It is, thus, possible that a person who is studying abroad (in a student role) can contact their colleagues in their hometown conveniently. In this sense, it could be argued that the mobility of online intercultural communication is in the fluid state which facilitates communication and results in complex patterns of human interactions.

3.5 Social network sites (SNSs)

Social network sites (henceforth SNSs) are one of the most significant developments in social media. They are defined as "networked communication platforms in which participants 1) have uniquely identifiable profiles that consist of user-supplied content, content provided by other users, and/or system-provided data; 2) can publicly articulate connections that can be viewed and traversed by others; and 3) can consume, produce, and/or interact with streams of user-generated content provided by their connections on the site." (Ellison and Boyd, 2013: 158). It is important to note that the definition of SNSs is subject to change over time given the rapid changes and innovations in communication technologies.

There are apparently many terminologies which are interchangeably used to describe digital communication, for instances, "social network sites", "social networking sites", "online social networks" and "social networking". Boyd and Ellison (2007) clearly distinguish between the meanings of these terminologies in that "social network sites" refer to online communication among people with their existing contacts and they are not necessarily "network*ing*" or looking to meet new people (Boyd and Ellison, 2007), "social network*ing* sites" refers to the

initiation of relationships, usually between strangers, "online social network" means general connection online and "social networking" emphasises actively seeking connections online and offline. In the particular SNS emphasised in this thesis; Facebook (see 6.4), the users primarily contact other users that they already know and those who are a part of their extended social network (Boyd and Ellison, 2007). "Social network sites or SNSs" is then the most appropriate term and is used in this thesis.

3.5.1 A history of social network sites

The first SNS was launched in 1997 and was named SixDegrees.com. This site was founded by Andrew Weinreich (Boyd and Ellison, 2007) and was based in New York City. It firstly allowed users to create profiles, list friends, family members and acquaintances on the site and also externally. Users could send messages, post their activities and see their connections with other users on the site. The site, however, was not widely used since early users did not have an extended network of online friends. Later on in 2000, SixDegrees was closed due to unsuccessful business sustainability (Boyd and Ellison, 2007). SixDegrees was followed by many different SNSs, to name a few, such as LiveJournal and Cyworld in 1999, Ryze.com in 2001, Friendster in 2002, MySpace, Hi5 and LinkedIn in 2003, Facebook in 2004, YouTube in 2005, Twitter in 2006, WhatsApp and Instragram in 2010, Google+ and Line in 2011, and more.

Among these different SNSs, Facebook has become the most popular, with more than 1.55 billion people access and more than one billion people active every day (Zuckerberg, 2015). In this thesis, the most popular SNS amongst the participants is investigated and used as a focus to examine the use of English for online intercultural communication (5.4.1). SNSs can be contextualised in the context of Web 2.0 and this is discussed in the next section.

3.5.2 Web 2.0

Web 2.0 describes the second generation of the World Wide Web. It is the evolved version of Web 1.0 which was the first stage of the World Wide Web and predominantly static or what Androutsopoulos (2010: 207) defines as a "unidirectional, information-oriented medium".

The concept of Web 2.0 was first mentioned at the first Web 2.0 Conference in 2004 by Tim O'Reilly and Dale Dougherty. According to the concept, a web is a

platform where software applications are built based on the Web as opposed to on the desktop. It emphasises user-generated content, usability and interoperability in that the Internet users can create content in various form, such as text, images or videos on SNSs, blogs, wikis and media sharing sites (Wikipedia, 2016). In alignment with the rapid shifts in digital communication, Herring (2013: 4) redefines Web 2.0 as "web-based platforms that emerged and were popular in the first decade of the 21st century, and that incorporate user-generated content and social interaction, often alongside or in response to structures and/or (multimedia) content provided by the sites themselves." Walther *et al.* (2011: 26) further explain that Web 2.0 aims to encapsulate websites which are built to facilitate interactivity and co-creation of content by website visitors in addition to original authors. Interactive and sharing practices are, thus, the emphases on Web 2.0 (O'Reilly, 2005).

Androutsopoulos (2010: 207) notes that Internet users can become active content creators at different levels through Web 2.0 tools. They can edit and upload texts, either in their original form or as modified versions of other users' texts. They can also comment on them, and/ or link to different kinds of texts. In this sense, Web 2.0 tools allow several functions of content creations, such as photo and video sharing, private and public messaging and self-presentation. It can thus be said that multimodal file sharing and collaborative content are the main features of Web 2.0 environments (Vettorel, 2014: 34). Examples of Web 2.0 platforms are Facebook, Flickr, Twitter, and YouTube (Herring, 2013). The nature of Web 2.0 contextualises the core characteristics of SNSs, particularly in relations to active participatory processes and multimodal features and these are elucidated in detail in the next section.

3.5.3 Features of social network sites

SNSs contain varied technical features according to each site; nevertheless a set of basic characteristics appear consistent throughout SNSs. SNSs can be categorised into four primary features, consisting of profiles, connection lists, stream of updates and multiple modes of communication.

Profiles are the personal pages of users. These can be generated by filling out personal information, such as name, birthday, hometown, education, workplace, current location and interests, etc. Most sites also allow users to upload their profile photos. The visibility of profile pages varies from site to site. Some sites do not offer a privacy setting which allows users to specify who can see their user

profile and instead allow profile pages to be visible to everyone, including viewers who do not have a site account, such as Twitter and YouTube. Other SNSs take a different approach in that their users need to be part of the same network in order to view other profiles. This normally happens when the profile page owners set their account as public. If the pages are set as private, in contrast, only friends in the owners' contact lists are accessible. Examples of these sites are Facebook, Google+, Instagram, and LinkedIn. However, these sites are unique in their own ways, depending on the available privacy settings on each site. Facebook, for example, provides a blocking service to prevent accessibility to the owner's profile page by an undesirable person and it can also be used to prevent a particular user in their friend list from seeing some of their statements. Instagram only allows approved users to see the profile owner's photos and videos but cannot prevent a particular user from having access to a particular activity. Profiles are pages where users can present themselves, share information and communicate. According to Ellison and Boyd (2013: 159), profiles are spaces for self-presentation and content distribution. These pages are normally updated by the profile owners. However, they can be also automatically updated when their friends update their activities on their profile pages which are always updated in profile owners' pages as well. For instance, friends of a profile owner might know he/she has recently married from another friend' photos uploaded on their profile page that have tagged the profile owner and/or if the profile owner has interacted with that update.

Once users become members of a particular SNS, they can identify others in the same network and create their relationships through a connection lists. The connection list is an important feature of SNSs. It contains links to friends' profiles and allow users to extend their network through their connection lists (Boyd and Ellison, 2007). They can add and accept friend requests whilst a delete or 'unfriend' option is also available if they do not want to have any further connection with a person. 'Connection lists' serve multiple purposes on SNSs in that users can get in contact with other friends by following and interacting with their updates and extend their online network. In these ways the users can build stronger ties in their relationships and a sense of community.

Most current SNSs provide a new feature: a broadcasting tool which allow users to post streams of themselves on their accounts. Stream of updates have become more salient today when users are encouraged to create content and share it with others in the same online communities. It represents individual expressions of

activities, ideas, and beliefs on any topics related to their interests. Other users can also construct their ideas about individual users who update their activities and any issues posted on the sites, such as news, activities, advertisements and movies. Content whether in the form of texts, photos, or videos can be added by the site users and/or their friends in their connection lists and is announced in the stream of updates. Streams of updates are named differently according to each SNS, for example, "News Feed" on Facebook, "Tweets" on Twitter and "Timeline" on Line.

Apart from profiles, connection lists and streams of updates, SNSs offer multiple modes of communication. In relation to the characteristics of EMIC as explained in 3.4.3, SNSs are multimodal with either text or media options, such as photos, videos, web links, and so on. Ellison and Boyd (2013: 159) claim that SNSs have been evolving so that they are more media-centric and less profile-centric. Users can share various media whether in the form of text, photos, video and these interactions can encourage productive exchanges since there is an engagement of extended networks, such as 'Friends' and 'Friends of Friends'. As such, SNSs (and EMIC) are no longer primarily involved in textual exchanges or written based forms (Herring, 2007), rather multimodal features also play a crucial role. It is common that users can interact with SNSs in a variety of optional ways, for example, they can post photos and explain what is happening in that photo through written explanation. Therefore, intercultural communication of social network sites has become increasingly fluid. People's practices, expectations, and social norms have also co-evolved alongside the technical features and social interaction opportunities.

3.6 Translingual practices via online intercultural communication

Characteristics of online intercultural communication (3.4) and features of SNSs (3.5.3) offer users new practices of online communication in that they can experience different languages and exploit characteristics of online intercultural communication (3.4) at the same time, for example, mixed asynchronous and synchronous modes, and multimodality for their online communication across time and space. This section discusses the emerging term 'translingual' in online communication practices, compares it with the existing term 'multilingual' and then discusses its relation to ELF.

3.6.1 'Multilingual' vs 'Translingual' practices

Multilingualism is a broad term used to explain the distinctive characteristics of online intercultural communication (3.4.1) as the Internet and its technological development afford transnational contacts and facilitate communication between people of different languages (and cultures). When considering the fact that online communication always involves the use of different languages and multimodal features in different ways, the question arises can the term 'multilingual' elucidate communication in this context? For example, Thai English online users update their activities in English along with photos on a particular SNS in order to facilitate an understanding of their entire networked audience. The responses, however, can occur in other languages such as Thai, Italian and Spanish when more than one of these different languages users participate in the same communication with the aid of multimodal features (e.g. a photo) and online translators. Could this communicative interaction be explained through the concept of multilingualism?

A number of scholars have criticized the use of the term 'multilingual' to describe dynamic communication. Canagarajah (2013) believes that the term 'multilingual' cannot capture the dynamics and complexity of communication. Multilingual explains the relationship between languages in an additive manner in that "languages are added one on top of the other to form multilingual competence" (Canagarajah, 2013: 7). From his perspective, multilingual orientation is somewhat influenced by the monolingual paradigm in the sense that monolingual speakers/users are typically able to use multiple registers, dialects and discourse of their native languages. In relation to Tagg (2015), many bilingual speakers online in bilingual communities draw resources from more than one language in the same way as a monolingual speaker draws on different registers and styles in a single language. 'Multilingual', thus, treats languages as separate and isolated (Canagarajah, 2013).

Multilingual practices are often conceived through the concepts of 'code-switching' and 'code-mixing' (Androutsopoulos, 2013;Canagarajah, 2013;Lee, 2015;Tagg, 2015). This further stresses a problem with the term 'multilingual' in online communication. Code-switching refers to a switch between languages appropriate to a context and requires comparatively advanced competence in both relevant languages (Canagarajah, 2013). Code-mixing does not require bilingual competence (Canagarajah, 2013). For example, French is mixed with English in the same sentence for online comments on SNSs. It is important to

note that languages are assumed to have a separate code according to these concepts of 'code-switching' and 'code-mixing'. However, the distinctions between terms are still questionable in that bilingual competence is not always necessary for code switching (Canagarajah, 2013) while 'code-mixing' is seen as a sub type of 'code-switching' (Tagg, 2015) and borrowing, mixing and switching all have rhetorical significance (Eastman, 1992). Tagg (2015) notes that multilingual practices in online intercultural communication are more complex than the concepts of 'code-switching' and 'code mixing'. And 'code-switching' and 'code-mixing' themselves are also influenced by affordances of the Internet (3.3.2). The term 'multilingual', therefore, cannot be used to interpret actual multilingual practices online. Online communication involves not only languages, but also semiotic resources or, multimodal features of online communication. Jørgensen *et al.* (2011) explain that features are often associated with particular languages and carry either the same or different meanings in these languages. As such, the emerging term 'translingual' is considered in this thesis to capture multilingual online communication in fluid and dynamic ways.

Translingual practice is one of the other terms used to indicate dynamic communicative practice in multilingual environments. The other terms are, for instance, 'polylingualism' or a multilingual practice with normative expectation (Androutsopoulos, 2012), 'metrolingualism' or the use of languages for new identities in urban communication (Otsuji and Pennycook, 2010;Pennycook, 2010), 'plurilingualism' which aims to develop school children's functional competence in partial languages (The Council of Europe, 2000) and 'networked multilingualism' or multilingual practices involving multiple authors and audiences and network resources (Androutsopoulos, 2013). Wei (2011: 1222) offers the term translanguaging to focus on creative and critical use of the full range of socio-cultural resources among multilingual speakers. It highlights communication which transcends individual languages and words and involves diverse semiotic resources and ecological affordances (Canagarajah, 2013). By this means communication involves diverse semiotic resources and language is one of these semiotic resources to complement these communication resources for making communicative meanings. García (2011) defines the term as multiple discursive practices among bilingual users and it also covers multilingual practices which have traditionally been described as code-switching, code-mixing, etc. (Wei, 2011).

Scoping down to online communication in this thesis, translanguaging can be seen as a kind of translingual practice which online users can use for different things, using diverse communicative resources, such as languages, symbols (e.g. emoticons and emojis), multimodal features (e.g. photos, audio, and videos), and network resources (e.g. translation services). In this sense, translingual practices manifest diverse ways of communication which emphasise the process of dealing with dynamic online communication (Canagarajah, 2013;Pennycook, 2007). These diverse modes of online communication facilitate users to adopt a range of communicative modes and produce their online communication in more creative ways. As English has become the main contact language between online users with different first languages and cultural backgrounds (or termed ELF in this thesis, see 2.3), it is important to understand how ELF can be perceived through translingual practices and this is discussed in the next section.

3.6.2 Translingual practices in ELF

In the realm of online communication where English is the most dominant contact language, the concept of translingual practices can provide an understanding of the dynamic use of Englishes among people with different first languages (and cultural backgrounds) in the online world.

The translingual approach has been developed to address the diverse and emergent use of English for communication (Canagarajah, 2013;Pennycook, 2007, 2010). Jacquemet (2005: 265) points out that 'translingual practice' involves "the communicative practices of transnational groups that interact using different languages and communicative codes simultaneously present in a range of communicative channels, both local and distant". In Pennycook (2007), the concept of 'translingual practices' moves away from nation-based models to understandings of English use across communities. He attempts to incorporate the local, agency and context in complex interactions and understand the use of English through 'translingual franca English' or the ways in which all uses of English are taken into account (e.g. interactions among NNESs). Canagarajah (2013) applies 'translingual practice' to an orientation of English as a contact language. According to his notion, 'translingual practice' concerns language contact among people from different backgrounds and strategies used to negotiate power and differences during communication without shared forms. Canagarajah (2013) adopts the term 'Lingua franca English' (or LFE) to highlight his focus on 'translingual practice'. In brief, LFE is seen as a highly fluid and

variable form of language practice, rather than a systematized variety of English. It emphasises semiodiversity in that all English users, no matter whether they are NESs or NNESs, adopt diverse semiotic resources to negotiate their different Englishes for intelligibility and effective communication. In this sense, the translingual LFE approach addresses the processes of language change and negotiation. Therefore, forms and norms of this approach are in a state of emergence according to socially situated translingual English practices.

Nevertheless, the notions of 'translingual practice' elucidated above (Canagarajah, 2013;Pennycook, 2007, 2010) point out that translingual practices involve all uses of English. Translingual users do not require a community in communication and are able to achieve successful communication. These notions also critique ELF as a product, a monolithic variety, and simple corpus-based, for example. However, most ELF scholars have argued that ELF does not treat English as a variety, but a variable way of using it (Seidlhofer, 2011). Also, empirical research stresses the dynamic, emergent and translingual practices of ELF communication (e.g.Baker, 2015;Vettorel, 2014). Therefore, the distinction between ELF and LFE is not entirely clear according to these notions.

Despite some different views of 'translingual practices' in the use of English in globalisation and criticisms of ELF, the notions of 'translingual practice' (Canagarajah, 2013;Pennycook, 2007, 2010) are perceived as useful metaphors for diverse, complex and emergent online communication. These notions, are, therefore, re-evaluated to be appropriate for English uses in online contexts. There are two main reasons why these notions should be considered. First, ELF is the most popular communicative medium among NNESs. Their diverse linguacultural backgrounds cause a difference in their English use in that they do not use one type of English but bring their own linguistic and semiotic repertoires into their communication. Online ELF users, therefore, need to negotiate communicative meanings in order to ensure mutual comprehensibility and meet their communicative goals. As Jenkins (2011: 928), proficient ELF speakers emerge from the research as skilled communicators. They innovate in English, making full use of multilingual resources to create their own preferred terms. They code-switch as a means of promoting solidarity with their interlocutors and projecting their cultural identities. They make skilled and extensive use of the accommodation strategy of convergence for affective reasons and to ensure comprehensibility. Another reason for considering translingual practice relates to multi-features and resources available in online communicative mediums. As

discussed in section (3.6.1), a translingual practice involves not only languages, but also the full range of sociocultural resources (Androutsopoulos, 2013;Canagarajah, 2013;Wei, 2011). Therefore, ELF online users can apply different communicative resources to create their communicative meanings. For instance, many ELF online users can be involved in online communication and can share and edit as well as remake these communicative resources with different interlocutors. The availability of communicative technologies makes online communication even more dynamic and complex.

Baird *et al.* (2014: 177) indicate that language performances are complex and include various integrated factors, including social influences and perceptions of self/others, for example. Therefore, it is important to consider community in online communication in order to construct a wider understanding of complex and emergent online communication and this point is discussed in detail in the following section.

3.7 ELF online communities

The discussion of ELF use in globalisation (see 2.3) indicates that technological advancement makes communication across boundaries feasible while advanced communicative technologies also give rise to dynamic and complex communication. ELF users' interactions can be independent from immediate physical proximity and technological communication further heightens the opportunity or transnational and mobile English communication (Seidlhofer, 2011). The notions of community in ELF online contexts are essentially reconceptualised in responding to a radical change in globalisation. This section highlights how online communities should be defined for this thesis in order to gain an insight into the way in which English is used for online intercultural communication.

Community is traditionally a geographically bound interaction between a group of people who share a common characteristic and/or interest. The Oxford dictionary defines a community as "a group of people living in the same place or having a particular characteristic in common". It is, thus, obvious that community has been understood mainly based on physical and local aspects. Electronic communication has by nature extended the reach of Internet users' interactions beyond the traditional geographical restrictions and expanded their opportunities to engage in different types of online communities, depending on their purposes, interests

and preferences. Given the fact that the Internet can stretch electronic communication to every corner of the globe, online communities cannot be appropriately defined using the traditional definition.

Online communities can be varied based on the intended purposes of those communities (Lukito and Chan, 2010). Blanchard and Markus (2004) define an online community as "a community in which information and communication technologies, particularly the Internet, facilitate the interaction of members sharing one or more specific objectives". These communities are formed online through specific websites, such as SNSs (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and Youtube), online chats (e.g. Line, and WeChat) and bulletin boards (e.g. blackboard) and connect users who share similar interests and/or existing interpersonal relationships, for example friends, family members and colleagues.

SNSs, a focus of this thesis (see 3.5), are a part of online communities. Recently, they have played a significant role in building communities online, resulting in active social action and co-operation. Online English users can come into the same online communities and interact with each other for specific or variable purposes. In order to consider what kind of online community is relevant in this thesis, conceptions of communities of practice by Wenger (2006) and Seidlhofer (2011) are taken into a consideration together with the notions of online communities discussed above.

Wenger (2006) explains that 'communities of practice' refers to groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something and develop their competencies through regular interaction (Wenger, 2006). Wenger (2006) proposes three main elements to distinguish a 'community of practice' from other groups and communities, consisting of the domain, the community and the practice. It is a fact that not all communities can be called 'communities of practice'. Instead, a community can be a 'community of practice' if it has a shared domain of interest with members involved in joint activities and interaction, etc. and if it develops a shared practice or a shared repertoire of resources over time. This conception stresses the idea of deepening the learning process through members' participation in a community of practice.

In contrast, according to Wenger's conception of 'communities of practice' (2006), online intercultural communication through ELF in this thesis cannot be viewed as an 'communities of practice' since online English users of different first languages and cultures have variable purposes, linguistic repertoires and

resources for their online intercultural communication. Given the fact that online ELF users use English as the main language code for their online communication with those who share different mother tongues and cultures in order to reach mutual understanding, it is useful to take into consideration Seidlhofer's conception of 'community of practice' specifically for ELF users (2011).

In her book (2011), Seidlhofer makes clear that ELF cannot be tied to interactions among people in the same geographical space. Countless interaction networks are free of physical proximity and ELF users can interact with each other over vast distances, often without physical encounter. The following statement clearly elucidates why 'community' is in need of re-conceptualisation.

> "So with the current proliferation of possibilities created by electronic means and easy global mobility, changes in *communications* have accelerated and forced changes in the nature of *communication*: *the media* now available have changed the *modes* of use. And in all this, English is in a pivotal position: already established as a widespread language, it is particularly well placed to place a crucial role in these changed conditions, where communities can no longer be defined mainly in terms of face-to-face contact, and certainly not by a common native language. It is now commonplace, and indeed necessary, for people who want 'to get on in the world', to use a means of communication that takes them beyond traditional community boundaries. Wider networking needs a lingua franca" (p.86).

According to this statement, what Seidlhofer sees in ELF is a means of wider communication for interaction outside one's primary social space and speech community. She reconceptualises 'community of practice' as '…..groupings sharing their particular modes of communication, with English being the most widely used code' (Seidlhofer, 2011: 88).

Her idea is applied in this thesis in that communities are constructed on a global scale where most participants do not have the same native language and English is the most widely used language. As such, English is mixed with local languages and cultures and encounters a natural process of variation and change, making this communication setting a multilingual environment and one which highlights the hybrid and diverse nature of English.

Considering the conceptions of 'communities of practice' by Wenger (2006) and Seidlhofer (2011), online intercultural communication can be seen as 'ELF online

communities of practice' if online English users of different first languages and cultures become members of the same communities online and share specific purposes, for example the Centre for Global Englishes (CGE) and Postgraduate Members of British Association for Applied Linguistics (BAAL).

In this thesis, online communities cannot be seen as 'ELF online communities of practice', but instead they are seen as 'ELF online communities' which refers to online intercultural communication between/ among users whose first languages and cultures are different and who bring various purposes as well as translingual resources to negotiate and achieve their communicative purposes. To be clearer, online ELF users are not limited to a particular activity in their online intercultural communication. Rather, they aim to get together in the same online communities and do various activities such as updating and sharing their experiences, ideas and activities, while friends and/or members of the same online communities have an opportunity to interact with these different activities.

In sum, this thesis views 'online communities' as 'ELF online communities' due to the fact that participants from different first languages and cultures become members of the same of online communities and use English as the main language code to interact with each other although they have variable purposes, linguistic repertoires and resources for their online intercultural communication. Therefore, English is a language tool which ELF users can use to achieve mutual understanding on various topics in their online updates and to develop their intercultural competencies in terms of choosing the most appropriate ways to communicate with interlocutors from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

3.8 Conclusion

This chapter has introduced relevant terms for online intercultural communication, including modes, modal affordances and network resources. It has also discussed the characteristics and nature of EMIC with a particular focus on SNSs which is the area of this thesis. It has attempted to point out why EMIC and SNSs have recently become popular mediums of communication among people around the world. Four main characteristics of EMIC have been noted; multilingualism and multiculturalism, multi-way communication, multimodality and mobility. SNSs are EMIC platforms where online users can communicate and interact with other online users. As EMIC platforms, these sites continually

develop and introduce various features for easier and wider social communication. Primarily, SNSs consist of the following four key features; 'Profiles', 'Updates', 'Connection lists' and 'Multiple modes'.

Concerning the fact that the Internet has brought people across the globe into closer connection while the advancement of communication technologies has facilitated their communication in various ways, communication in online contexts, thus, presents the complex and fluid nature of communication. The notion of 'translingual practices' is re-evaluated to understand ELF for online communication. According to 'ELF translingual practices', ELF online users can apply different communicative resources to create and negotiate their communicative meanings.

'ELF online communities' are also brought into a discussion as one of many other factors influencing online communication. In this thesis, 'ELF online communities' presents variable communicative goals and translingual repertoires among ELF users, which support their adaptation, orientation and negotiation for successful online communication among users with different linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

Online SNSs are a current trend which people integrate into their communication in daily life. Concerning its significance for communication at local and global levels, the focus on English use in this medium would contribute to an understanding of ELF for intercultural communication. The next chapter highlights language and culture for ELF online intercultural communication and the relevance of SNSs to a representation and construction of cultures and ICC.

Chapter 4: Culture and intercultural communicative competences in online intercultural communication through ELF

4.1 Introduction

From Chapter 3, we have learnt that online mediums and SNSs in particular have complex natures due to various factors, mainly the large number of different online users and the dynamic features of online mediums (e.g. multimodal features, networked resources, modal affordances and mobile communication via digital devices (e.g. laptops, smart phones and tablets). The acceleration of globalisation through communicative technologies has given rise to a consideration of culture and how it is enacted and constructed when English functions as a lingua franca in complex and diverse online intercultural communication. Further, the competences needed for successful intercultural communication are also a concern, as intercultural communicative competence (henceforth ICC) is necessary for successful online communication among online ELF users.

This chapter presents one of the core theoretical discussions for this thesis, which aims to provide an understanding of culture in intercultural communication through ELF. It starts to explore how intercultural communication and culture should be conceptualised in online intercultural communication and to discuss what these mean in this thesis when considering the effects of advanced communicative technologies and globalisation. An emerging intercultural conception; transcultural communication, is also discussed. A range of practical conceptions of culture for online intercultural communication through ELF are brought into the discussion in order to understand the characteristics of cultures online, followed by the relationship of cultures, language and ELF in online intercultural communication. The chapter ends with an exploration of a traditional conception of intercultural communicative competence and possible alternative approaches to the issue.

4.2 Understanding intercultural communication

The discussion in Chapter 3: indicates that SNSs are the most popular medium of online communication among online users around the world today. Thus, SNSs have become a platform for online intercultural communication where a large number of different online users can communicate and interact with each other. Considering the engagement of a diverse range of online users in SNSs, which is the focus of this thesis, it is necessary to understand the concepts of intercultural communication when diverse cultures are enacted through ELF online. Some concepts of culture are included in the discussion in this section while culture is elucidated in detail in the next section (4.3). This section aims to gain an understanding of intercultural communication in general and specifically in terms of digital media, and explore how it relates to SNSs and ELF.

4.2.1 Concepts of intercultural communication

Before starting an exploration of how intercultural communication relates to SNSs and ELF, an understanding of intercultural communication in relation to the thesis context is necessary to frame the scope of the discussion.

The term 'intercultural communication' is used in a wide range of academic and professional fields such as sociology, psychology, anthropology, education and so on. This makes it interdisciplinary in nature (Baker, 2015) and of course the different approaches for understanding its concepts are not necessarily compatible. In applied linguistics, the field of this thesis, intercultural communication is considered through the lens of differences, dynamics and complexity, applying insights from ELF research.

Traditionally, intercultural communication refers to studies of both interaction between people of different cultures and comparative studies of communication patterns across cultures (Hua, 2013: 1). Many scholars have scrutinised the term when 'inter-' and 'culture' are considered thoroughly (e.g. Baker, 2015;Piller, 2011;Scollon and Scollon, 2008). This section deals with 'inter-' while the concepts of culture are explored in detail in the next section (4.3). Baker (2015: 24) raises the point that 'inter-' suggests intercultural communication *between* cultures and this is problematic because "it proposes that cultures have fixed borders and that intercultural communication takes place between these borders or boundaries but with the cultures remaining separate". The way in which cultures are seen as separable entities at a national homogeneous level fits in

with a 'cross-cultural communication' approach which focuses on distinct cultural groups independent from interaction and investigates aspects of their communicative practices comparatively (Baker, 2015;Piller, 2011;Scollon and Scollon, 2008), for example between Thai and Vietnamese cultures.

Although the term has been scrutinised, intercultural communication is widely used. A distinct concept of 'intercultural communication' is "to signal the study of distinct cultural or other groups in interaction with each other." (Scollon and Scollon, 2008: 539). Baker (2015) notes that this perspective highlights two approaches to intercultural communication; 'inter-' and 'intra-' cultural communication, and that different communicative ways exist in intercultural and intracultural communication (or communication between people who share a first culture), so it is important to consider "how does the concept of culture arise in these social actions, who has introduced culture as a relevant category, for what purposes, and with what consequences?" (Scollon and Scollon, 2008: 545).

It is worth pointing out here that cultures are always different even among people from the same first language, because of their different educational backgrounds, working and living experiences, for instance. Also, different first languages and cultural differences are not necessarily important to communication, particularly among multilingual people who share much else, such as negotiation strategies for successful intercultural communication (Scollon and Scollon, 2008). Baker (2015) further characterises intercultural communication, stating that it involves communication where cultural and linguistic differences are perceived in the interactions. In addition, Hua (2013) adds that intercultural communication is primarily concerned with how individuals from different cultures negotiate cultural or linguistic differences in order to achieve their communication goals or what she terms 'interculturality'.

Given the wider communication of people in the world today, particularly communication via electronic media which includes a range of factors; languages, multimodal features, networked resources, audiences, and so on, a dynamic approach to intercultural communication is most suitable to describe its characteristics. As such, the term 'intercultural communication' characterised by Baker (2015) and Hua (2013) is considered in this thesis.

It is worth noting that the term 'transcultural' is emerging in response to the dynamics and complexity of intercultural communication in digital media (e.g. Pennycook, 2007;Risager, 2007). Thus, it is useful to explain this emerging term

in brief here in order to understand its concepts and how it relates to and/or informs intercultural communication through social media.

Baker (2015: 24) points out that "'trans' implies a less static view of cultures with transcultural communication occurring 'through' and 'across' rather than 'between' cultures" . It highlights the free movement of cultures which are not bound to nation, language and culture correlations but rather move across networks of communication (Baker, 2016). Transcultural communication, according to Hepp (2015), involves processes of communication that transcend individual cultures. He believes that people are living in "mediatized worlds" (Hepp, 2013;Hepp and Krotz, 2014) in which communicative technologies are central to the construction of their social lives and cultures which can be more visible and concrete and can spread across the world. Communication through technologies, thus, brings people (or users) to globalization where they can circulate information across transnational borders and develop transcultural communicative connectivity. Pennycook points out that cultures can be also seen to be in a state of "transcultural flow" which refers "…..not merely to the spread of particular forms of culture across boundaries, or the existence of supercultural commonalities (cultural forms that transcend locality), but rather to the processes of borrowing, blending, remaking and returning, to processes of alternative cultural production." (2007: 6). For Pennycook, then, cultures always move, change and are refashioned into new identities in diverse contexts from local to global and vice versa.

Considering these transcultural conceptions, cultural flows in globalization cannot be seen as processes of homogenization. They are rather heterogeneous, and cultures are reproduced and reformed based on locality and tradition. Cultures in this sense are dynamic processes. Therefore, the term 'transcultural' can be a metaphor for visualising complex cultural phenomena of intercultural communication through electronic media.

It is known that electronic communication online facilitates communication with fewer geographical limitations and connects people across the globe using the various different features of their preferred online mediums. They can represent their own cultures and explore and experience other cultures. In other words, they can travel beyond the bounds of different cultures in their daily engagement with or interactions over the Internet and social media. For example, they can read up to date news about different parts of the world from online news and/or social media, access an abundance of information, watch and/or listen to online

videos of different cultures, and learn about the different perspectives of others from diverse cultures. Therefore, cultures transcend my and your cultures, traditional and national, local and global. Rather, cultures independently move across these frames, depending on communicative situations and individual preferences. The transcultural conceptions help this thesis to approach an understanding of cultures (and languages see 4.4) in intercultural communication through a wider lense and in a more complex sense.

Although transcultural communication responds to the complex nature of cultures in electronic communication, this thesis opts to use (online) intercultural communication due to the widely well-known of the term, instead of 'transcultural communication' but takes its characteristics into concern. The next part discusses the way in which online intercultural communication relates to the focus of this thesis; SNSs.

4.2.2 Online intercultural communication on SNSs

Social media and SNSs, the focus of this thesis, are intercultural in nature as a large number of users with different first languages and cultures take part in online social communities. These communicative mediums have evolved into the area of diversified cultural engagement and a medium of intercultural exchanges where users can interact, share opinions and construct knowledge about various cultures. This part of the chapter discusses the way in which SNSs relate to online intercultural communication through the lens of cultural representation and cultural construction, applying the concept of self-presentation and multimodal features of the mediums.

Cultural representation is a fuzzy subset of mental and public representations inhabiting a given social group (Sperber, 1996: 33). Mental representations may exist inside their user, such as a memory, a belief, an intention, and a preference while a public representation may also exist in the environment of its users which involve several users and include signals, utterances, texts and pictures, for example. These mental and public representations can be understood through interpretation. Cultural representation involves the use of language, signs and images (Hall and Open University., 1997).

In terms of cultural construction, it refers to the shape of individual ideas about different things in the world. Burr (1995: 2-3) explains cultural construction through social constructionism in that people "take a critical stance towards our

taken-for-granted ways of understanding the world (including ourselves)". They can exchange knowledge with others through daily interactions and negotiate meanings and as such construct their knowledge. Social constructions vary from individual to individual and these bring with them different kinds of people behaviours and action.

Cultural representation and cultural construction can relate to intercultural communication on SNSs. As indicated earlier in 4.2.1, intercultural communication involves communication where cultural and linguistic differences are perceived as relevant to the interaction (Baker, 2015;Hua, 2013). The way in which online users communicate with others whose linguistic and cultural backgrounds are different and share their interests, perspectives, knowledge, etc., using a variety of modal features available on SNSs (e.g. texts, photos, and videos) can be considered as either direct or indirect cultural representation. At the same time these users learn these from their communication and interactions and construct their knowledge about others from different languages and cultures. According to Pauwels (2012), different multi-features facilitate cultural representation of the users while at the same time an interplay of these different features allows them to understand the communicative meanings and construct their understandings of the communication.

The concept of self-presentation with the support of multimodal features is helpful to explain cultural representation and cultural construction. Self-presentation is "the process of controlling how one is perceived by other people" (Leary, 1996:2). Self-presentation can be claimed as a key activity on SNSs. Its activities, for example the creation and uploading of personal profiles, happen a lot on a particular SNS, Facebook. (Boyd and Ellison, 2007;Eisenlauer, 2014;Gross and Acquisti, 2005). Multimodal features of SNSs directly support the self-presentation of online users. They can present their interests, ideas, beliefs through a range of available modes on SNSs, such as posting messages, photos, videos, and external links, on either their or others personal SNSs pages (e.g. News Feed on Facebook, Timeline on Line). Other users (i.e. friends in their lists, friends of friends, those who are tagged or even strangers), who see these interactions on their 'News Feed' and 'Notifications' can understand what peoples' knowledge about, experiences of, beliefs, values, or attitudes to a particular issue are and, thus, construct their ideas about others from individual representation about various issues. Cultural representation and construction are seen as inseparable parts of this process as our cultural histories influence how

we present ourselves and how we interpret others' presentations of themselves. Therefore, cultural representation through self-presentation with the support of multiple modes on SNSs manifests the different cultures of online users and generates cultural construction as other online users can experience multiple cultural practices and meanings. How cultures are formed and practiced in online intercultural communication is analysed in the next section.

4.3 Culture in online intercultural communication

This section aims to conceptualise culture for online intercultural communication. It explores the context of intercultural communication and more specifically online intercultural communication through ELF. In doing this, it begins to explore a range of definitions of cultures which describe culture for online intercultural communication and to ground an understanding of how culture should be conceptualised to inform and/or relate to intercultural communication in electronic media. Drawing on this reviewed information, useful conceptions of culture are discussed in relation to online intercultural communication.

4.3.1 An overview of culture

Culture is acknowledged as a complicated and large concept. Williams (2014: 86), for example, claims that 'culture is one of the two or three most complicated words in the English language'. There are no solid definitions of culture as they are constantly being refined, changed and developed (Giles and Middleton, 1999). According to Risager (2006b: 42), "there has been more or less of a consensus that it was not possible to lay down any 'authorised' definition of culture" that would be applicable in all contexts. Baker (2015) also agrees that a single definition is not possible to cover cultural meanings while the definitions are subjected to revision and change. According to these examples of perspectives on cultural definitions, culture is notoriously difficult to define. Despite the difficulty in defining culture, it is necessary to make extensive reference to this term which can be further drawn on together with its different theories (see 4.3.2) for an understanding of intercultural communication online. Therefore, this section does not aim to offer one clear definition of culture, rather it attempts to expand an idea of culture which describes its characteristics and encompasses the diversity of online intercultural communication.

Baker (2015) proposes four characteristics of culture, including culture as product, culture as discourse, culture as practice and culture as ideology. In relation to online intercultural communication, culture can be simply understood as 'culture as discourse' and 'culture as practice'. Rather than providing a detailed account of these two characteristics (see Baker, 2015;Holliday, 2013;Kramsch, 1998;Risager, 2006b;Swales, 1990), their meanings are discussed and how they relate to cultures of online intercultural communication.

Regarding 'culture as discourse', it can be defined as "membership in a discourse community that shares a common social space and history and common imaginings. Even when they have left that community, its members may retain, wherever they are, a common system of standards for perceiving, believing, evaluating and acting. These standards are what is generally called their 'culture'" (Kramsch, 1998: 10). The communication in this regard is not bound physically but scattered around the world through mechanisms of intercommunication, such as phone, email, and blogs. According to this notion, however, 'discourse community' refers to a group of people and the participants need to share some specific lexis. Culture as discourse, as such, can happen in online intercultural communication when a particular online group is formed for participants who share purposes and genres in communication via different online platforms, such as web blogs and emails. An online group of local cyclists may be an example in which participants aim to share cyclist experiences, activities and information about bicycle equipment. Considering the wider engagement of online users who share a particular goal and/or topic of communication, 'communities of practice' provides broader systems of online intercultural communication in which diverse members engage in the communities (see 3.7). Whilst 'culture as discourse' presents some aspects of online intercultural communication as discussed, it cannot fully explain the complex nature of all online intercultural communication in this thesis.

'Culture as practice' is also a useful characteristic of culture for an understanding of culture in online intercultural communication. Baker (2015: 56) considers culture, according to this approach, as constructed and subjective and occurring only through interaction. According to Risager (2006b: 49), culture as practice stresses how "the symbols are created and recreated in 'the negotiation' between people in interaction". 'Culture as practice' can represent the nature of culture in online intercultural communication in the sense that online users experience different cultures from their online interaction. They can enact their cultures and

discover those of others as well as develop their understanding of different cultures and perhaps the impact of digital media on intercultural interactions. Baker (2015: 56) highlights that cultures can be approached at many different levels or scales from this perspective as we are able to examine the construction of national cultures, ethnic cultures, regional cultures, work cultures, family cultures and so forth, without contradiction. This view of culture is considered in this thesis as it reflects the dynamic and complex nature of culture, involving and/or emerging from online users' interactions.

Reiterating the dynamic nature of online intercultural communication due to a large number of different English users, a variety of modal features are available in online communicative mediums (3.3.1, 3.4.3), modal affordances (3.3.2) and different networked resources (3.3.3). Culture as flexible, dynamic and negotiable fits an understanding of online intercultural communication through ELF. Baker (2009a: 568) clearly advocates that "cultures in ELF should be conceived as liminal, emergent resources that are in a constant state of fluidity and flux between local and global references, creating new practices and forms in each instance of intercultural communication." Breslow and Mousoutzanis (2012: xii) also admit the flow nature of culture online through what they term 'cybercultures'. They state:

> "Cybercultures know neither boundaries, nor limitations, nor inhibitions. They are the *ne plus ultra* expression of flow spreading as, when, and how they can. Cybercultures do not follow predetermined paths, nor do they exist in predetermined states…Cybercultures do not articulate themselves according to a specific logic, fixed identity, or set of rules determined by one space or another. They flow from one place to place, from node to node, from site to site. In so doing, they rewrite the logics, relationships, meanings, behaviors and subjectivities, heretofore found within any locale, any node, and any site, on the Internet."

As discussed in 3.7, online users have different first languages and cultures. They are regarded as online ELF users who have variable purposes and variable repertoires or resources. They bring different cultures into their online intercultural communication, ranging from local to, national to global according to their individual preferences. Culture in this thesis, therefore, is seen as a complex way of being. It is dynamic, complex, fluid, negotiated and different from individual to individual in online intercultural communication. The next

section discusses a conceptualisation of cultures in online intercultural communication.

4.3.2 Practical conceptions of culture in online intercultural communication

As cultures in online intercultural communication are accepted as dynamic, complex, fluid and emergent (4.3.1), a simplistic notion of one nation, one culture and one language or culture-language-nationality correlation is firmly rejected by critical theories of culture which concern the dynamics, complexity, fluidity and emergence of cultures in modern globalised societies. This section aims to understand the concepts of these critical theories. It starts to discuss 'cognitive theories' and semiotic theories' in order to ground an understanding of culture and language. Then, the wider conceptions of culture are discussed based on the complexity of cultures and languages (Baird *et al.*, 2014) in online intercultural communication.

4.3.2.1 Relevant theories of culture to online intercultural communication

4.3.2.1.1 Cognitive theories of culture

Culture is mainly understood as shared knowledge in cognitive theories of culture (Risager, 2006b;Sieck *et al.*, 2010). The theory emphasizes exploring systems of concepts through their linguistic labels and comparing them across languages in different cultural settings in order to find their underlying principles of organization (Brown, 2006:96). According to Goodenough, culture draws heavily on linguistics (language use) and seeks to discern the 'cultural grammar' which individuals use to categorize and interpret the world (Risager, 2006b).

Cognitive anthropology adopts theoretical elements and methodological techniques from structuralism and linguistics (Simova *et al.*, 2009). It can be divided into three phrases, including (1) ethnoscience (also originally known as "the new ethnography" and "ethnographic semantics") in an early formative period in the 1950s, (2) the study of folk models in the middle period during the 1960s and 1970s and (3) schema theory in the most recent period beginning in the 1980s.

Ethnoscience views culture as systems of knowledge or mental dispositions rather than behavior or artifacts (Brown, 2006), as can be seen from a famous passage by Goodenough (1964: 36):

> "A society's culture consists of whatever it is one has to know or believe in order to operate in a manner acceptable to its members and do so in any role that they accept for any one of themselves. Culture, being what people have to learn as distinct from their biological heritage, must consist of the end product of learning: knowledge, in a most general, if relative, sense of the term. By this definition, we should note that culture is not a material phenomenon; it does not consist of things, people, behaviour, or emotions. It is rather an organization of these things that people have in mind, their models for perceiving, relating and otherwise interpreting them."

According to this view, culture involves mental processes and is concerned with what people know and the ways in which they conceive and think about things in the world. Knowledge is seen as a set of propositions which relate to each other and it can be investigated through language, especially formal structural semantics. The conceptual goals attempt to discern the principles that organize culture in the mind and overlook the influences of environment on these systems. However, it is a fact that culture is complex and influenced by other factors such as experiences. Its process of meaning-making is not necessarily linguistic. The language-based approach to cultural knowledge has, thus, been shifted away from linguistics to cultural knowledge known as "schemas" (Brown, 2006).

Schema theory is known as a system of 'cultural models' (D'Andrade, 1995;D'Andrade and Strauss, 1992;Holland *et al.*, 1987). It is also known as a "folk model" or an "ideational system" which refers to people's explanations for how things work and affect their judgments and decisions which influence their behaviour (Gentner and Stevens, 2014). Under folk theory, people's behaviours and their conscious and unconscious perceptions about the social world are highlighted.

Cultural models are further formulated in conjunction with a connectionist theory of mental processing in that a large measure information processing is mediated by internal mental structures and constructed by association networks built up from repeated experiences without any necessary reference to language (Brown, 2006;Strauss *et al.*, 1997). In other words, meanings are generated from mental states and are shaped by individuals' specific life experiences for activities within particular situations and/or contexts for thinking and decision making. These can also be varied and can change under suitable conditions (Sieck *et al.*,

2010;Strauss *et al.*, 1997). However, cultural models involve linguistic analysis (Brown, 2006;Holland *et al.*, 1987).

Schemas are an important part of most actions since they allow interpretation of what is happening and decisions about how to behave (Strauss *et al.*, 1997: 49). Internalized knowledge can be represented through metaphor to explain the way in which small parts of knowledge built up from experience are organized into schemata (Strauss *et al.*, 1997). This is what they call a neural metaphor of knowledge. Quinn's analysis of American "ideational systems" about marriage and love and Strauss's analysis of work and success are exemplars (Strauss *et al.*, 1997), which demonstrate shared beliefs about these issues in individuals.

Cognitive theories provide explanations for the process of discovering what meanings are and the way in which these meanings arise. They are useful for understanding online intercultural communication in this study in that individuals' communicative meanings can be drawn from shared schemata and these schemata or frames may be further shared in intercultural communication (Baker, 2009b: 37). In addition, the theories can be applied to an analysis of communicative meanings based on participants' mental concepts, since sometimes their ideas about their online intercultural interactions are different and cannot be explained by research categories.

However, it should be noted that cognitive theories are not sufficient to understand cultural meanings. They focus too narrowly on internal mental processes (Geertz, 1993). Baker (2009b) points out that both internal and external elements of culture in theories of culture should be taken into account because internal meanings can be separated from external interactions (Geertz, 1993). The next part discusses semiotic theories of culture, rejecting the internal private view of culture and showing how the theories relate to online intercultural communication.

4.3.2.1.2 Semiotic theories of culture

Semiotics is the study of signs (or synonymously "symbols"). There are two major traditions in modern semiotic theories which were proposed by the Swiss-French linguist Ferdinand de Saussure (1857-1913) and the American pragmatic philosopher Charles Sanders Peirce (1839-1914).

In Saussure's semiotics, "sign" is composed of signifier and signified (Kaartinen and Latomaa, 2011). The former is the carrier of communicative meanings,

including words, phrase, and symbols while the latter refers to the actual meaning from the mental concepts. It is worth noting that according to his concepts, words are not inherently meaningful, so they must be combined with mental states in order to form meanings and be expressed with some perceptible sign vehicle. Kaartinen and Latomaa (2011: 236) present this process as follows to allow an understanding of how communicative meanings are created (see Figure 4.1).

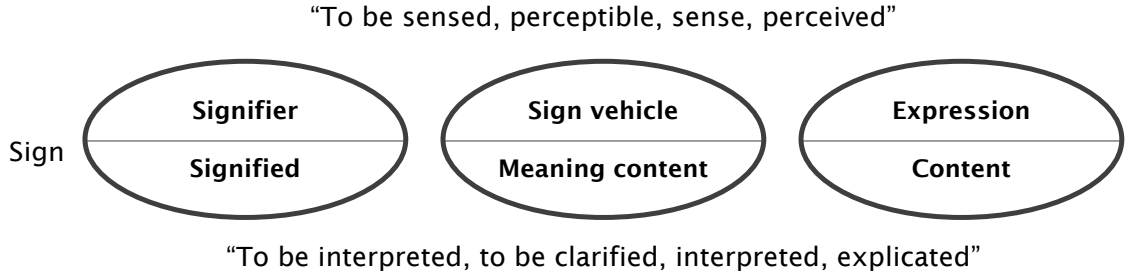


Figure 4.1 Two-member sign

As can be seen, something can be understood when internal meaning contents (signified) are connected through sign vehicles (signifiers). In other words, the understanding process happens when a mental meaning is represented through signs. Saussure's semiotics is useful to gain an insight into how communicative meanings are presented in public.

Pierce's sign theory defines a sign as a triadic relation, as anything is determined by something else. Three types of signs are distinguished under this semiotic theory; a sign, an object and an interpretant (Atkin, 2010). 'Sign' presents (obvious and not so obvious) a similarity between sign vehicle and sign object through pictures, maps or diagrams. For 'object', sign carries meanings about it and has a direct link between the sign vehicle and sign object. That means the sign vehicle represents dissimilar forms of the sign object, for instance, 'smoke' is presented as a sign of 'fire' or 'red and green traffic light' means 'stop and go' and so on. The idea of interpreter involves a complex understanding of the sign's object. It refers to objects in relation to rules, customs, religions, norms, cultures, tradition and social convention. For examples, 'red' implies 'love', 'hot', 'stop', 'anger' or 'danger'. There are unlimited ways of thinking about the meanings of signs which are independent of the physical relationship to the sign users. This

type, therefore, is crucially important for an understanding of the complexity of human communicative meanings.

Linking these two concepts of semiotic (or sign) theories to the study of ELF for online intercultural communication, the theories help to deconstruct the structure and meanings of online contents and interactions, for example, the key themes and topics of communication, the underlying messages in the contents and the influence of the multimodal features of online mediums on practices and forms of online intercultural communication.

It is also interesting to consider Geertz's semiotic standpoint (1993) in that he rejects internal views of culture but rather focuses on the public significant symbols for an understanding of what people think and perceive. Culture is a public creation and its meanings can only be created in public. Therefore, context, or the symbolic system in which the communication occurs, is essential for understanding cultural meaning.

In the same vein, Halliday (1978) views language as a social semiotic and part of an ongoing exchange of meanings. It expresses and symbolizes the social reality in its semantic system in which the reality is encoded and language builds up a picture of that reality which "…..serves as an encoding system for many (though not all) of the others" (p.2). In this way, people learn things and language at the same time through language. Therefore, language is a means of both reflecting and mediating actions (Halliday, 1978;Wells, 1999).

Geertz (1993) and Halliday (1978) discuss how culture is expressed through language or semiotic systems. This queries how culture is part of communication, particularly in terms of the multifarious uses of English globally. It is important to note that the semiotic theories view social systems as changeable due to the different elements of the system (Halliday, 1978). Given the complexity of English use for intercultural communication in an online lingua franca context, the theories have much to offer for this study to understand the connection between individual meanings, linguistic interaction and online context. This point further links to 'multimodal analysis' in 5.6.4. A detailed discussion of the relationship between culture, language and ELF is presented in 4.4.

4.3.2.2 Critical conceptions of culture for online intercultural communication: complexity theory

While cognitive and semiotic theories are drawn on as the foundations for an understanding of cultural concepts in intercultural communication, the complexities of cultures and languages are further considered to understand cultures in intercultural communication in the online sphere.

Given the multiple users and various factors that influence online communication (see 3.4), cultures are unsurprisingly complex (see further discussion of the complexity in relation to cultures, language and ELF as a complex system in 4.4). As such, it is necessary to discuss complexity theory here for its general characteristics and in relation to online intercultural communication.

Complexity (or chaos) theory was developed in the physical sciences and mathematics, and has not been used extensively in the social sciences or specifically in applied linguistics. Baker (2015) argues that based on a relativist position, complexity theory can be considered as an approach to studying languages and cultures in that human actions (physical systems) are dependent on their perceptions and thus social systems relate to human perceptions and actions. Although there are not significant explorations of complexity theory in relation to cultures and applied linguistics in particular, the theory has been brought to the attention of researchers working on intercultural communication (e.g. Baker, 2009b; 2015) and applied linguistics.

Complexity theory involves complex systems or the combination of many elements and/or agents in interaction. Miller and Page (2009: 3) illuminate their ideas about this theory in that:

> "At the most basic level the field of complex systems challenges the notion that by perfectly understanding the behaviour of each component part of a system we will then understand the system as a whole. One and one may well make two, but to really understand two we must know both about the nature of "one" and the meaning of "and"."

According to Miller and Page (2009), complex systems need to be understood as a whole rather than individual parts in order to completely understand the system or phenomenon. In addition to taking a holistic approach to complex systems, it should be noted that complex systems are dynamic as the systems are composed of many elements as earlier mentioned and there are also continual changes in

these elements. Baker (2015: 69) adds that small changes in parts of the system can cause large changes in the overall system, such that interactions are not linear and people can self-organize, self-modify and change anything in their interactions. As in Gleick's notion of 'nonlinearity' (1990: 24), "the act of playing the game has a way of changing the rules". Different components can be mediated in successful ways variously from individuals to individual. Further, interactions can lead to change when it is required for an occurrence of unexpected situations.

The complexity can also emerge from individual self-organisation. Mitchell (2003: 6) explains that "self-organization refers to any set of processes in which order emerges from the interaction of the components of system without direction from external factors and without a plan of the order embedded in an individual component". By this means that set rules are not always functional in interactions, rather, the workable rules can arise from the interaction. Miller and Page (2009: 45) note that "emergence is a phenomenon whereby well-formulated aggregate behaviour arises from localised, individual behaviour". However, as Baker makes clear in his monograph, the emergence of an individual component does not suggest a final state, "The dynamic nature of complex systems means that they are always in a state of emerging but never reaching a final end point" (2015: 70). He stresses that nothing is permanently fixed in complex systems while the constant changes, self-organisation (and perhaps adaptation to other external systems) causes patterns and stabilities to emerge. These characteristics of the complexity theory can be summarised by looking at a useful explanation by Larsen-Freeman and Cameron (2008: 4) "[C]omplexity theory deals with the study of complex, dynamic, non-linear, self-organising, open, emergent, sometimes chaotic, and adaptive systems.". In accordance with what Larsen-Freeman (2011: 52) summarises, "complexity theory seeks to explain complex dynamic, open, adaptive, self-organising, non-linear systems. It focuses on the close interplay between the emergence of structure on one hand and the process of change on the other".

Applying the complexity theory to an understanding of cultures, cultures are seen as complex systems which can be changed and which emerge from cultural contacts. Baker (2015) clearly concludes that cultures are complex in two senses; (1) multiple, on many levels or scales, contested, and fluid (2) adaptive, chaotic and emergent. Here he concludes that cultures are conceptualised as complex social systems which are constantly changing due to, first, relationships or

'networks of individuals' interactions which bring sets of shared knowledge, beliefs, values, attitudes and practices and thus norms and patterns emerge and second, individual variation which brings about new knowledge, beliefs, values, attitudes and practices while older ones are used less. These changes continue without a fixed end point or clear boundary.

Specifically, cultures in online intercultural communication, multi-interactions, multimodal features and various resources online make cultures presented through SNSs complex. Many users can get involved in the same activity (e.g. topic, statement) and this causes a more complex interaction as they present individual ideas which may or may not be different but of course there are lots of details in their interactions which cause complex interpretive cultural meanings. Further, users do not only communicate through text, but they also collaborate using different online features to form their communication. For example, photos presented are related to textual messages and/or external links are posted together with textual statements on SNSs pages. These could provide more complex interpretive meanings because the users who post can present their visions from more angles.

According to the complexity theory, culture as a complex social system provides a holistic approach to culture and thus insights into the dynamic nature of intercultural communication online. The theory is considered as a necessity for being successful in online intercultural communication. The next section discusses the relationships between cultures, languages and ELF for online intercultural communication.

4.4 The relationships between cultures, languages, and ELF for online intercultural communication

In attempting to explain the relationship between language and culture for online intercultural communication, three approaches should be taken into consideration, including linguistic relativity, transnational mobility and complexity theory and emergentism.

Linguistic relativity is one of the most widespread conceptions of the relationship between language and culture (Baker, 2015). Sapir and Whorf hypothesise that "the "real world" is to a large extent unconsciously built on the language habits of the group. No two languages are ever sufficiently similar to be considered as representing the same social reality" (Sapir, 1964). Baker (2015) makes clear that

this hypothesis contains two interpretations; the strong form and the weak form. While the strong form focuses on the control of language in our own worldview, the weak form rather corresponds to the use of English for online intercultural communication in that different languages influence ways of conceptualising and perceiving the world. The ways in which users contact other users who do not share the same mother tongue or culture through SNSs, gives rise to opportunities to understand the linguistic and cultural practices of these others and shape their traditional ideas of their first cultures to match wider global views. This is further enhanced by the multimodal features of the communicative platform which let users experience various visual linguistic and cultural interactions through texts, pictures, and videos, for example.

Transnational mobility is another useful conception of the relationship between language and culture which can be considered. Risager (2006a; 2006b; 2007; 2008) provides an extensive and detailed discussion of the relationship between language and culture. She claims that the relationship between language and culture is complex (Risager, 2008) and that this relationship is re-created in every new communicative event (Risager, 2006b). In her view, transnational mobility is an alternative way to understand the complexity of languages and cultures as consequences of (local) and transnational flows. This 'Transnational paradigm' is formulated based on the concept of 'linguaculture' (Risager, 2008) or alternatively 'languaculture' (Risager, 2006a, 2006b, 2007). It presents an awareness of the contingent nature of the national and foregrounds individual meanings and practices in shifting contexts. It is interesting to note that the emphasis in communication is not on a national standard norm, but rather there is variation and variability in linguistic practice and there are many local linguistic norms. Risager (2007: 170) writes that "language as cultural practice is a carrier of various types of meaning, and the intention is to argue that language is never linguaculturally neutral." That means, according to Baker (2015: 78), that there is nothing inherent in the linguistic forms of the language itself that 'carries cultural baggage' or cultural scripts. Languages are socially embedded and differentiated. People develop linguistic and cultural resources in social interaction and these resources are personal, though shared with others to a greater or lesser extent. Therefore, 'language' and 'culture' are different from individual to individual, characterized by a specific perspective and a specific horizon of understanding. It is too simplistic to maintain that language and culture are always inseparable (Risager, 2008). This concept aligns with current online communication research. The way in which communication on SNSs supports fast and economical

communication without the limitations of time and space and contains multimodal features spreads languages and cultures in interconnected global networks. People carry their language resources with them into new cultural contexts and put them to use in perhaps new ways under new circumstances.

Considering language and culture as emergent complex systems is the last approach to the language and culture relationship in this thesis. As earlier reviewed in 4.3.1, culture should be considered as a complex system and this can be applied to language as well. It is true that culture and language are closely linked but separable. Larsen-Freeman (2011: 49) states that language is perceived "as a complex adaptive system, which emerges bottom-up from interaction of multiple agents in speech communities….rather than a static system composed of top-down grammatical rules or principles". Baker (2015) comments that language and culture co-evolve, influence and adapt to each other with fuzzy and blurred boundaries between them.

Linking the relationships of cultures, languages and ELF to intercultural communication online, there is a multitude of different cultures out there on SNSs. Users from different first linguistic and cultural backgrounds have experienced multiple cultures in different forms such as photos, videos, conversation (e.g. message posting, and chat) created by people whom they know their background and identities. English language(s) and cultures in this study, therefore, are considered as dynamic and fluid in communication. They are not bound to a target culture, but rather are emergent resources that may or may not relate to an understanding of communication.

It is accepted in this thesis that languages and cultures in intercultural communication online through ELF are complicated. The question then arises of how online ELF users deal with the dynamics, complexity, fluidity and emergence of languages and cultures in online intercultural communication. This brings the chapter to the next discussion on intercultural communicative competence (ICC).

4.5 (Re-examining) Intercultural communicative competence (ICC)

According to ELF perspectives, ELF users make an effort to achieve mutual understanding and meet communicative goals. It is, thus, interesting to examine which competences are essential and/or are needed by ELF users for successful intercultural communication. This section aims to discuss this aspect by looking

at the notion of intercultural communicative competence in relation to cultural complexity in intercultural communication online. It commences with theories of ICC and then discusses alternative approaches to ICC for intercultural communication through ELF online.

4.5.1 Intercultural communicative competence (ICC)

Intercultural communicative competence, or ICC hereafter, combines communicative and intercultural competence approaches. Baker (2015) notes that communicative competence focuses too narrowly on linguistic and grammatical competence in particular, while intercultural competence concerns wider perspectives on communication such as communicative strategies but ignores the linguistic dimension. The most well-known concepts of ICC are those of Michael Byram and his colleagues, albeit in particular relation to foreign language education (e.g. Byram, 1997, 2003, 2012a, 2012b;Byram and Grundy, 2003;Byram *et al.*, 2001). Therefore, the concepts of ICC in this thesis are discussed and formed based on his research.

ICC refers to the ability to interact effectively with people whose culture differs from our own, using a foreign language (Byram, 1997, 2003;Byram *et al.*, 2001;Guilherme, 2000). Byram *et al.* (2001) defines the concept of the 'intercultural speaker' as someone who is able to interact, mediate, accept and evaluate different perspectives on the world. He discusses the fact that "the intercultural speaker needs intercultural communicative competence, i.e. both intercultural competence and linguistic/communicative competence, in any talk of mediation where two distinct linguacultures are present, and this is something different from and not comparable with the competence of the native speaker." (Byram, 2012a: 89). His quotation apparently concerns ICC for successful intercultural communication among intercultural speakers, and does not regard native speakers' language as the target level of competence. As seen from his proposed model of ICC in Figure 4.2, his concepts move away from the native speaker model of communication and incorporate the knowledge, skills and attitudes essential for intercultural communication.

This model presents a thorough analysis of the influential factors in intercultural communication, comprising of attitudes, knowledge and skills.

Attitude (savoir être) involves the concept of 'decentring' oneself from a personal central position. It focuses on open-mindedness and respect of different

perspectives from one's own. This dimension is an important ability since the way in which people relativise their personal values, beliefs and behaviors to others and suspend disbelief about other cultures and beliefs about their own encourages them to learn about others and to understand which ways they should or should not perform in order to communicate successfully (Byram *et al.*, 2001).

	Skills Interpret and relate (savoir comprendre)	
Knowledge Of self and other; Of interaction: Individual and societal (savoirs)	**Education** Political education Critical cultural awareness (savoir s'engager)	**Attitudes** Relativizing self Valuing other (savoir être)
	Skills Discover and/or interact (savoir apprendre/faire)	

Figure 4.2 Factors in intercultural communication (Byram, 1997: 34)

Knowledge (savoir) comprises two major components; (1) knowledge of social processes and (2) knowledge of how people see oneself and other people (Byram *et al.*, 2001). This dimension enables people to understand their interlocutors such as their cultural, national or educational backgrounds which further facilitates their intercultural communication.

Skills of interpreting and relating (savoir comprendre) refer to the "ability to interpret a document or event from another culture, to explain it and relate it to documents or events from one's own" (Byram *et al.*, 2001: 6). Interpretation and relation skills are useful for considering different social identities and relating these to one's own identity.

Skills of discovery and interaction (savoir apprendre/faire) consist of the "ability to acquire new knowledge of a culture and cultural practices and the ability to operate knowledge, attitudes and skills under the constraints of real time communication and interaction". It is important to find new knowledge and attitudes which can then be integrated with existing ones. This supports people

to know how to communicate with other people by considering their beliefs, values and behaviors (Byram *et al.*, 2001: 6).

Critical cultural awareness (savoir s'engager) is defined as "an ability to evaluate, critically and on the basis of explicit criteria, perspectives, practices and products in one's own and other cultures and countries (Byram *et al.*, 2001: 6). This, according to Corbett (2010: 5), implies the capacity to engage with the political consequences of education, and to be critically aware of cultural behaviors.

Byram's five savoirs of ICC provide important points for successful intercultural communication. They enable intercultural communicators to interact, mediate and negotiate their intercultural exchanges by applying the proposed factors (attitudes, knowledge, skills and cultural awareness) for successful intercultural communication. Baker (2015) discusses the positive aspects of this model in that it removes the problematic concept of native speaker competence and replaces it with the more appropriate notion of ICC which concerns the different competences of intercultural speakers. Further, the model presents a level of dynamism and flexibility at which intercultural speakers need to interpret, interact, mediate and negotiate in intercultural communication. It also emphasises an essential understanding of conflicting and contradictory views or the multi-voiced nature of culture in intercultural communication.

When considering the model in relation to intercultural communication via digital media, it does, however, have some limitations. The model emphasises nation-based views of culture. This position is made clear in savoir s'engager, for example, "critical cultural awareness includes a critique of our own communities and societies as well as those of other countries. It does this because foreign language learning inevitably draws attention to other countries, where the language being learnt is spoken, and to the communities and society of those other countries." (Byram, 2012b: 10). This contradicts intercultural communication online through ELF, which transcends the national boundaries and is not limited to a particular country and/or culture. There is also lack of empirical data to prove which communicative competences relevant to ICC are needed for successful intercultural communication in either pedagogical or online contexts. Regarding these important limitations, the notion of ICC for wider intercultural communication in an online context should be re-examined and this is discussed in the following part below.

4.5.2 Re-examining intercultural communicative competence (ICC) for online intercultural communication

Given the translingual and transcultural nature of online intercultural communication through ELF (see 3.6.2 and 4.2.1), Byram's model of ICC cannot sufficiently respond to intercultural communication through ELF online as its narrow concepts of ICC are based on mainly national and geographically bound cultures and 'foreign' languages. This section aims to explore alternative concepts of ICC which are more relevant to ELF for online intercultural communication. These are symbolic competence and intercultural awareness.

One approach of ICC would be Kramsch's symbolic competence (2009, 2011). Kramsch acknowledges the fluidity of cultures in 'discourse worlds' (2011: 356) According to her notion, symbolic competence involves three aspects as follows:

(1) An ability to understand the symbolic value of symbolic forms and the different cultural memories evoked by different symbol systems.

(2) An ability to draw on the semiotic diversity afforded by multiple languages to reframe ways of seeing familiar events, create alternative realities, and find an appropriate subject position 'between languages', so to speak.

(3) An ability to look both at and through language and to understand the challenges to the autonomy and integrity of the subject that come from unitary ideologies and a totalizing networked culture. (Kramsch, 2009: 201).

According to these three aspects, Kramsch places emphasis on the symbolic competence of making communicative meanings, which is not tied to national languages. She makes clear that symbolic competence is described as a "dynamic, flexible and locally contingent competence" (Kramsch, 2009: 200). It involves "embracing, multiple, changing and conflicting discourse worlds" (Kramsch, 2011: 356). From her standpoint, symbolic competence is, therefore, useful for understanding essential ICC for successful intercultural communication online by using ELF.

Another relevant approach to ICC is 'intercultural awareness (ICA)' proposed by Baker (2015), which perhaps responds to the translingual and transcultural nature of (online) intercultural communication through ELF. He illustrates the key elements of ICA. The model makes important distinctions between different types of knowledge and skills, and different levels of intercultural communication awareness as well as linking the relationships between these elements. There are

three levels, consisting of (1) basic cultural awareness, (2) advanced cultural awareness and (3) intercultural awareness. These three levels of ICA are elucidated as follows:

Level 1: basic cultural awareness involves general understanding of cultures, particularly the first culture (C1) which influences behaviour, beliefs, values and is important in communication. This level also includes an awareness of cultural differences, but it may not include a specific systematic knowledge of these other cultures or the concept of culture itself. Moreover, this level involves an ability to articulate one's own cultural perspective and compare one's own and other cultures in general.

Level 2: advanced cultural awareness involves more complex understandings of cultures and cultural frames of reference. It moves away from essentialist positions to fluid, dynamic and relative nature of cultures. It includes specific knowledge of other cultures and its effects on misunderstanding and miscommunication in the specific instance of intercultural communication. Furthermore, this level involves an ability to make comparisons and to mediate between specific cultural frames of reference.

Level 3: intercultural awareness moves beyond cultures as bound entities to complex views of cultures as liminal and emergent of intercultural communication through ELF. It recognises that cultural references and communicative practices in intercultural communication may or may not be relevant to specific cultures. It also requires abilities of comparison and mediation of the previous two levels and combines with an awareness for dealing with the emergent nature of cultural forms, references and practices in intercultural communication. (Baker, 2011: 204-205).

Baker's model of ICA (e.g., 2009b, 2011, 2015) is different from Byram (1997) in that it is not being based on the national scale and corresponds to the increasing diversity of English use on a global scale in that it concerns the complex, dynamic and emergent intercultural communication in relation to ELF contexts.

Relating these alternative approaches of ICC to understand intercultural communication through ELF, this thesis considers Byram's ICC model as a broad concept of ICC which usefully provides essential skills for intercultural communication with a rejection of native speakers as a target competence. However, as clearly noted the model's limitations mainly about nationally bounded culture, an alternative concepts of intercultural communication

proposed by Kramsch (2009; 2011) and Baker (2015) are also considered to gain an insight of ICC in wider intercultural communication online through ELF.

4.6 Conclusion

In the age of advanced technological communication, SNSs have become increasingly popular online communication mediums in people's everyday lives. They connect people across the globe and allow them to share a range of stories, news, innovations, creations, ideas and their lives through various available multimodal features of the platform, for example texts, photos, videos, and external web-links. It has brought people from different languages and cultures into 'the global community'. As such, SNSs are obviously a transcultural medium of intercultural communication and contain language and cultural diversity. In this thesis, the traditional conceptions of language and culture are reconsidered and aligned with current perspectives on the use of English in globalisation based on cognitive theories, semiotic theories, and complexity theory. The relationship of language and culture for online intercultural communication through ELF is further reconsidered based on three relevant conceptions; 'linguistic relativity', 'transnational mobility' and 'complexity theory and emergentism'. The relationship of language and culture does not correlate entirely on the first and/or on national cultures in online intercultural communication through ELF. Regarding the complexity of language and culture in online intercultural communication through ELF, language and culture are represented and constructed through a variety of processes of communication such as texts, and interactions with multimodal features. It is, therefore, important to examine how ELF online users manage such complexity and fluidity in their online intercultural communication. ICC is further adopted in this thesis to gain a wider understanding of what enables ELF online users to achieve meaningful and satisfactory intercultural communication.

Chapter 5: Research Methodology

5.1 Introduction

As mentioned in Chapter 1: , the aims of this research are to investigate the complexity of online intercultural communication through the use of ELF for online intercultural communication. This chapter elucidates the methodological approach and techniques used to conduct this research. Qualitative inquiry is carried out to understand languages and cultures for online intercultural communication and the perceptions of a particular group towards it. To this end, multiple techniques of data collection are employed to obtain the evidence regarding how participants represent and construct culture online, how they learn and use ICC for successful online intercultural communication and how they perceive and use English language for online intercultural communication. Through qualitative inquiry, the rich description and analysis of these points can be drawn upon to answer the following research questions.

1. What is the role of culture(s) in intercultural communication for online English users?

    a. In what way do Thai international students in the UK represent and construct cultures through their online English intercultural communication?

    b. How do cultures influence Thai international students' online communication in English?

2. What intercultural communicative competences do the participants apply and/or learn for meaningful and satisfactory online intercultural communication?

3. What are the perceptions of Thai international students in the UK regarding English(es) for online intercultural communication?

The chapter commences by discussing rationales for evaluating and selecting methodological approaches and moves on to outline the theoretical framework for this research. This is followed by studied settings (or physical locations), and sites (or SNSs) of data collection. After that, this chapter presents the sampling frame, including strategies for selecting participants, the roles of the researcher

and the ethical considerations and validity of this research. Then, this chapter explains procedures for data collection using four methods. The chapter ends with analytical approaches and a short discussion about the potential limitations of the adopted methodological approach and techniques.

5.2 Rationales for Methodological Approaches

Given the dynamic nature of expressing cultures through language (Baker, 2009b) as well as textual exchanges as a traditional popular way of online communication (Herring, 2010), the qualitative approach is selected and adopted to discuss the nature of the phenomenon investigated. According to Creswell (2013), a qualitative study is an inquiry process used to explore a social or human problem in a natural setting. The researcher can analyse words and report detailed views of informants in order to understand the investigated problem by creating a complex and holistic picture. Muijs (2011) notes that qualitative approaches are suitable for considering the meaning of particular circumstances and through the primarily qualitative approach, the researcher can interpret and understand the communicative meanings of the participants about the investigated phenomenon. Mann and Stewart (2000: 4) suggest that the qualitative approach is naturalistic and commonly used to investigate how people act and react in different forms of 'computer-mediated communication or CMC' as a social setting.

Qualitative approaches sit comfortably in this study with the notion of the human-as-instrument (Lincoln and Guba, 1985) because the mentioned approaches offer the researcher the opportunity to develop insights and gain a profound understanding of conversational situations in the selected online medium. The primary data from differential interactions can be grasped and evaluated as the researcher gets close to practice and makes first hand-sense of what actually goes on in the medium (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011;Lincoln and Guba, 1985;Richards, 2003). Linked to the "person-centred enterprise", proposed by Richards (2003: 9) for the field of language teaching, the qualitative approach can be appropriately adapted to this research because it involves a natural phenomenon which is truly complex and related to Thai participants and situations characterised by diverse variables. Via the qualitative inquiry, the studied participants are able to explain their social practices in online mediums and express their points of view about their uses of English language(s) for online intercultural communication.

Acknowledging multifaceted images of the world (Cohen *et al.*, 2011), the qualitative approach focuses on multiple methods in order to understand and interpret the meanings that participants bring to the phenomenon and the significance of actions from their perspectives (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011;Richards, 2003). This study abides by this qualitative characteristic and deploys a variety of empirical materials; including an online questionnaire, observations, interviews, and a focus group (5.5.2).

A qualitative approach has been chosen over a quantitative one in this research because it deals with natural situations, as discussed above, and this makes assessment of the investigated phenomenon through the eyes of both participants and researchers easier (Richards, 2003). A quantitative approach is applied as a supplementary approach, mainly to find a popular SNS for observation and to select the right individuals who are regularly involved in online communication and can provide rich and varied insights into the investigated phenomenon in further stages of qualitative data collection. As Richards (2003: 10) argues, quantification is only used for specific purposes and as part of a broader approach. A quantitative survey helps with reporting participants' personal backgrounds, behaviour in online interactions, cultural representation, cultural construction, ICC and a snapshot of their perceptions of English(es) and cultures for online intercultural communication. It enables the researcher to map the overall ideas of participants either in order to draw a general picture of the participants or to link to data collected using qualitative techniques.

Rather than terming this study as mixed methodologies which integrates both qualitative and quantitative at one or more stages of the research process (Dörnyei, 2007: 163;Muijs, 2011), here, the qualitative approach plays a critical role in providing rich data for the individual cases and enables the researcher to understand the meaning of conversations, experiences and the-depth perspectives of participants, as discussed above. According to Dörnyei and Taguchi (2010), questionnaires provide rather superficial data and do not examine an issue in depth. For instance, the questionnaire may provide limited data related to learners' reasons and motivations for their responses. Alongside this, there are possible different interpretations of survey questions which cause wide ranging responses to concepts, such as language and culture (see 5.5.2.1 for a detailed discussion of an online questionnaire). On the other hand, qualitative studies are able to provide a greater depth of discussion about the nature of communication processes, such as the way in which the participants

use English, represent and construct cultures in online intercultural communication, what ICC strategies they use or learn for enhancing online intercultural communication and how they perceive the use of English(es) for online intercultural communication.

Previous qualitative studies on English and intercultural communication in online contexts focus on discussions of English conversations online among people of the same nationality (Seargeant and Tagg, 2011), enhancement of ICC (O'Dowd, 2007) and the development of an online course for intercultural communication and intercultural awareness (Baker, 2012b). In this thesis, the qualitative research kit is utilized to understand the 'naturally occurring' use of English in online contexts and participants' explanations of the conversational exchanges and perspectives on ICC and English language used for intercultural communication online with people from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds. The following section discusses research paradigms of this research as a framework to support the methodological approach to experiences of the participants' English(es) for online intercultural communication.

5.3 Theoretical research paradigms

Cohen *et al.* (2011: 5) believe that approaches to methodology in research are situated in 'paradigms'. They define the term as a way of looking at or researching phenomena. Patton (2008: 203) refers to a research approach as a way of breaking down the complexity of the real world. Approaches to research are, in fact, underpinned by different paradigms under which the studied phenomenon can be understood. In order to illuminate the complexity of natural online communication among people from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds, it is necessary to evaluate and select an appropriate approach to frame the research design and data analysis. Interpretivism and ethnography perspectives are considered and applied to probe the investigated phenomenon and practices (1.2 and 5.1) as follows.

5.3.1 Interpretivism

Within the scope of interpretivism (or social constructivism) as Creswell (2013) indicates, qualitative research enables the researcher to listen to the reports about participants' experiences and interpret findings based on the stated experiences and backgrounds of the participants. Interpretivism also provides a framework for researchers to explain the reasons for social actions, grasp the

complexity arising from participants' views on emergent situations, and ascertain the purposes of participants in sharing their experiences, as Cohen *et al.* (2011: 17-18) note. In addition, the specific contexts of people's lives are in focus in order to understand their historical and cultural settings (Creswell, 2013).

An interpretive paradigm is drawn on to study English for intercultural communication using electronic means with an intention to understand 1) the purposes and meanings of participants' conversations, 2) the ways that participants represent and construct cultures and the ICC that they use for their online intercultural communication and 3) their perspectives on English for online intercultural communication. From an interpretive perspective, participants' online conversations are considered together with their clarifications of purposes and meanings of the cited conversations. Under an interpretive paradigm, the research aims for a thick description of the participants' insightful comments on their actions and perceptions of English for online intercultural communication.

Nevertheless, it should be noted that there are methodological alternatives which can be used to explain the meanings of conversation and how people make sense of their experiences and behaviours in online intercultural communication. The distinctive nature of modern communications technology connects people around the world without geographical borders, leading to diversification of language use, cultures and local identities and the blurring of local and global boundaries. Linked to this, ethnography perspectives are applied together with an interpretive paradigm to add another dimension of understanding of the phenomenon investigated in this thesis.

5.3.2 Ethnography perspectives

The concepts and strategies of ethnography are oriented to investigate online representation and construction of culture through the use of English for online intercultural communication. This subsection begins with how ethnographic strategies are employed to the study of English and intercultural communication. Then, it illustrates the application of ethnography concepts to this research.

The strategies of ethnography are used to produce a thick description of how participants use English to interact with people who do not share the same mother tongue in intercultural communication over a period of time. The description in turn helps the researcher to examine and account for the participants' actions and perceptions of language and culture as well as other

variables that lead to shifts in their perceptions of English for online intercultural communication. As O'Reilly (2009) points out, ethnography encourages researchers to see what happens, listen to what is said and ask questions, presenting a complete account of the way of life and culture of a group (Garner and Scott, 2013). It is crucial that ethnography provides insights into the agents of the situations.

This study is informed by an open-ended ethnographic approach (O'Reilly, 2009). The openness refers to points of investigations relevant to contextual factors, individuals, settings and emergent issues (Baszanger and Dodier, 2004;O'Reilly, 2009). Acknowledging the mobility of technology communication, people are able to communicate online with others anytime and from anywhere through various electronic devices according to their choices, preferences and/or convenience. The electronic devices include personal computers (PC), laptops, mobile phones and tablets. Using these devices further affects people's language use, for example abbreviations can be frequently used when they communicate on mobile phones while they are travelling on the train because of the small screen and the need to reply quickly. Taking an open ended approach, this research, therefore, is not limited to a specific electronic tool to collect data from participants, but rather is open to their interactions via any electronic tools. This approach allows the researcher to collect data from multiple sources and to obtain multiple forms of evidence.

In this study, multiple techniques and approaches from an enterprise of ethnography are adopted to gather various forms of data. The research techniques include an online questionnaire (5.5.2.1), observation of online conversations (5.5.2.2), semi-structured interviews (5.5.2.3), and focus group (5.5.2.4). Cohen *et al.* (2011: 220) explain that social reality, experiences and social phenomena are multiple and sometimes contradictory. Therefore, a range of sources are needed to render a full account of the studied phenomenon, thereby helping to illuminate the meanings, actions, behaviors, intentions, and attitudes of participants (Gonzalez *et al.*, 2008) or even issues beneath the surface of observable actions (Cohen *et al.*, 2011). A range of sources also provides opportunities to notice development and changes in ICC based on the longitudinal perspectives of the participants. Cohen *et al.* (2011) further notice that overly relying on a single method possibly distorts a study. Multiple techniques of data collection are also useful to cross-check findings from each kind of data and to determine if there are any existing misunderstandings.

5.4 Sampling frame

This section sets out to discuss how research setting/ site and participants were sampled and recruited. This section also considers the roles of the researcher. At the end of this section is a discussion about the ethical considerations and validity of this research.

5.4.1 Research setting and site

In this research, research setting refers to a geographical place where the researcher conducts fieldwork. It is required even though online communication is the emphasis, and concerns the investigated areas and processes of data collection. The setting chosen for the fieldwork of this research was an international university in the UK. The reasons for choosing this setting are discussed below.

First, the research setting was chosen mainly because of the familiarity of the researcher with the environment which facilitated the accessibility of online observation (5.4.3). Berg (2007) suggests that access to potential participants is important when designating a research setting. Given that online conversations are private and/ or sensitive to some people and only friends or acquaintances are able to view these conversations, the participants (5.4.2) might be suspicious of researchers if the fieldwork was conducted in Thailand because of the limited interpersonal relations between the researcher and the participants. This issue might cause difficulties in getting through to participants and in terms of data collection.

According to Jenkins (2007), ELF is not bound to a geographical location or context but rather happens anywhere around the globe. She further stresses that the nation-state view of language varieties and speech communities (2011) no longer holds true for the majority of English language users around the world. Thus, it is worth making clear here that despite English being prevalently used in Thailand mostly as ELF, as discussed in 2.4.2, this does not mean that Thai users of English communicate internationally only within Thailand. Their use of English for communication with people with different first languages can take place in numerous places around the world. The above shows that the investigation into Thai students' cross-boarder online communication with people around the world echoes the notion of ELF beyond geographic boundaries as well as non-state perspective on English and speech communities.

Added to this, Seidlhofer (2011) notes that globalisation has brought changes to the old notion of face-to-face speech communities. People can now communicate with each other even if they do not live in close proximity. Therefore, the mobility of online communication makes connections across the globe feasible without geographical borders or time constraints. Following this thread of thought, the research setting is not necessarily fixed in only the country where the participants originate. Rather, it can be the place where an investigation of the online communication is conducted.

The second main reason for choosing this setting was the international environment of the selected UK university. There was linguistic and cultural diversity among English language users as well as ELF communication on a variety of topics. Besides, the large number of students in the university from more than 135 countries represented an excellent research site because ELF communication was very likely to take place among these students (Jenkins, 2011). Following this, Thai international students in this university had great opportunities to use English for online intercultural communication with international and/or home students.

Moving on to the research sites, this refers to the platforms on which participants' online communication is carried out. As discussed in 5.3.2, an open-ended ethnographic approach informed the research, so as not to initially limit the research to a specific site of online communication due to the different preferences of the participants. For example, the participants may prefer to communicate with others on different online channels, such as Facebook, Twitter, MSN, Skype, etc. An emphasis on only one online platform would narrow the data received from the survey. Therefore, the survey was employed as the preliminary data source in order to find out which online channels most participants used for their communication and to inform subsequent processes of data collection.

5.4.2 Recruitment and selection of participants

The participants in this study were Thai international students from different disciplines at the selected UK university. Thai international students were chosen because a particular cultural group is necessary for an in-depth understanding of the varying English and cultures in online intercultural communication. In addition, the researcher has a Thai cultural background, allowing insider perspectives on Thai culture to support data analysis.

The recruitment and selection of participants were governed by a non-probability sample (Cohen *et al.*, 2011;Dörnyei, 2007), consisting of convenience, snowball, heterogeneous and purposive sampling. Multiple sampling strategies were employed to recruit participants who regularly used English in online modes for their communication with people from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds. How sampling strategies are utilized to recruit participants is explained below.

Convenience sampling was initially applied to recruit participants (Cohen *et al.*, 2011;Creswell, 2013). This strategy allowed the researcher to seek participants who were suitable for the research (as the English users familiar with intercultural communication under various communicative circumstances) through her personal network.

Snowball sampling was further utilised to recruit participants for the research. This sampling, also known as the 'chain-referral methods' (Cohen *et al.*, 2011), was useful to enlarge the number of the participants because the existing participants acted as informants and also identified further contacts for the researcher via their social networks and personal contacts (Browne, 2005;Heckathorn, 2002;Noy, 2008). Employing this sampling strategy, the researcher built and developed interpersonal relations with the participants and then gained access to online observation.

Heterogeneous sampling was also used so that the study was not limited to participants who used English for online intercultural communication with people from different linguacultural backgrounds. Rather, data was also collected from non-users of English for online communication in order to obtain their different perspectives and ideas or key themes about the use of English language and cultures for intercultural communication.

Altogether, 39 participants took part in the survey in the initial stage of data collection; online questionnaires. These participants were then 'purposively' selected for the subsequent stages, including semi-structured interviews, observation of online conversations and focus group. Twelve participants were firstly chosen from the questionnaire survey for the first round of interviews. Among them, ten participants favoured online communication; whereas two did not have experience in online intercultural communication. The intention of selecting representatives from these two groups was to obtain the different perspectives of participants, as earlier mentioned.

Then, five participants were further chosen from the ten participants for online observation, the second round of interviews and group discussion as they actively used English for online intercultural communication and allowed the researcher to observe their online conversations on Facebook and sent records of their private conversations to the researcher. With their rich experiences of online intercultural communication, they were, as Cohen *et al.* (2011) call it, 'knowledgeable people' with in-depth knowledge of the investigated points and as such, were satisfactory subjects for this research, as Cohen *et al.* (2011) suggest. The selection of participants for each stage of data collection is summarised in Figure 5.1.

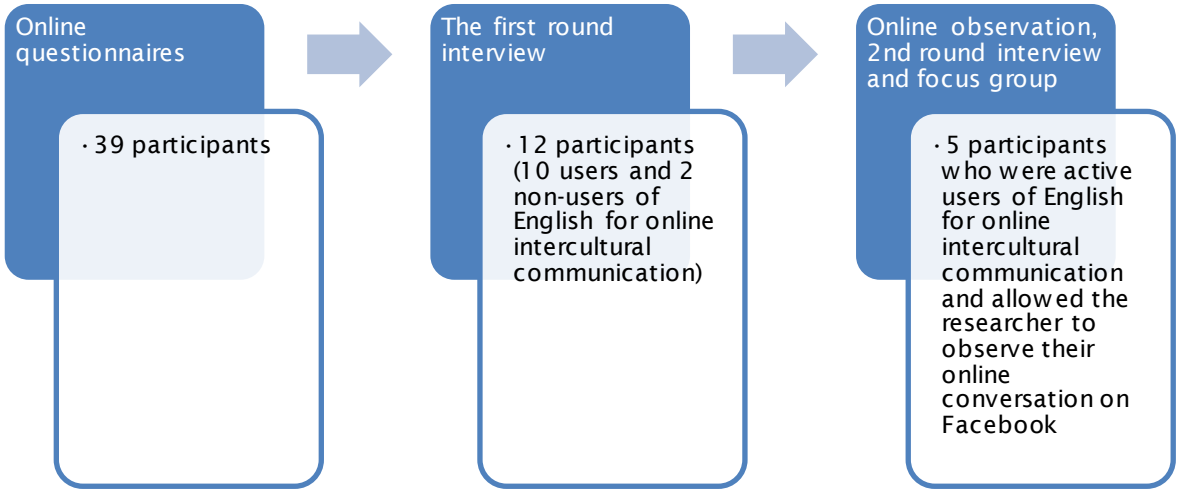


Figure 5.1 The selection of participants for each stage of data collection

5.4.3 Researcher's role

Creswell (2014) indicates that the role of the researcher is essential for qualitative research, as they are the primary data collection instrument for identifying personal values, assumptions and biases at the beginning of the study. The researcher's role in this thesis is explained as follows.

I shared a similar status to the participants as a Thai international student of the University and a Facebook user. These similarities between me and the participants allowed me to approach the participants more easily. As discussed in 5.4.1, I was familiar with the setting and knew some Thai international students, who further helped by suggesting and recruiting more participants. It also increased the reliability of the study as I was able to access the participants' personal profiles on Facebook and carry out observations. Due to my familiarity with the setting and the well-established rapport with participants, my role in the research environment was recognised and accepted by the participants and I was considered to be a reliable rather than an unknown researcher. Consequently, the

participants were willing to explain their situations, elaborate on the meanings attached to conversations, and openly express their feelings about the investigated issues. Additionally, my experiences as a Thai international student and Facebook user allowed me to provide the first-hand and accurate background knowledge about the setting, site and participants. The Thai international student and Facebook users identities also suggest that they have an insider's perspective on the investigated issues emerging from online intercultural communication. Situated in the ethnographic approach to research, the insider perspective is drawn upon to enhance the interpretation of data analysis as discussed in 5.3.2.

This research also considers outsider perspectives in order to gain an understanding of the investigated phenomenon from a wider view. To gain outsider perspectives, I kept a research diary and field notes to record data collection. The former presents my interpretation of the research process as well as the ideas and feelings of the interlocutors about their online conversations on Facebook as I did not participate in the online intercultural communication. The latter were created for people who were unfamiliar with the research to read and give feedback on the notes. By so doing, a review from an auditor can provide an objective assessment of the fieldwork and rebalance the insider and outsider perspectives on the interpretation of data analysis of this research. Keeping a researcher's diary and field notes to get feedback from "outsiders" aimed to prevent subjective judgements about the data analysis and develop a broader understanding of themes and concepts concerning English for online intercultural communication.

5.4.4 Ethical considerations

Ethical considerations are important to the whole process of research and data collection in order to protect and respect the rights of participants (Cohen *et al.*, 2011). Below is a description of how the researcher explained and provided participants with information about the study and the consent forms to complete at different stages of data collection.

At the beginning of data collection, the informed consent form was combined with a participant information sheet and used for online 'iSurvey' questionnaire. The participants needed to sign the consent form by ticking the box on the front web page before they took part in the survey. During the first round of interviews, the researcher provided hard copies of both the consent form and participant information sheet to the selected participants to explain how this research was

being conducted using different research instruments and why. The participants signed the consent forms, indicating their agreement to take part in the interviews, focus group and online observations. At this stage, the researcher applied 'reasonably informed consent' to explain to the participants briefly the research, areas of investigation and data collection processes, as it was impossible for the researcher to inform the participants about everything (Cohen *et al.*, 2011;Mann and Stewart, 2000). All relevant ethical documents, including a student research project ethics checklist, a survey, a consent form, a participant information sheet, a risk assessment, and a research protocol, were approved by the Ethics and Research Governance Office (ERGO) (Appendix A to Appendix F) at the University of Southampton.

Explicit written consent was acquired from all participants. They each retained a copy together with a participant information sheet. It was made clear to the participants that any information obtained as part of this study would be stored confidentially on a password protected computer and iSurvey system. Only the researcher has access to all the information. Where data were made public for academic conferences, for example, participants would be kept anonymous. Furthermore, participants had the right to withdraw from the study at any time.

A further key aspect of ethics is the safeguarding of third party data, as online conversations between participants and their interlocutors were also used in the analysis. The researcher asked those who had communicated with the participants to sign consent forms which were emailed to them as an attachment and emailed back to the researcher in case their online conversations with the studied participants were selected for the data analysis. This practice was applied to conversations, both public and private, such as those that took place on discussion boards, alternatively called the 'Wall' on Facebook and in personal chats. For conversations in the public arena or on the Facebook Wall, however, the researcher did not ask for consent during the observation because if the researcher was able to read the conversations, that meant that they participants intended to display their messages publically and to allow others who were not on their friend lists to see their online conversations and/or interactions.

Through the different stages of data collection and the whole process of research, all ethical principles were followed in compliance with ERGO's regulations. The researcher had full responsibility for the participants' rights and the security of data storage. The participants were able to contact the Chair of the Faculty Ethics Committee in the unlikely case of concern or complaint.

5.4.5 Validity

Validity is the key to effective research (Cohen *et al.*, 2011: 179). It determines whether the research truly measures what it is intended to measure or how truthful the research results are. Creswell and Miller (2000) explain that validity is based on determining whether the findings are accurate from the viewpoint of the researcher, the participants or the readers of an account. Other terms which are used to describe validity are 'trustworthiness', 'authenticity', and 'credibility' (Creswell and Miller, 2000). This section discusses how validity is assessed in this thesis.

Gibbs (2007) indicates that the researcher can check the accuracy of the findings in qualitative research by employing certain procedures. Validity in qualitative research has several principles. Lincoln and Guba (1986: 77) suggest the following criteria for validity in qualitative research; credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. Credibility involves (a) prolonged engagement or lengthy and intensive contact with the phenomena or participants in the field, (b) persistent observation or in-depth pursuit of the phenomena or participants, (c) triangulation or cross-checking of data by using different sources, methods and different investigators, (e) peer debriefing or asking a peer to review and ask questions about the qualitative study, (f) negative case analysis or the active search for negative instances to develop insights and continuously adjust the latter until there are no more negative instances, and (g) member checks or respondents' reactions towards the researcher's reconstruction of the data (what he or she has been told by the participants). In terms of transferability, it includes thick descriptive data or the narrative developed about the context. Dependability and confirmability involve an external audit or a review by someone who is not familiar with the research. Other researchers also agree on other steps to ensure validity in qualitative research, including, for example, prolonged engagement in the field, persistent observation, rich and thick description, triangulation (use of different data sources to build a coherent justification for themes), leaving an audit trail (e.g. leaving documentation and records from the study), member checking/information feedback (e.g. participant validation), peer debriefing (external evaluation of the research), checking for researcher effects or clarifying researcher bias, making contrasts or comparisons between groups, sites and literature, replicating a finding and negative or discrepant information (e.g presenting contradictory evidence) (Creswell, 2014;Onwuegbuzie and Leech, 2007).

In this thesis, the researcher incorporated eight validity strategies to assess the accuracy of the findings. This research occurred in a natural setting and site where English was used for online intercultural communication between the participants and their interlocutors (5.4.1). The research was conducted during an extended period of fieldwork (eight months) to develop an in-depth understanding of the investigated phenomenon (see 5.5.1). There was also persistent observation as the researcher continually observed the use of English for intercultural communication online through prolonged engagement in the field (5.5.2.2). Triangulation was carried out using four different methods to collect the data (5.5.2) and themes were established based on converging several sources of data and cross-checking. There was a rich and thick description to convey the findings (7.3, 7.6, 8.4 and 8.5). Member checking was done by summarising the themes of the interview data and asking the main participants whether they felt that these themes were accurate (5.5.2.3). Peer debriefing was used by continually sending the entire thesis to the research supervisor to review. The whole thesis was presented at postgraduate seminars and conferences over the duration of the thesis. This allowed the researcher to listen to the reflective commentary of audiences at these seminars and conferences and to consider the views of external auditors who were not familiar with this thesis which yielded some interesting ideas which the researcher had overlooked and some additional points for further study (Chapter 10:). These strategies enhanced the overall validity of the research.

5.5 Procedures and methods of data collection: from pilot study to fieldwork

This section explains the stages and methods of data collection. The description begins with the pilot study, highlighting its implications for the fieldwork and indicating the time taken for each method of data collection. Then, the types and purposes of research methods are discussed.

5.5.1 Pilot study to fieldwork

The pilot study took place from November 29 to December 10, 2012 in order to try out four research instruments, comprising of the online questionnaire, interviews, a focus group and online observations. Three participants took part in this process. They were all female aged between 30 and 39 years old. They were PhD students in Health Sciences, Engineering and Electronics and Computer

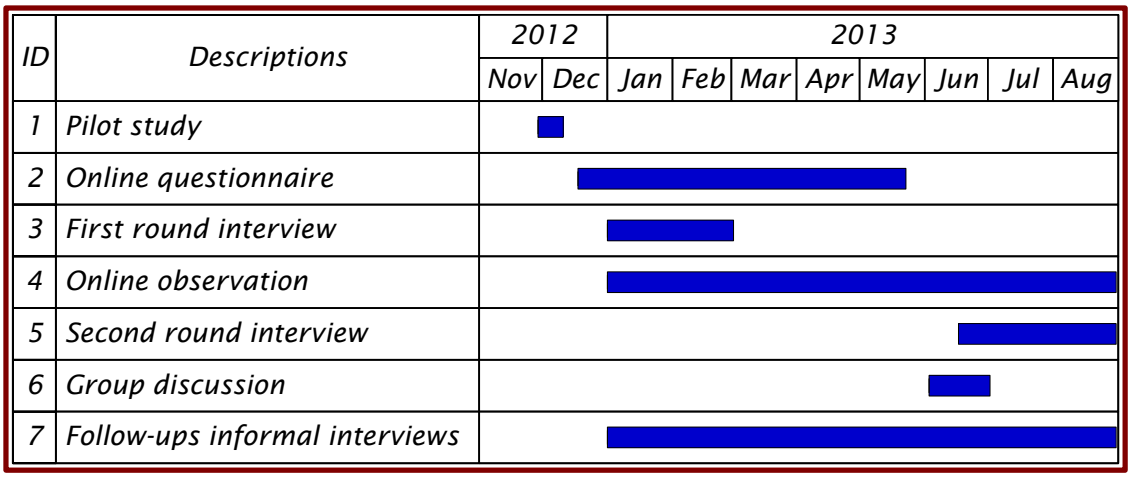
Science. This pilot study aimed to help the researcher to check the questionnaire and discover if any questions, items or styles needed further revision. As Oppenheim (1992) explains, a pilot questionnaire helps to identify what should be included, excluded, and revised to ensure quality. The results of the pilot study also helped the researcher to ponder over the issues that emerged in the interviews and focus group. The other aim was that participants' feedback regarding language use, clarity of the questions and suggested points was drawn upon to reformulate the interview questions and improve the main study as Arthur and Nazroo (2003) suggest. Furthermore, as Gilbert (2001) observes, in the pilot study, potential practical problems can be identified and sorted out to ensure the feasibility of using these methods in fieldwork in the main study. Gilbert's observation holds true to the pilot study for this research. Through piloting the focus group discussion, for instance, the researcher polished moderation skills to keep the discussion of participants focused on the provided topics and to stimulate the discussion in situations when participants ran out of ideas. Piloting online observation also helped the researcher to plan how to retrieve the online conversation recordings from participants and practice negotiating access to the records of their online intercultural communication. Next is the discussion of the main study.

Leading to fieldwork of the study, it ran over eight months between mid-December, 2012 and mid-August 2013. The time taken for the main study was slightly different and longer than expected (as shown in Appendix F) due to the long processing time for the ERGO application before the fieldwork and the availability of participants during holidays.

The process started with distributing the link to the iSurvey questionnaire to participants via emails to different groups of Thai international students at the selected setting (5.4.2). The fieldwork then moved on to the first round of interviews. During the interviews, interviewees were asked about their willingness to take part in observation of online conversations on Facebook's wall or its private messages. The fieldwork moved on to the next stages of data collection through the online observations, the second round of interviews, and group discussion. Participants' online conversations were observed as agreed in the first round of interviews and text messages were retrieved from participants as negotiated. Participants were asked to join the second round of interviews and group discussion afterwards. It was worth noting that the time taken for each method overlapped, depending on the availability of participants.

At the end of fieldwork, the researcher and most of the participants went to a meal as a thank you for their active participation and collaboration with the data collection. All of them were still in a regular contact with the researcher through Facebook. The timeline for employing all four methods of data collection in this study is exhibited chronologically in Figure 5.2.

Figure 5.2 Timeline for applying the four methods of data collection



5.5.2 Research instruments of data collection

As mentioned, four methods were utilised to collect data for this research, so the rationales, and purposes for developing each method to carry out fieldwork are considered in this section. The discussion is presented in the order of online questionnaire, interviews, online observations and focus group.

5.5.2.1 Online questionnaire

An online questionnaire was carried out at the beginning of the process of the fieldwork through the electronic system of the chosen setting called iSurvey. It was carried out to aid the selection of participants and online medium for the subsequent stages of data collection. The obtained data served as a supplement to aid the analysis of the main data. Questionnaire data analysis was also compared and contrasted with the analysis of other types of data.

This instrument was chosen as the most efficient and convenient way to collect the preliminary data. Rather than using a paper based questionnaire, the web-based survey helped the researcher to reach a larger and more diverse group of respondents within a short time in an economic manner and readily processable form and thus find out the potential number of qualified persons who were willing to participate in other procedures of data collection (Baker, 2009b;Cohen

et al., 2011;Dörnyei, 2007, 2014). Also given the fact that this instrument could be administered without the presence of the researcher, the survey information collected could render reliable data because the respondents could complete the questionnaire in private without potential threat or pressure caused by the researcher's presence, as Cohen *et al.* (2011: 404) suggest.

However, this research also considered the pitfalls of self-administered questionnaires without the presence of the researcher. Creswell (2014) argues that questionnaires often result in rather superficial data and cannot probe deeply into an issue. In line with Creswell's point, this research employed other methods to avoid eliciting superficial information from participants, aiming for an in-depth understanding of the investigated phenomenon (see 5.5.2.2 to 5.5.2.4). Furthermore, the absence of the researcher discourages queries from respondents, leading to potential misinterpretation of questions and/or choices, and inaccurate answers (Cohen *et al.*, 2011). To overcome the aforementioned pitfalls, the researcher employed a Thai version of the questionnaire to collect data, keeping the survey as short as possible with four pages, including consent form and 'thank you' note. It was more reasonable to provide the questionnaire in the Thai language, given that Thai international students were the only respondents. In addition, completing the questionnaire in their first language made it easier for Thai respondents to understand some difficult concepts, such as the technical terms related to this research. Thai and English versions of the questionnaire are presented in Appendix G and Appendix H.

Although, as Dörnyei (2014: 69) points out, online surveys are still infrequently adopted in second language research, it was appropriate for this research as Internet access is ubiquitous and the university web-based iSurvey is user-friendly which helped with access to scattered and busy respondents. By revising Baker (2009b), the online questionnaire was created. Baker's questionnaire was drawn upon and adapted for this study because his survey was related to intercultural communication, albeit his study had a different focus. In addition, this questionnaire could provide answers to a range of questions that this research set out to explore.

The questionnaire was divided into two main sections. The first section aimed to obtain participants' personal background information and the second section focused on participants' perspectives on culture and the use of English for online intercultural communication with people from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

Two types of questions were employed in the design of the online questionnaire. Closed ended questions were incorporated into both sections. This type of questions was used because the nature of questions makes them easy to answer, further boosting the response rate. Besides, answering closed-ended question is not time consuming for the respondents because this type of question provides ready-made response options for respondents (Dörnyei, 2014).

The online questionnaire also adopted open-ended questions because they allowed 'other' ideas or reasons not included in the response options to be made in some blank spaces. This prevented 'missed' information, thereby creating an opportunity for respondents to raise issues or items that the research did not anticipate and include them in the online questionnaire as Dörnyei (2014) suggests. As Oppenheim (1992) emphasizes, some questions may be more suitable in an open rather than a closed format because respondents can express opinions freely in open-ended questions without the frustration of being limited to choosing from ready-made options in the closed-ended ones. Examples of open questions in the online questionnaire were those concerning language proficiency, the nationalities of respondents' interlocutors, and rationales for and experiences of using online communication.

The first section of the online questionnaire constituted single and multiple choice questions with short text response items. The purposes were to gather background information about the respondents, including personal data (name, age, gender, degree currently being studied, study year, faculty, and discipline), ability to communicate in different languages in addition to Thai and English, English language learning history or language learning in extra courses outside school and/ or university, and sojourn experience. They were also asked to provide the result(s) of their English language proficiency test(s) in order to consider whether their English language competency affected how they used English for online intercultural communication. Lastly, participants responded to the question of how frequently they used English to communicate with NESs and NNESs in person and online, and how they represented their English usage.

The second section included single and multiple choice questions with short text responses. These questions aimed to gain information from participants about their online communication practice, such as how often they used SNSs, the electronic tools that they used for their online intercultural communication, who they communicated with, how often their online intercultural communication occurred, and the ways that they represented and constructed cultures. The

respondents were provided with items and asked to rank them in order by assigning a number to each item in the order of their purposes of online communication. Finally, Likert scale questions were utilised for gaining respondents' perspectives on culture(s) and their use of English language for online intercultural communication. Online questionnaires are presented in Appendix G and Appendix H.

With specified questionnaire alternatives, respondents could not extend their answers or give unanticipated information (Baker, 2009b). In addition, this only allows for 'objective' answers and insight into the superficial behaviours and perspectives of participants. Other methods were, therefore, required to gain more detailed information from their explanation and clarification that further encouraged the researcher to go deeper into their subjective feelings and/or meanings.

5.5.2.2 Observation of online conversations

To understand the use of English language and cultural interactions, it is essential to investigate participants' experiences in natural situations and thus observation was utilized.

Observation allowed the researcher to enter naturally occurring social interactions and gather 'live' data. This provided an opportunity to directly learn from what people actually did, not from their retrospective or anticipatory accounts of what was done in certain situations (Cohen *et al.*, 2011;Mann and Stewart, 2000;Robson, 2011). As Baker (2009b: 114) comments on the advantages of intercultural encounters to the study of intercultural communication, participants' beliefs, attitudes, knowledge and skills can be ascertained from observed behaviour during communication. Observation was a useful research technique for this research because it illuminated the contextual elements of the phenomenon investigated. It also helped the researcher to capture complex interrelations between these elements and studied areas/or participants (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007;O'Reilly, 2009).

In this research, the aim of observation was to investigate how participants represented and constructed their cultures through English and their online interactions with others. By observing, the researcher obtained information about what was going on during everyday interactions and acknowledged contexts of communication. Further, observation revealed the unspoken issues that might be sensitive for the participants and/or that they may feel uncomfortable talking

about in the interviews or group discussion. As a result, observation prevented 'missed' data and afforded a deeper understanding of studied social practices, as Cohen *et al.* (2011) and O'Reilly (2009) suggest. As Robson (2002; 2011) indicates, observation is a tool to cross-check the analysis of other data resources because what people do may differ from what they say they do. By this, the data obtained from observation can be compared and contrasted with perception-based data collected from the online questionnaires, interviews, and focus group. Scholars (Cohen *et al.*, 2011;Dörnyei, 2007;Robson, 2011) question the validity of perception-based data by highlighting its limitations due to factors, such as participants' memory, and ability to convey intended message, as well as the issues that participants prefer to talk about or ignore. The implication of the discussion above for this research is that observation was utilized in combination with other methods in order to offer insightful understanding of the studied contexts.

Observational data were collected from participants' interactions in both Facebook's wall and private Facebook messages over eight months as shown in Figure 5.2. As Mann and Stewart (2000) and Cohen *et al.* (2011) suggest, despite that observational data is relatively time-consuming to gather, it provides detailed information and provides insight into the investigated situation. By being immersed in the Facebook observation for a long period of time, the researcher became adequately skilful to identify the changes and capture the dynamic interactions and 'get under the skin' of behaviour and situations as ethnographic concepts.

The reviewed literature shows that researchers play various roles when carrying out observations. In this research, I took the roles of 'participant-as-observer' and 'observer-as-participant' (Gold, 1958). As the 'participant as observer', I observed the online conversations of the selected participants on Facebook. My status as the researcher was overt to the participants since acceptance as a member of their online groups was needed. Taking this role, I blended into the medium in order to observe and record all participants' conversations with their interlocutors from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds without disturbing or joining their interactions. In this way, I was able to gather a rich description and 'get a feel' for participants' interactions, as Schensul *et al.* (1999) suggest. Through longitudinal observation, I familiarized myself with how participants communicated and represented and constructed cultures as well as how they coped with situations when communication problems occurred.

In the role of 'participant-as-observer', I, however, needed to take the issue of 'going native' into consideration. Kawulich (2005: 4) argues that this role consists of a degree of subjectivity and sympathy. That means researchers may adopt the groups' values, norms and behaviours as their own so that researchers may stop being objective in the investigated contexts. Blommaert and Jie (2010: 17) also comment that the 'self-perception' or 'subjectivity' of the researchers influences how they select observational issues to address. This difficulty can be aided by casting the researcher in the role of 'participant-as-observer'. In this research, this helped me not to get too close to or too far from what was being observed. The passive nature of the role of 'participant-as-observer' can avoid the risk of going 'native' in the contexts whilst the sense of objectivity still persists (O'Reilly, 2009). Further, for this research, the aforementioned pitfall of observation can be overcome by using follow-up inquiries into the observed issues through the second round of interviews (5.5.2.3). By doing so, I listened to the direct or implied meanings in participants' conversations and their perspectives on the situations.

The 'observer-as-participant' was another role that I played to collect data from participants' private messages on Facebook. Taking on this role, I was not a member of the group but known as a researcher. Practically, the participants emailed their conversation records to me directly. There were some ethical concerns with this role with regard to the fact that the conversations took place privately between the participants and their interlocutors who may have felt uncomfortable with the observation despite the main participants' consent. In this regard, the third party's privacy must be protected in that the participants' interlocutors needed to consent to the observation of their private conversations (5.4.4).

Observational data was written text from both Facebook's wall and private messages with multimodal features surrounding the texts, such as images, news links, descriptions of the topics posted, etc. because these multimodal features were vital parts of the collected conversations. As O'Reilly (2009) and Cohen *et al.* (2011) suggest, field notes were taken during online observations to keep a record of the researcher's first impressions, reflections, feelings and thoughts, and contextual facts. In this research, the researcher took notes relating to descriptive information about the situations investigated, including the times and dates of participants' online conversations, response time between participants and their interlocutors, their conversational topics, the names of their

interlocutors to identify their nationalities during the interview process, and any problematic issues that emerged from their conversations, for examples. These notes were used to remind the researcher of the situations, thereby facilitating the analysis of online intercultural interactions, as Blommaert and Jie (2010), Cohen *et al.* (2011) and O'Reilly (2009) suggest.

5.5.2.3 Interviews

Interviews were used to probe how participants described and perceived English, cultural representation and construction and ICC through online intercultural communication as well as their interpretation of their conversations. As discussed in 5.5.2.1, analysing online questionnaires may not afford an in-depth understanding of the issues to be investigated because they only provide superficial data (Creswell, 2014;Dörnyei, 2007).

To address these issues, interviews were used to complement online questionnaires and observations for the following reasons. The first reason was that the interviews could be used to follow-up interesting points from participants' answers in the online questionnaire. The second reason was that the interviews created opportunities for participants to elaborate on issues related to personal information, experiences, motivations, reasons and perceptions which cannot be explained in detail through the online questionnaire, as Cohen *et al.* (2011) suggest. Third, communicative meanings cannot always immediately be understood at first glance and thus interviews made interpretation possible. Lastly, the interviews validated issues investigated by the survey and observation, as Bryman (2016) and Cohen *et al.* (2011)advocate.

Biases of the researcher and participants were crucially kept uppermost in the researcher's mind. The researcher's shared nationality with the participants necessitated control of the interview's direction because the participants may have provided positive answers to satisfy the researcher. The researcher still needed to avoid being judgmental despite her inside knowledge of Thai culture to facilitate data analysis. By this, the researcher means that the power relationship with regard to social ethics in Thai culture was considered (e.g. the young tend to listen to the elderly; newcomers listen to the more experienced). To avoid the potential impact of these social ethics on data resources, the researcher decided not to ask the participants demographic questions during the interviews in order to encourage interviewees to express their ideas and perspectives freely and independently. Another thing to consider was that participants' professional

experiences may affect their interpretations of the situations to various degrees. In this case, the participants were selected from different disciplines (see 5.4.2).

The interviews were semi-structured. This type of interview is suitable for investigating a phenomenon after the researcher has an overview of participants' data from the questionnaire survey and can create related or follow-up questions for interviews, as Dörnyei (2007) suggests. The structures of the interviews and the questions were adjusted and altered in accordance with the interview circumstances and participants' constructs (Cohen *et al.*, 2011). The same main questions were asked to interviewees but the order of questions and their wording varied. The main interview questions are presented in Appendix I. In alignment with the notion that the content of interviews is socially co-constructed by interviewer and interviewees (Fontana and Frey, 2005) and 'directiveness' (Cohen *et al.*, 2011), the researcher asked interviewees the follow-up questions, creating opportunities for interviewees to elaborate on the unanticipated answers, ideas and suggestions on a particular topic. Besides, supplementary and confrontational points were utilized to question or stimulate the participants to evaluate and express their critical ideas and perspectives.

The first and second rounds of interviews were conducted over an extended time period (Figure 5.2). The first round of interviews was performed after the questionnaire survey. The underlying principle was to fully explore participants' responses in accordance with the results of the analysis of the questionnaire survey. Further, the first round of interviews focused on what made them think about English for online intercultural communication in a particular way.

In the second round of interviews, five participants whose online conversations had been observed were interviewed. The second round of interviews focused on the follow-up questions regarding the issues that had emerged based on the researcher's observations. An example of a new question about the observed online intercultural communication is as follows: why did the participants choose certain topics when conversing with each other and were there any implied meanings of their conversations? The second round of interviews also encouraged the participants to think about the questions in the first round of interviews and comment on whether all their answers to the previous questions remained the same.

The duration of each individual interview was about 40 minutes. The total interview time for the first round of interviews with 15 participants was

approximately seven and a half hours. The second round of interviews took about three hours in total with the five main participants. The participants were interviewed in Thai, as it was the first language of the interviewees and the researcher.

All these interviews were audio recorded with the permission of the interviewees. One advantage of recording interviews was that it allowed the researcher to engage in the participants' responses and discuss with interviewees any emerging issues, as Legard *et al.* (2003) advocate. By doing so, the interviewees could answer questions independently without any worries about whether the researcher could follow them or interrupt their responses. Moreover, recording prevented the researcher from losing data, which could happen if the interviews only relied on the memory of the researcher. It is, however, worth mentioning that notes were made during the interviews to allow the researcher to remember important or emerging issues from the interview discussions. Furthermore, informal follow-up interviews were conducted in occasional situations via casual social meetings between the researcher and participants and through telephone conversations.

5.5.2.4 Focus group

A focus group was utilised to obtain a collective view of the participants. This method was used in collaboration with other methods of data collection, such as an online questionnaire, interviews and observations. As Cohen *et al.* (2011) and Finch and Lewis (2003) suggest, a focus group elicits a range of perspectives on the issues investigated. Robson (2002; 2011) further notes that participants are encouraged to articulate their opinions on the provided topics, leading to collaborative development of the themes. In this way, the researcher was able to gain a more holistic view of the investigated situations from the multiple perspectives of the participants.

The aim of conducting a focus group was to discuss participants' experiences of online intercultural communication and their perspectives on the use of English online, cultures and ICC. Appendix J presents the guidelines for the focus group in which participants discuss and the moderator leads the discussion. The focus group was carried out in June 2013 during the process of the second round of interviews and online observations (Figure 5.2). The five participants who took part in the focus group were those who participated in the second round of interviews and whose online conversations were observed. During discussion,

participants demonstrated a range of perspectives on using English and their indigenous points of view about the way in which they used English for online intercultural communication and how to achieve the goals of communication. The group discussion took place in a private study room of the library of the selected setting of this thesis (5.4.1), which was very quiet and ideal for generating lively discussion. This focus group discussion lasted for about 50 minutes and was audio recorded.

While conducting the group discussion, the moderator control technique was applied in order to tackle several problems and practical issues of this method. According to Smithson (2000), a frequently encountered technical issue of focus groups that the moderator has to deal with is the group dynamics. Also, some members of focus groups over-talk and dominate the discussion. Other issues, such as intragroup conflict and shortage of ideas also need to be considered. As discussed in 5.5.1, the pilot study catered for the aforementioned issues so that the researcher was able to predict the possible problems with leading the group discussion. For instance, several questions were posed to stimulate participants to elaborate on the given themes in case participants did not have ideas to engage in discussion. The researcher also provided opportunities for the participants who were less involved and/or talked more slowly than others to express their ideas.

5.6 Data analysis approaches

As multi methods were used to collect data in this thesis (5.5.2), different analytical approaches were applied to analyse the four types of data. This section aims to elucidate the overall analytical approaches used in this research.

Four analytical approaches were applied to interpret and gain in-depth understanding of the data. These included frequency distribution for data from the online questionnaires, content analysis for the data from interviews, focus group and online observations. Latent content analysis was applied together with content analysis to analyse specifically the focus group data. In addition, multimodal analysis was used in collaboration with the content analysis to analyse the data from the online observations. These four analytical approaches are explained in the following sections.

5.6.1 Frequency distributions

A 'frequency distribution' was used to analyse the quantitative data from the online questionnaires. The main aims of using this analytical approach were to find out how many participants regularly used English for intercultural communication online with English users of different first languages and cultures, and what was the most popular online platform for online communication among the participants (Muijs, 2011). The frequency distribution could also show the statistics of participants' personal information, their experiences and perceptions of using English for online intercultural communication, which could further be used to support an analysis of data obtained from the other three approaches (7.3, 7.6, 8.5 and 8.5). The 'frequency distribution' was conducted in SPSS because it is the most common statistical quantitative data analysis software, as Muijs (2011) claims. The next part discusses analytical approaches to qualitative data in this research.

5.6.2 Content analysis

Content analysis is a method of analysing written, verbal or visual communication messages (Cole, 1988). It is "a research technique for making replicable and valid inference from texts (*or written communicative materials*) to the contexts of their use." (Krippendorff, 2004: 18). More explicitly, content analysis is a method of describing, counting and analysing visual and textual artefacts.

Content analysis is often used to analyse large quantities of written data by using categorisation as an essential feature to reduce the large quantities of data (Flick, 2009). Put simply, it is used to quantify research data by means of a technique called "coding". It allows the researcher to test theoretical issues and enhance understanding of the data by distilling words into fewer content related categories (Elo and Kyngäs, 2008). Cohen *et al.* (2011: 564) explain that content analysis involves categorising (creating meaningful categories into which the units of analysis words, phrases, sentences, etc. can be placed), coding, comparing (categories and making links between them), and concluding (drawing theoretical conclusions from the text). Content analysis may be applied to analyse the intersection of culture, social structure and social interaction, for example (Weber, 1990). It can be undertaken with all sorts of qualitative data, such as transcripts of interviews, protocols of observations and documents, etc. (Mayring, 2000).

In this thesis, content analysis was used to analyse the qualitative data from the interviews, focus group and online observations. It aimed to attain a condensed and in-depth understanding of the use of English for online intercultural communication by establishing and categorising themes for manifest content. Themes of the content were established and categorised based on 'inductive category development' and 'deductive category application' (Mayring, 2000;O'Reilly, 2009;Patton, 2008).

5.6.2.1 Inductive category development

Inductive category development formulated categories' definitions of concepts, themes or patterns of coding based on the research objectives and research questions (1.2). This process included open coding, creating categories and abstraction. With open coding, many headings and notes were written while reading through the data to describe all aspects of the content. These were then narrowed down by grouping similar and different data in order to reduce the number of categories. Categories aimed to provide a means of describing the investigated phenomenon, increase understanding and generate knowledge (Elo and Kyngäs, 2008). The categories were revised and eventually reduced to only the main ones and checked with respect to quality. Abstraction was used to create a general description of the research topic through generating categories. A description of each category was given. Subcategories with similar content were grouped together with the main categories.

5.6.2.2 Deductive category application

Deductive category application was applied to analyse data based on previously formulated or existing themes (Mayring, 2000). It determined which contents could be coded within formulated categories. This approach helped with the testing of categories, concepts, models or hypotheses. In other words, the deductive category application helped to examine data that suited or did not suit already developed themes.

In sum, the inductive category aimed to formulate or develop thematic categories while deductive orientation was employed to link data to the existing themes and create new categorisations or concepts if aspects did not fit the formulated categorisations.

Apart from the content analysis, other analytical approaches were used collaboratively in order to support in-depth interpretation of data from the focus

group and online observations. The following parts elucidates 'latent content analysis' and 'multimodal analysis' as a coordinated approach to analysing data from the focus group for the former and online observations for the latter.

5.6.3 Latent content analysis

Latent content analysis is one of the two primary aspects of content analysis. The other is manifest content analysis and it was regarded as content analysis as discussed in 5.6.2, because the themes of all the qualitative data in this thesis were categorised according to the surface and easily observable content.

Potter and Levine-Donnerstein (1999: 259) explain that latent content analysis moves beyond manifest content to the underlined elements on the surface of a message. It is implicit and not obviously presented in texts. Elo *et al.* (2014) indicate that latent content analysis involves a consideration of noticing silence, sighs, laughter, posture, etc. According to Potter and Levine-Donnerstein (1999), latent content is distinguished into two types, consisting of pattern content and projective content. Pattern content focuses on patterns in the content in that the researchers give precedence to the content and uncover an objective pattern of the precedence content. On the contrary, projective content concerns the elements in the content as an access point to a pre-existing mental schema for judging the meaning in the content.

In this thesis, latent content analysis was applied to analyse focus group data by means of the projective content. As the discussion involved participants who varied in ethnic backgrounds and this could affect their actions during the group discussion (5.5.2.4), the latent content analysis, thus, aimed to interpret if and how the participants' actions during the group discussion session (e.g. laughing and silence) implied communicative meanings.

5.6.4 Multimodal analysis

Regarding multimodal features and the available network resources of online mediums, and SNS (Facebook) in particular, multimodal analysis is important to analyse data from online observations because these factors can affect communicative practices and meanings online (Herring, 2015;Jewitt, 2013).

Multimodal analysis offers a way to look beyond the language and explore a wide range of modes and communicative contexts according to different multimodal perspectives (Jewitt, 2013). In this thesis, multimodal analysis was used to look at

online observation data based on a social semiotic approach to multimodal analysis (Bezemer and Jewitt, 2010;Jewitt, 2013). This analytical approach was drawn on to examine the range of different modes that the participants used to make communicative meaning and to represent and construct cultures, such as photos, videos, and external links 8.4 and 8.5.

Bezemer and Jewitt (2010) point out that a social semiotic multimodality focuses on an analysis of the full repertoire of meaning-making resources which people use in different contexts. Considering online communication can be conducted not only through language, but in coordination with multimodal resources, such as photos and videos. Language is only ever one mode surrounded by a multimodal cluster of modes and the interaction between modes produces communicative meanings (Herring, 2015;Jewitt, 2013). Therefore, communicative meanings are constructed not just through language; instead the meanings in any one mode are often intertwined with the meanings made with those of all other modes co-present and 'co-operating' in the communicative event (Jewitt, 2013: 15). In this regard, the social semiotic multimodality assisted the analysis of how multimodal features were selected and used to make meaning by online English users to realise specific social meanings.

According to a social semiotic perspective on multimodal analysis, it was a concern that text communication (language) alone was not adequate for understanding cultural representation, cultural construction, ICC and communicative meanings, so this analytical approach was used to understand the complex methods of online intercultural communication through ELF.

5.6.5 Summarised process of data analysis

According to all the analytical approaches, it is useful to picture the process of data analysis applied in this research in order to make sense of all the approaches and this is illustrated in Figure 5.3.

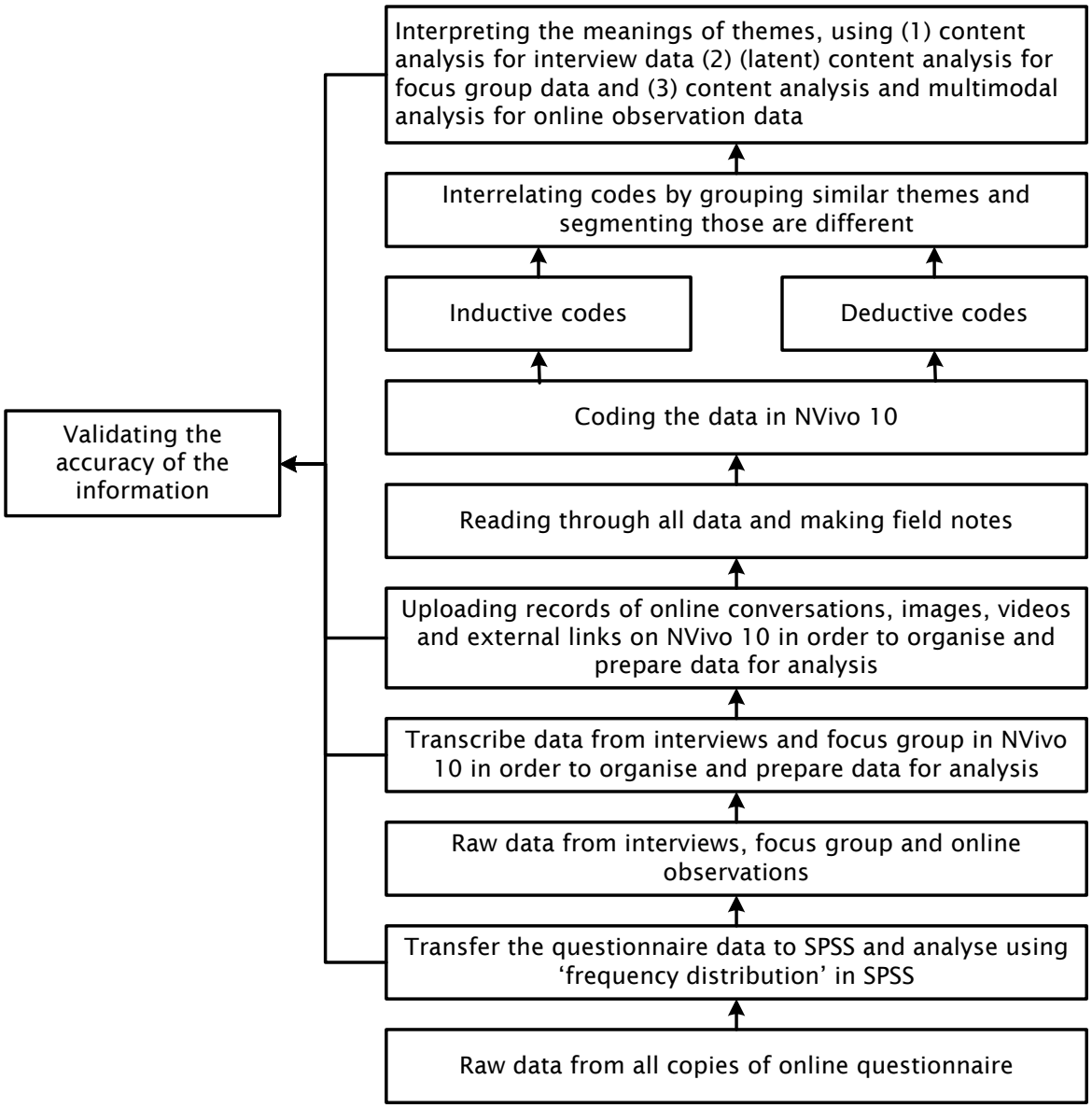


Figure 5.3 Overall approaches to data analysis in this research (Adapted from Creswell, 2014: 197)

At the beginning, the quantitative data from the online questionnaires were analysed, using a 'frequency distribution' as elucidated in 5.6.1. Then, other three steps of analysing the qualitative data (interviews, focus group and online observations) based on (latent) content analysis and multimodal analysis were carried out as explained in the following.

5.6.5.1 Transcription

Referring to Figure 5.3, raw data from the qualitative approaches; interviews, focus group and online observations, were transcribed into texts in NVivo 10 as soon as they were collected in order to familiarize the researcher with the data and to be faithful to the participants' information. The transcription in this

research was centred on the content rather than the manner of presentation in the participants' responses such as adjacency pairs, turn-taking, and pauses, for example. These prosodic features were not considered as significant features to the analysis and were not transcribed. The conventions used for transcribing the results (both interviews and focus group) were adapted from Hutchby and Wooffitt (2008) and VOICE (2013) because the transcription symbols in their studies are commonly used and their transcription conventions meet the requirements of data analysis and interpretation in this research (Appendix L).

Transcription offered advantages for the data analysis in that it presented the detailed thoughts, ideas and perceptions of the participants regarding the investigated areas to the researcher. It helped the researcher to dissect the meanings of their conversations and interactions in the context (Kvale *et al.*, 2009: 180). The researcher was also able to re-listen to their messages and think about the interesting issues that emerged. Furthermore, the transcriptions were double checked with the participants during the second round of interviews and group discussion to ensure that the researcher had heard and understood their messages and meanings correctly. This 'member checking' allowed the researcher to ensure accuracy (Poland, 2002: 643).

Interview and focus group data were initially transcribed in Thai, the language used for conducting the data collection, and were double checked to ensure accuracy. The data were later translated into English only for selected parts of the data analysis.

5.6.5.2 Coding and categorising

Coding was subsequently conducted to aid qualitative data analysis after all data were completely transcribed. Cohen *et al.* (2011: 559) explain that coding is a name or label given to a piece of text or different kinds of data, for example conversations, meanings, intentions, interactions, events and so on. These data can be coded into a word or abbreviation which resembles the original data so that the researcher is able to know and understand what it means immediately. Gibbs (2007) suggests that the same code should store the data which refers to the same thing and in this way the data are well managed and categorised into systems. Consequently, the researcher is able to search and retrieve the data conveniently. As discussed in 5.6.2, data were coded and categorised based on 'inductive' and 'deductive' approaches. The inductive code relates to the research focus and questions, whereas the deductive code considers the themes that

existed and/or emerged from coding the data. Codes that shared similar themes were grouped and those that indicated different themes were separated from each other. These codes were revised and (re) analysed during the process of data collection.

5.6.5.3 Data interpretation

After data from all the qualitative methods were coded and interrelated, the contents were analysed drawing on appropriate approaches. As indicated in 5.6.2 to 5.6.4, the interview data were analysed based on content analysis in order to obtain an in-depth interpretation of participants' use of English for online intercultural communication. Focus group data was analysed using content analysis and latent content analysis in order to interpret the communicative meanings in detail and to evaluate any possible factors that might have affected participants' expression and/or participation in the group discussion. Data from the online observations were examined, applying content analysis and a social semiotic multimodal analysis in order to critically interpret the meaning of participants' online communication and the influence of the multimodal features of the selected online SNS (Facebook) on their representation, construction of cultures, ICC and the use of English for online intercultural communication.

5.7 Methodology limitations

The small number of participants (5.4.2) is the most significant limitation of this study in relation to research generalisability. Since findings of qualitative research are usually restricted to a small number of individuals in a particular context, it is difficult to balance what emerges from one context with wider relevant research in other settings (Lincoln and Guba, 1985;Richards, 2003). However, 'transferability' is a more appropriate conception than generalisation, and can be applied to connect the sufficient thick description of the results to those of others, enabling the researcher to share an understanding of the context under scrutiny with other researchers (5.4.5). Considering this limitation, the researcher has attempted to make such a transfer possible by providing an in-depth analysis of data from multiple sources (5.5.2) in order to construct a rich picture of the investigated phenomenon. The participants, as Thai English users from different academic fields, have extensive experience of English language use in international contexts, both online and face-to-face. Therefore, they may represent collective perspectives on English use in intercultural communication and different individual views on the same issue.

Another limitation of this research is online observation. Even though this process was made on Facebook, a public communicative space (5.4.1), most participants were using it to keep in contact with existing offline communities rather than strangers. This rather limited the researcher's opportunity to observe online conversations due to the lack of interpersonal relations between both parties. As a result, only participants who had personally known the researcher and those who were introduced from their social networks had their online conversations observed (5.4.1 and 5.4.2).

Further, the researcher's roles also influenced an access to the data. Given the shared Thai cultural background of the researcher and the participants, the participants felt uncomfortable allowing the researcher to observe some parts of their online conversations. For example, some participants deleted parts of private conversations before they emailed the researcher the records. The researcher noticed some missing parts of private conversations during the stage of continually reading through the collected data (Figure 5.3) and asked the participants for clarification in the second round of interviews (8.5). Furthermore, having a Thai cultural background could cause bias in the researcher about the investigated issues. Possible researcher's bias was managed and controlled by taking a critical, reflexive approach to the research reports and presentations at both postgraduate seminars and conferences (5.4.5).

Finally, features surrounding the private conversations were sometimes excluded, such as the date and time of conversations. The insufficient background information caused a difficulty in analysing data. For example, a delay in replying to messages might indicate stress or displeasure in communication but this information was not available.

5.8 Conclusion

This chapter considers the theoretical framework underpinning the research design, data collection and analysis. This research predominantly employed qualitative approaches based on ethnographic concepts and strategies in an attempt to generate a rich description of the use of English for online intercultural communication, ICC and participants' perceptions of the use of English for online intercultural communication. In order to acquire such in-depth data, multiple research methods were adopted, including interviews, observations of online conversations and a focus group together with a quantitative

questionnaire survey. 'Interpretivism' and 'ethnographic perspectives' were theoretical paradigms applied to this research in order to discover the purposes and meanings of participants' conversations, their representation and construction of cultures, ICC, and the way that they perceive English use for intercultural communication in the age of rapid technological advancement. Four analytical approaches were employed; 'frequency and distribution' for an analysis of the online questionnaire data, content analysis for analysing data from the interviews, (latent) content analysis for analysing focus group data and content analysis and multimodal analysis for analysing data from the online observations. Although the small number of participants and settings is a limitation of the study, detailed description and analysis of the phenomenon under scrutiny is expected to resonate with other contexts in which English is used in similar ways. In the following chapters (Chapter 6: to Chapter 8:), the outcomes of the data collection are presented and briefly discussed, leading to the detailed discussion in Chapter 9: .

Chapter 6: Quantitative results

6.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the results from the online questionnaire because this was the first research method for approaching data for subsequent research methods (5.5.2.1). The findings of this method helped to discover which participants actively used English for online intercultural communication and a particular SNS for an observation. The results also illustrate statistics about participants' experiences and perceptions of online intercultural communication and lead to initial understanding of the participants' cultural representation and cultural construction, their ICCs for successful online intercultural communication and perceptions of English used online with people with different mother tongues and cultures.

6.2 Questionnaire results of English language use for online intercultural communication and the selection of the research participants

A questionnaire about English language use for online intercultural communication was administered through a web-based system, as described in the methodology chapter (5.5.2.1). This first stage of the fieldwork primarily aimed to find out the most popular mode of online communication for observations and which participants regularly used English for communication online with English users with different first languages and cultures. It was useful to collect the preliminary data from a large and diverse range of participants. These preliminary data were essential for an understanding of the participants' backgrounds, such as their education, experiences of using English for communication online and other situations, behaviours, and perceptions of English language and cultures. In accordance with ethnographic methodological approaches, the questionnaire rendered a 'thin' description of the participants in the investigated phenomenon and could be combined with the remaining methods (interviews, focus group and online observations) for those participants who took part in all procedures of data collection.

6.2.1 Participation

As discussed in 5.4.2, the recruitment of participants for this very first stage of data collection drew on a non-probability sample (convenience, snowball, heterogeneous and purposive sampling) in order to get the main participants: Thai international students, who regularly used English for online communication with people from different first languages and cultures. The recruitment helped the researcher to access a total of 39 Thai participants who all voluntarily completed the online questionnaire. Eighty per cent of them spent less than 15 minutes completing the questionnaire.

6.2.2 Tool for analysing data from online questionnaires

IBM SPSS was utilised to store and analyse numerical data from the online questionnaire survey. This software was chosen because it is the most commonly used statistical software package in the social sciences (Muijs, 2011). Data from different sections of the questionnaire from each participant were firstly tabulated. Frequency distributions were then chosen to calculate these data in order to depict the investigated phenomenon. More in-depth statistical analysis such as cross-tabulation (a consideration of the relationship between variables), chi square (the measure of statistical significance), Phi (the measure of effect size) and the T-test (a comparison of the means of two groups) was not undertaken due to the limited role of the questionnaire in this research.

6.3 Questionnaire results

The following presents the questionnaire results and leads to the discussion of the research participants' selection (6.4).

The questionnaire was divided into two main sections, including (1) personal background information and (2) perceptions of culture(s) and the use of English for online communication with people with different first linguistic and cultural backgrounds. The results of each section are described respectively below.

6.3.1 Section 1: Personal background information

This section covered gender, age, education, English language background, experiences of studying, living and/or visiting abroad, reasons for doing a degree

in the UK and behaviours when using English for communication with NESs and NNESs.

In total, 39 Thai international students participated in the survey, consisting of 19 males (48.7%) and 20 females (51.3%). Most of them (61.5%) were aged between 30 and 39. They were mostly PhD students from different disciplines (71.8%) and were in their first year of study (38.5%). The majority of them had lived in the UK for between one and two years (30.8) and had no experience of studying abroad before their current studies in the UK (89.7%) or any experience of visiting other countries (56.4%).

Regarding their language background, only six of the participants were able to speak other languages apart from their mother tongue (Thai) and English at a moderate level. These languages included Chinese, Bahasa Malay, French, Italian, Malay, and a North East Thai dialect (Isan). All of them had completed an English competency test, mostly IELTS. In terms of the length of time they had spent learning the English language, most of the participants (33.3%) had studied English for more than 20 years while 25.6% had spent 11 to 20 years learning English. Most participants (76.9%) had completed an extra English language course outside school or university. The majority of them chose to pursue their higher education in the UK because of the 'high quality of education' (69.2%), and the worldwide reputation of UK researchers as leaders in their field of study (66.7%).

As they lived in the UK, it was useful to consider how often the participants used English with NESs and NNEs through face to face communication. The results showed that most of them (43.6%) used English with NESs a few times a week while 43.6% used English with NNESs every day.

The participants' personal background information is illustrated in Table 6.1.

Table 6.1 Findings of participants' personal background

Topics	**Percentage**
Gender	
Male	48.7%
Female	51.3%

Topics	Percentage
Age	
Less than 20	5.1%
20-29	25.6%
30-39	61.5%
40 or more	7.7%
Degree	
Undergraduate	10.3%
Master's	15.4%
PhD	71.8%
Others	2.6%
Current year of study	
1st year	38.5%
2nd year	25.6%
3rd year	17.9%
4th year	12.8%
5th year	2.6%
Others	2.6%
Length of time spent studying in the UK	
Less than 1 year	25.6%
1-2 years	30.8%
2-3 years	15.4%
3-4 years	20.5%
4-5 years	5.1%
More than 5 years	2.6%
Experiences of studying abroad before the UK	
Yes	10.3%

Topics	Percentage
No	89.7%
Experiences of visiting or living in other countries	
Yes	43.6%
No	56.4%
English language competency test	
IELTS	73.9%
TOEFL	17.4%
TOEIC	6.5%
IGCSE	2.2%
Length of time spent learning English language	
Less than 5 years	7.7%
5-10 years	7.7%
11-15 years	25.6%
16-20 years	25.6%
More than 20 years	33.3%
Extra English language course outside a school or university	
Yes	76.9%
No	23.1%
Reasons for pursuing higher education in the UK	
High quality of education	69.2%
The worldwide reputation of UK researchers as leaders in their field of studying	66.7%
The birthplace and home of the English language	48.7%
A rich history and culture	30.8%
Recommendations from workplace and/or friends	46.2%

Topics	Percentage
English use face-to-face with NESs	
Never	2.6%
Rarely	2.6%
A few times a month	15.4%
A few times a week	43.6%
Every day	35.9%
English use face-to-face with NNESs	
Never	2.6%
Rarely	5.1%
A few times a month	15.4%
A few times a week	33.3%
Every day	43.6%

6.3.2 Section 2: Perceptions of cultures and the use of English for online communication with people with different first linguistic and cultural backgrounds

The focus of this section is on the participants' experiences of using English with people who do not share the same mother tongue and their perceptions of English language use and cultures online.

Facebook was undoubtedly the most popular SNS, used by most participants (79.5%). Their online communication was mostly conducted through mobile phones (41%) and laptops (35.9%) mainly because of the convenience, portability and mobility of these electronic devices. Most participants communicated online with their friends (74.4%), a few times a week with NESs (30.8%) and every day with NNESs (35.9%).

Their interlocutors were from different countries. These included China (16%), UK (14%), USA (10%), Taiwan (8%), Malaysia (7%), Korea, Indonesia, Saudi Arabia, and India (4% each), the Philippines, Iran, Turkey, Japan, Vietnam (3% each), Canada, Sweden, Nepal, Nigeria, Italy, Columbia, Brunei, Australia, Greece, Portugal and Germany (1% each).

There were different reasons for English online communication with people from different countries. 'To keep in touch with international friends' was found to be the most important reason, followed by 'to share experiences and ideas', 'to practice English language', and 'to keep up to date with news and activities'. However, the participants paid less attention to learning other cultures and making new international friends.

The participants represented and constructed their cultures mostly through posting cultural photos (66.7%) and sharing cultural information (53.8%), while 30.8% of them used English in Thai ways, such as the mixed use of Thai words with English to show their respect at the end of the conversation, for example.

In terms of the participants' perceptions of online communication in English, most of them were positive about communicating in English with people from other countries (71.8%). They had a willingness to discover information (79.5%). Further, they mostly thought that it was important to present their own cultures (53.8%) and also understand other cultures (71.8%) when they conducted online communication. The majority of them (97.4%) could apply their online experiences to other online communication, while 94.9% could also apply it to their face-to-face communication. Unsurprisingly, all the participants (100%) considered English as the most important language for online communication. Over half of the participants (66.6%) thought that there were differences between the use of English online and face-to-face. Only 12.8% agreed that it was impossible to communicate without 'correct' grammatical English. Interestingly, more than half of the participants (66.6%) had found new English words through their online communication. These results are presented in the Table 6.2 as follows.

Table 6.2 Findings of perceptions of cultures and the use of English for online communication with people with different first linguistic and cultural backgrounds

Topics	**Percentage**
Social networking sites	
Facebook	79.5%
MSN	5.1%
Others	15.4%

Topics	Percentage
Electronic tools	
Personal computers	20.5%
Laptops	35.9%
Mobile phones	41.0%
Tablets	2.6%
Online interlocutors	
Friends	74.4%
Colleagues	20.5%
English use online with NESs	
Never	2.6%
Rarely	12.8%
A few times a year	5.1%
A few times a month	25.6%
A few times a week	30.8%
Every day	23.1%
English use online with NNESs	
Never	0%
Rarely	7.7%
A few times a year	5.1%
A few times a month	17.9%
A few times a week	33.3%
Every day	35.9%
Interlocutors' nationalities	
China	16%
UK	14%
USA	10%

Topics	Percentage
Taiwan	8%
Malaysia	7%
Korea, Indonesia, Saudi Arabia, and India	4%
The Philippines, Iran, Turkey, Japan, and Vietnam	3%
Canada, Sweden, Nepal, Nigeria, Italy, Columbia, Brunei, Australia, Greece, Portugal and Germany	1%
Reasons for using English online with people from different countries	
To keep in touch with international friends	51.3%
To share experiences and ideas with others	43.6%
To practice English language	41.0%
To keep up to date with news and activities	28.2%
To learn international cultures	10.3%
To make international friends	7.7%
(Note: The percentage of this aspect is more than 100% because the participants can select more than one answer).	
Ways of representing and constructing cultures	
Posting cultural photos	66.7%
Sharing cultural information	53.8%
Using English in Thai ways	30.8%
(Note: The percentage of this aspect is more than 100% because the participants can select more than one answer).	
Perceptions of online communication in English	
(1) I like to communicate with people from other countries.	71.8%
(2) I have a willingness to discover information.	79.5%
(3) I think it is important to present my own cultures.	53.8%
(4) I think it is important to understand other cultures.	71.8%
(5) I can apply my experiences to others online communication.	97.4

Topics		Percentage
(6)	I can apply my experiences to face-to-face communication.	94.9%
(7)	English is the most important language for online communication.	100%
(8)	English online is different from face-to-face.	66.6%
(9)	It is impossible to communicate without grammatically correct English	12.8%
(10)	I find new and created English words	66.6%

6.4 The selection of the mode of online communication for online observation and research participants

As Facebook was found to be the most popular mode of English online communication among the participants (79.5%), it was thus the focus for online observation of participants' English language use and cultural interactions. Fifteen participants were initially selected from the survey for the next stage of the data collection: interviews (7.3). These consisted of 13 participants who often used English for online communication and two who did not often do so. The aim when selecting these participants was to acquire different perceptions and/or common ideas about the nature of English use for intercultural communication (5.4.2). Pseudonyms of these 15 participants can be found in Table 6.3. Their answers are discussed in detail in 7.3.

Table 6.3 Pseudonyms of 15 participants for the first round of interviews

Pseudonyms	Brief details
A	Undergraduate student in Engineering
Bee	Master's degree student in Modern Languages
Dew	PhD student in Geography
Namwan	Master's degree student in Management
Man	PhD student in Health Sciences
Ken	PhD student in Engineering
Kae	PhD student in Electronics and Computer Science

Pseudonyms	Brief details
North	Master's degree student in Management
Mai	PhD student in Modern Languages
Pu	PhD student in Mathematical Sciences
Yean	PhD student in Modern Languages
Jo	PhD student in Modern Languages
Pink	PhD student in Electronics and Computer Science
April	PhD student in Health Sciences
Aero	Master's degree student in Engineering

From these 15 participants, five participants were chosen for online observations (8.4), the second round of interviews (8.5) and the focus group (7.6). They were selected because they regularly used English for communication online with people who did not share the same mother tongue or cultural background. These five participants had a variety of educational backgrounds, experience of living or visiting abroad and experience of using English online. There were three male and two female participants. The participants' roles in the research were explained. The consent forms were given to them and to the interlocutors with whom their online conversations were conducted (Appendix C). Brief biographical information for the five participants is presented, using pseudonyms below.

Ken – A male participant aged between 30 and 39 years old. He was a PhD student in Engineering. He was considered to be a moderately proficient user of English from his English language competency results (IELTS). He has spent more than 20 years learning English. He had never studied or lived abroad before he started his PhD programme. He used English more with NNESs than NESs both face-to-face and online. His non-native English interlocutors online were from Italy, Columbia, India, Korea and Iran.

A – A male participant aged between 20 and 29 years old. He graduated from international high school in Thailand and pursued his undergraduate degree in Engineering in the UK. He has spent 16 to 20 years learning English. He had lived in the UK for two to three years and had never been abroad before starting his current degree. He used English for online communication with NESs and NNESs face-to-face and online every day. His online interlocutors were British, Burmese, and Chinese.

Jo – A male participant aged between 30 and 39 years old. He was a PhD student in Modern Languages. He was a competent English user and trilingual speaker (Thai, English and Bahasa Malay). He has spent about five to ten years learning English. He had been to both English speaking countries and non-English speaking countries for exchange educational programmes. He used English language more with NNESs than NESs both face-to-face and online. His online interlocutors were from Malaysia, China, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Indonesia and Taiwan.

Kae – A female participant aged between 30 and 39 years old. She was a PhD student in Electronics and Computer Science and was considered as a competent English user based on her IELTS score. She has spent more than 20 years learning English language. She has lived in the UK for three and a half years. She had previously been to study English language in an English speaking country. She used English both face-to-face and online with NESs every day and two to three times a week with NNESs. Her online interlocutors were mostly from the United Kingdom and the United States.

North – A female participant aged between 30 and 39 years old. She was a Master's degree student in Management. She was a competent user of English language. She has spent more than 20 years learning English and had never been abroad before her current degree. She used English with NESs two to three times a week both face-to-face and online. For online English communication, she communicated with NNESs who were from China every day.

6.5 Summary

This section presents an analytical tool for analysing the quantitative data from online questionnaires (iSurvey) and the results. Frequency distributions were used to calculate and depict the statistical data, which was then used to choose participants and SNS for the subsequent methods of data collection. Fifteen participants were selected for the first round of interviews as most of them frequently used SNSs for online intercultural communication and could potentially provide rich data about the phenomenon under investigation. Facebook was found to be the most popular SNS, so thus was the focus of online observations. The next chapter presents the results from the first round of interviews and the focus group.

Chapter 7: Qualitative results: the first round of interviews and focus group

7.1 Introduction

This chapter aims to present the results from the first round of interviews and the focus group. The chapter begins to describe the coding categories for the first round of interviews and results based on the established codes. Then, those of the focus group are presented. This is followed by a brief discussion of the results from these two methods, in order to interpret the results, although these are dealt with in more depth in the discussion chapter (Chapter 9:).

7.2 The first round of interviews: coding and categorising data

The first round of interviews was conducted with 15 selected participants with the aims of following up interesting points from the participants' answers to the online questionnaires and gaining detailed descriptions of their personal information, experiences, reasons and motivations for using English for online intercultural communication (5.5.2.3). The following part presents how data obtained from this method were coded and categorised for further in-depth analysis.

The first round of interview data were coded while the fieldwork was ongoing in order to reduce complexity and overload of data and also to ensure the quality of the data. As Cohen *et al.* (2011: 560) discuss, provisional codes ensure consistency of data as the researcher can go back and forth through the data several times. When the initial codes are assigned, emerging themes and similar and different points can be perceived. These codes were revised as the research progressed.

Regarding the research focus, the coding began with cultural presentation and construction, intercultural communicative competence (ICC) and perceptions of English for online intercultural communication. At the beginning of coding, a number of codes were expanded under these three themes, but they were grouped and reduced later on due to apparent overlaps. Irrelevant codes were

removed in order to eliminate the complexity of the data. The final inductive codes are as follows;

(a) Cultural presentation and construction: ways to present and construct culture(s).
(b) Intercultural communicative competence (ICC): applying experiences of and/or knowledge from previous online communication to other online communication in the future, being open minded about other cultures, developing an understanding of other cultures and intercultural learning.
(c) Perceptions of the use of English for online intercultural communication: differences in English use online and face-to-face, types of English used, types of English preferred, differences between English use with NESs and NNESs, and the role of nationality and language for online intercultural communication, accuracy of English use for communication online, and importance of English for online intercultural communication.

Additionally, there were three other themes relevant to cultures and English language which were established as they emerged from the data when the participants interpreted their ideas in the interviews. These themes were:

(d) Motivation for online intercultural communication: convenience of online communication and trendy use of vocabularies.
(e) Multimodal features and available network resources: using pictures for explanation, online dictionaries, and Google translation services.
(f) Linguistic behaviours: language choice

Coding details for the 15 participants in the first round of interviews are presented in Appendix K. The next section presents the results of the first round of interviews on the basis of the established codes.

7.3 Results of the first round of interviews

7.3.1 Cultural representation and construction

This category of codes related to the ways in which the participants represented and constructed their cultures through their online intercultural communication in English. The first round of interviews indicated that posting a photo is a common method of cultural representation for participants, although this was not the main purpose of the action. This point is explained in Example 7.1.

Example 7.1

1 NORTH: "Well (.), there are photos. I always post photos of my
2 activities. In relation to culture, I mostly post photos of making merit
3 with Thai international students here. Actually, the main purpose of
4 posting photos is to show my activities to my friends and share the
5 photos with those who join the same activities @. I, however, think
6 about a representation of Thai culture to my friends from other
7 countries as well."

It is obvious that North uploaded photos of her different activities on her Facebook page without the intention of cultural representation. However, she tried to link this directly to the investigated issue by specifying a particular cultural activity of which her photos formed a part (line 2). This indicated her conscious understanding of cultures that related to visible elements, such as a custom.

Conscious understanding of culture can also be found in other participants, including Bee, Dew, Namwan, and A. These participants always posted their photos on Facebook to update their friends on their activities rather than to present their cultures. Their photos were sometimes related to culture, such as food photos and Thai festival photos which can be seen from Dew's statement as in the example below:

Example 7.2

1 Dew: "Mostly, I present myself that I am from Thailand and post some
2 Thai food in order to attract my friends' interest and desire to talk
3 about Thai culture."

In particular relation to cultures, these participants also posted statements about their different activities and important Thai festivals and/or occasions.

Example 7.3

1 Bee: "I posted 'Proud to be Thai' on Thai Father's Day, for example"

Example 7.1 to Example 7.3 obviously reveal the limited cultural understanding of some participants which are related to food, traditional festival and activities.

Man was the only participant whose subconscious understanding of cultures was demonstrated by his awareness of the Thai cultural background of his online

interlocutors. He stressed the importance of his online interlocutors' backgrounds in Thai culture in his online communication, as seen below.

Example 7.4

1 Man: "I sometimes (.) represent my culture. It depends how much my
2 interlocutors are familiar with Thai culture. If they have never been to
3 Thailand and have not got any experiences about Thailand before, they
4 might not interest in Thai culture. Therefore, it is not necessary to say
5 'ka', 'krab'[1] or 'Sawasdee' (see meanings of these words in footnote1).
6 For some of my online interlocutors who have ever visited Thailand or
7 interested in Thai culture, I 'Sawasdee' at the beginning of our online
8 conversation @."

According to his response, Man managed his cultures by considering the backgrounds of his interlocutors in terms of Thai culture and used this awareness in his online conversations. In this way, he ascertained that his cultural representation through Thai words could encourage his interlocutors to be interested in Thai culture and did not negatively affect his communication.

In terms of cultural construction, most participants could not discuss in detail how they constructed their cultures in their English online communication. One possible reason could be relevant to the discussion about cultural representation above, in that the participants have a limited understanding of cultures. However, the results of this aspect could be revealed more from the records of online conversations. Only one participant, Jo, clearly explained his cultural construction as follows.

Example 7.5

1 JO: "…..mostly it happens when my friends ask me something during
2 our online conversation @. I always explain them and this links to my
3 culture. If I simply tell them that I can or can't do something, it doesn't
4 make sense. But if I tell them that I can't go to the bars or pubs, for
5 example, because it's wrong (.) according to my religion, they will
6 simply understand. There is also another group of my close friends
7 who ask me directly, such as what this means in my culture, can they

[1] *'Ka' refers to the final word of a communicative sentence for women. 'Krab' refers to the final word of a communicative sentence for men. 'Sawasdee' means hello.*

do this or that, etc. because they have heard about it from other sources. It's because they are very close to me, so they feel comfortable to ask me the questions. When I tell them about my culture, I always ask them about their cultures as well @ in order to see in what ways my and their cultures are similar or different. Rather than they know about me, I know about them too."

Rather than constructing a new shared understanding or a new culture, Jo shared his persistent cultural construction in terms of his religion. He explained a specific belief and appropriate behaviour according to his religion to his online interlocutors. So, religion aspect was a cultural construct which Jo respected and he developed expected patterns of behaviour.

7.3.2 Intercultural communicative competence (ICC)

ICC coding aimed to find out the necessary intercultural communicative competence (ICC) for online intercultural communication. Most participants expressed positive perspectives in that online communication promoted their ICC learning, particularly about the behaviour of people.

Kae is an exemplar who applied cultural skills from her online intercultural communication. Applying five savoirs (Byram, 1997) to an understanding of this aspect, she opened her mind to other cultures, beliefs and behaviours and also respected how they differed from her own. As seen from Example 7.6 (lines 3 to 6), Kae accepted her British friend's request to meet up at a British pub on Sunday rather than her favourite place, a department store, because she knew that it was normal for British people to meet up at a pub according to British culture. It is, however, unusual for Thais to meet friends at a pub in the day time as a pub in the Thai context does not mean a public house where people can have drinks and food. Instead, it is similar to a bar in British culture. Mainly due to the hot weather in Thailand, many Thais, particularly women, like meeting up at department stores because these places have air-conditioning and they can do various activities there, for example, having a meal and shopping. Her response showed her decentring from her personal position.

Example 7.6

KAE: "Err: I learn about other cultures in the sense that, for example err::chatted to one of my native English friend online last time to meet up together on Sunday. This friend doesn't normally like going to a

department store. He likes going to a pub and have the same menus, such as pizza, Carbonara, Sunday roast, etc. He asked me to meet up at the pub because he wanted to have 'Sunday Roast' @@@ But he was afraid to try some Asian sauce because of the spicy taste. Moreover, in terms of greeting words online, he likes saying 'Hey'. I sometimes don't reply him. I feel that it's too rude. I tell him I don't like it and you can say 'hi', but he still does it. It's a kind of teenager language. I err: feel that he is a man and I'm a women, so he should be nicer. He has never do it face-to-face though, only online even now. So, let it goes @."

Further, Kae showed her critical cultural awareness in accepting greeting discourse online from her British friend. Even though she did not like her friend to say 'hey' and told him how she felt, she tried to understand when he kept doing it and evaluated it as a common greeting word in British culture. She finally accepted it and let her friend say it online (see Example 8.6 for Kae's online conversation to support this interview).

Namwan, Ken and Pu also expressed their positive opinions about what they learnt in online communication about culture (see Example 7.7 to Example 7.9).

Example 7.7

Namwan: "Online communication makes me learn working behaviours of people from different countries. (.) I have got a Korean friend who is very interested in Thailand and she likes chatting to me online. I'm also interested in Korea so we have so many things so share, such as famous destinations in our countries, photos, festivals, etc. I also think that people from different countries have different ways of using English language. Sometimes their communicative meanings differs from my interpretation. I would say online communication involves an exchange of cultural information in a wide sense. When my Chinese friend, for example, take a photo in Chinese dress. I feel like oh: what kind of dress is. We haven't had it in our country. Also as I mentioned earlier, I talk to my Korean friend. I sometimes ask her does your country have this kind of festival or food. I also ask my Chinese friends if they have 'Cheng Meng'[2] (see Footnote2). It is surprise to know that they haven't had this festival in their country."

[2] *'Cheng Meng' refers to a celebration of life for Thai Chinese families in Thailand.*

Example 7.8

1 KEN: "I think online communication (.) opens up my minds in that I
2 know how people from other countries construct their ideas about
3 different things. It, however, depends if I notice them or not."

Example 7.9

1 Pu: "……erm (.) I think I have learnt different working culture. Well, (.)
2 they have a systematic working system. We don't need to meet up but
3 we can make an appointment or talk briefly in our online
4 conversation."

These three examples indicate the participants' abilities to acquire new knowledge of a culture and different cultural practices (see Example 7.7: line 3 to the end and Example 7.8: lines 1 and 2). They could also integrate their new knowledge with their existing behaviour, as seen from Example 7.9: lines 2 to 4).

However, there were some ambivalent perspectives to regarding online communication as a medium of cultural learning. Some participants believe that face-to-face communication can help them to learn cultures better than online communication because they can see gesture, movement and body language, while these things cannot be seen in online communication. Man offered both positive and negative attitudes to this aspect, but these were related to his limited use of online communication (see Example 7.10).

Example 7.10

1 Man: "I think it's probably (.) well, suppose that my friends post
2 pictures, this helps me learn their cultures. Actually in terms of
3 cultural learning, I think face to-face communication could support an
4 exchange of our cultures. We can friendly talk and exchange our
5 information for a long time. We can show our food or anything else, for
6 examples. But for me personally, I learn cultures from face-to-face from
7 real situation rather than online. It's probably because I don't
8 personally rely on online channel for my communication."

From the perspective of a participant who did not usually communicate in English online, it was interesting that he related cultural learning to two different types of online interlocutors; friends and strangers.

Example 7.11

1 Mai: “I think it doesn’t help that much. Because if online
2 communication, if I view, I consider a communication of two groups.
3 First, a communication between friends. In this case, interlocutors
4 know the background of each other and I think it leads to cultural
5 learning. Another case, in contrast, a communication between
6 strangers. It should be accepted that people can create their fake
7 image, so it doesn’t help any learning about cultures at all because
8 they don’t mean to exchange cultural information.”

Jo, as an experienced online user, related cultural learning to the topics of communication. He thought that no matter whether it was online or face-to-face communication, these were only the tools of communication and cultural learning could not happen without the relevant topics of communication about cultures.

Example 7.12

1 Jo: “Err..if we are talking about online communication, it is only
2 another kind of communication. It doesn’t help or support cultural
3 learning. I think no matter online or face-to-face communication it
4 depends on conversational topics because online communication is
5 just a communicative tool between two people or a group of people. It
6 doesn’t indicate that online communication support intercultural
7 learning. Rather, topics of our conversation will lead to our learning of
8 behaviours or cultures of our interlocutors”.

7.3.3 Perceptions of the use of English for online intercultural communication

This category of codes attempted to represent the perceptions of participants regarding the use of English for online intercultural communication in several aspects. These included differences of English use online and face-to-face, types of English used, types of English preferred, differences of English use with NESs and NNESs and the role of nationality and language for online intercultural communication.

Looking firstly at differences between English use online and face-to-face, most participants believed that the use of English online differed from face-to-face in terms of language and emotion. Taking A’s ideas, for example, abbreviations

were frequently used in online communication. According to Jo, emoticons and abbreviations, such as 'C U' were used in online communication. He further added that these two modes of communication were different due to emotional expression.

Example 7.13

1 Jo: "…..I don't have feelings for my online communication. Do you
2 know what (.) I mean? It's not fun because I can't see my interlocutors.
3 Even though I can turn on a VDO, it's not the same. It isn't similar to
4 personal interview like this which we can see each other and respond
5 our conversation immediately. In online communication, however, I
6 read, type and smile to a message alone. My interlocutors can't see my
7 smile."

Jo's response was interesting in that he was still an active English online user even if he presented some negative perceptions about the limited features of the online mode, such as asynchronous responses and the absence of an interlocutor. This suggested that he was aware of some of the limitations of online features but used the Internet for facilitating fast and convenient communication.

Regarding the types of English used and the types of English preferred, it was interesting that the participants were aware that they did not conform to NES standards but they used English in their own way by mixing British and American English and/or English and Thai. However, they could not distinguish the differences between British and American English. They were also not aware of other kinds of English(es) even though they noticed differences in English use by their online interlocutors from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Apparently, they preferred to be able to use English like NESs (see Example 7.14 to Example 7.17).

Example 7.14

1 A: "Mostly I use British English. I can't use exactly the same as NESs
2 because I don't know how to do it perfectly @, but I'm myself and try
3 to improve my English to be British English all the time."

Example 7.15

1 Bee: "I think I use American English because I learnt it in Thailand. I
2 don't know the differences between British and American English
3 though. Therefore. I don't concern about what kinds of English I use

but I focus on mutual understanding of the communication. It might be because I use English online with my acquaintances. However, I like British English, especially its accent. I like everything British. It is cool! But I do not know how they are different anyway @."

Example 7.16

Dew: "I think I use English as my style. I mix between British and American English. I don't fix to use a particular kind of English, but I try my best to use British English because it affects my academic writing."

Example 7.17

Jo: "It does not fix for me. It is uncomplexed English which is short and can be understood easily. I concern about contents rather than grammar. I can't identify what kinds of English I use because I don't know if I use British or American. My Thai English teachers didn't even know if they used British or American @. If we look at English language curriculum in Thailand, contents were on the focus but not different kinds of English(es). Therefore, students know only English contents but do not know English types. For me, I think I mixed use between British and American English and I do not care about it as far as I am able to achieve my communicative purposes."

These were the prevalent perceptions among the participants about preferable English and English usage. It was obvious that conformity to NES standards was not as important as successful communication. The participants were more concerned with how to encourage their interlocutors' understanding and achieve their communicative purposes. The results were consistent with those from the questionnaire in that only 12.8% thought that it was impossible to communicate without correct grammatical English (see Table 6.2). As they have experienced intercultural communication, the results suggested that the participants generally had a sophisticated understanding of natural English use, such as the English used in intercultural communication and the significance of mutual understanding.

In the discussions about preferred English language, British English was deemed to be their preference. This might be related to their current lives in Britain, which motivated their preferences in English use. As can be seen from Example 7.16

(lines 3 and 4), Dew stressed the positive effect of native like communication on her academic writing.

It was interesting to discover that amongst the participants there was an awareness of making everyone on Facebook (who either shared or did not share their mother tongue) understand their communication and expression.

Example 7.18

1 Ken: "Using English online makes me aware to select a proper word or
2 abbreviation. For example, I always use 'hahaha' rather than '555'
3 because my friends from different countries do not know that '555' is
4 pronounced as 'hahaha' in Thai, not 'five five five' and it sounds
5 similar to our laughing@."

This indicates the influence of the online community on communication, so that the participant clearly orients himself to his interlocutors from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds. It reflects his understanding of the mixed and fluid cultural forms represented through language and his awareness of creating a mutual understanding in terms of communicative meanings and purposes.

In terms of the role of nationality for online intercultural communication, most participants believed that the nationality of their online interlocutors mainly influenced topics of communication. According to Namwan, she was very careful when choosing topics of online communication with her Chinese friend.

Example 7.19

1 Namwan: "There are, there are (.) when I chat online with one of my
2 Chinese friend. She told me after we have known each other for a
3 while that she really hated Japanese. Therefore, I have never talked to
4 her about Japanese. Sometimes I praised Japanese but I suddenly
5 realised that I mustn't talk about this to her."

Namwan clearly pointed out the role of nationality in online communication. Her response reflected her ICC ability, and that she had background knowledge about her interlocutors and understood them and this facilitated successful intercultural communication.

Kae distinguished between language use for online communication by NESs and NNESs as follows:

Example 7.20

1 Kae: "I think there are…erm I have noticed that British people, I mean
2 my British friends always use emoticon when they text me messages
3 online. There are at least two of them as far as I have noticed. For
4 Thais, they sometimes use emoticon for showing their tongue :P @@@.
5 I think other NNESs rarely use emoticon. Another point about cultures
6 is erm (.) farang likes complementing us when we chat with them, for
7 examples, they always say 'Well Done!' Thais also like giving a
8 complement but it is not as much as farang."

This example shows a participant's beliefs about the relationship between language, culture and, in that native speakers with different first languages have different ways of using language for communication (see lines 2 to 5). It was further interesting to note that the participant indicated the cultural identity of NESs. As seen in line 6, 'farang' or a specific term which Thais generally use for European people, was used as a category of NESs.

7.3.4 Emerging interview data

Apart from the three coding categories about cultural representation and construction, ICC and perceptions of the use of English for online intercultural communication, three more relevant themes for English language and cultures emerged from the data, consisting of motivation for online intercultural communication, the multimodal features of SNS and other available sources online and linguistic behaviour.

For motivation for online communication, convenience and trendy use of language were influential factors which motivated the participants to communicate in English online. Most of them agreed that online communication was a very convenient channel of communication. They were facilitated to communicate with anybody, anywhere and anytime cheap and quickly without geographical limitations. Furthermore, one of the participants also raised the point that trendy use of vocabularies motivates her to communicate through this channel.

Example 7.21

1 Yean: "I sometimes want to use vocabularies which are on the trend @.
2 I try to follow Facebook of NESs and notice their use of language. In

3 this way, I also learn new believes, ideas and new cultures. For
4 examples, I have noticed that most American people pay attention to
5 politics and election."

Yean's perception shows her interest in language evolution and her desire to use English in a modern way.

Another theme that emerged from the data was that the participants made use of the multimodal features of SNS and available sources online for facilitating mutual understanding. These included the use of pictures for explanation, checking vocabularies in online dictionaries, checking the accuracy of sentences using Google. In Example 7.22, Kae explained that she used pictures and other available online sources to present her communicative meanings.

Example 7.22

1 Kae: "I try to send a picture to show or explain what I want to tell
2 them. It's so easy because one picture can explain everything and
3 make them clear in their minds. (.) Moreover, I sometimes try to
4 explain in details by linking so many relevant things together."

The last coding to emerge was linguistic behaviour. Ken discussed the language choice of Thai English users online.

Example 7.23

1 Ken: "In the case of Thai English users online, I think they use
2 'Karaoke' language. Actually, it mixes between English and Thai. For
3 English use between Thais and people from different first languages,
4 English is of course used in communication."

His response showed the production of a sense of 'Thainess' through mixing Thai and English language in discourse when Thais communicate with other Thais on intercultural social networks, like Facebook. Evidence for this aspect was revealed and discussed in 8.4. Additionally, the results of the second round of interviews are presented along with those from the online observations to clarify the meanings and/or purpose of participants' online communication.

7.4 Summary

The results showed that intercultural communication appeared to be more related to personal presentation than cultural representation and cultural construction. Most participants presented themselves and updated their activities by posting photos. This agrees with the online questionnaire results, which showed that most participants aimed to keep in touch with their international friends and share their experiences and ideas with others (6.3.2). Although most participants did not intend to represent and construct cultures through their online intercultural communication, this still happened in the sense that they shared their interests, perspectives, knowledge, etc., using a variety of modal features available on the mediums (e.g. texts, photos and videos) and in turn they learn these from their communication and interactions with other users with different languages and cultures. In accordance with the online questionnaire results, posting cultural photos was found to be the most practical way of representing and constructing cultures. Most participants showed a limited understanding of cultures at a superficial level, such as food, traditional festivals and national activities (e.g. Example 7.2 and Example 7.3), although their online conversations always involved more complicated levels of culture and these can be seen in the results of the online observations (8.4).

Most participants reported that ICC were important for online intercultural communication. They applied a range of ICC to create meaningful and successful online intercultural communication by using knowledge from their online intercultural communication experiences in their online communication. They also opened up their minds and had a willingness to learn and discover the different practices of their interlocutors from diverse cultures. In terms of the online questionnaire results, most participants showed their positive perceptions of online intercultural communication and believed that it was important to understand and discover other cultures for successful online intercultural communication. Some ambivalent perceptions, however, appeared with regard to whether online intercultural communication facilitated intercultural learning, particularly from those who were not active users. For example, Man believed that only photos posted on SNS allowed him to learn about different cultures. His perception was influenced by his lack of interest in online intercultural communication and lack of experience of engagement with the medium (Example 7.10).

As regards perceptions of the use of English for intercultural communication online, most participants were aware of different kinds of English, but they did not fully understand the language differences. They adapted English to their own style and aimed to achieve mutual understanding in intercultural communication. Unsurprisingly, British English was regarded as standard and their preference for communication.

Overall the first round of interviews provided further detailed personal background information for the participants regarding their histories of English language learning and use for intercultural communication, their English language competency, their experiences of online intercultural communication using English on a particular SNS; Facebook and perceptions of the use of English for online intercultural communication with people from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds. The results suggested that the most frequent users of English online experienced diverse cultural engagement and were most able to articulate how to create meaningful and successful online intercultural communication. The next section presents the results from the focus group.

7.5 Focus group: coding and categorising data

This section presents the results of a group discussion by the five selected participants about their experiences of online intercultural communication and their perspectives on the use of English online and the benefits and problems of online communication. The discussion of the focus group results involves an examination of the participants' ideas and focuses on how they shape their ideas in a group.

In accordance with the first round of interviews, tools for analysing data from the focus group consisted of (latent) content analysis to examine the influence of the participants' actions on their ideas, expression and discussion in a group. Data was transcribed immediately after the discussion in NVivo 10. In this software, the researcher made notes about any impressions and interesting points of the discussion and coded the data. The content of the participants' discussion was the main focus and similar conventions to the interviews were used. However, additional transcription conventions were used to support the latent analysis, for example, latching between utterances and overlapping speech, for example (Appendix L).

The transcriptions were coded based on inductive and deductive codes. As with the interviews, coding categories were devised and revised throughout the whole coding process. It appeared that many of the coding categories were relevant to the inductive codes from the first round of interviews. The codes were, thus, developed and characterised as reoccurring features of the discussion. These included coding categories explained in (a) to (c) (7.2). Other interesting codes relevant to online intercultural communication also emerged and were then taken into the analysis. Table 7.1 illustrates the coding and categorising of the focus group data.

Table 7.1 Coding and categorising – numerical counts

	Aspects	Codes	Ken	A	Jo	Kae	North
Inductive codes	The role of cultures	Cultural representation	6	0	1	1	1
		Cultural construction	1	1	1	1	0
	ICC	Culture and language	5	0	5	3	0
	Perceptions of English use for online intercultural communication	Advantages and disadvantages of online communication	11	3	4	2	1
		Types of English that should be used for online communication	1	1	2	1	0
		Differences between English used online and face-to-face	5	2	1	1	0
		Differences between English used with NESs and NNESs	2	0	0	1	0
Deductive codes	ICC	Body language and cultures	6	0	2	0	1
		Behaviours of online communication of NESs and NNESs	1	1	2	4	1
		Goals of online communication	1	0	3	2	1
	Perceptions of English use for online intercultural communication	Characteristics of online communication	7	1	2	4	1
		Differences between British English and American English	1	0	0	1	0
		Techniques for ensuring mutual understanding	2	2	1	0	1
			49	**11**	**24**	**21**	**7**
	Total						

Table 7.1 presents numerical counts of the frequency of each inductive and deductive code. With regard to the inductive codes, the focus group data were categorised in relation to the coding categories from the first round of interviews. These categories included (1) cultural representation, (2) cultural construction, (3) culture and language, (4) advantages and disadvantages of online communication, (5) types of English that should be used for online communication, (6) differences between English used online and face-to-face and (7) differences between English used with NESs and NNESs. Other interesting codes also emerged from the existing data and these consisted of (1) body language and cultures, (2) goals of online communication, (3) behaviours of online communication of NESs and NNESs, (4) characteristics of online communication, (5) differences between British English and American English, and (6) techniques for ensuring mutual understanding.

The overall coding categories show extensive discussion about online intercultural communication. The participants discussed not only the areas investigated in the study (inductive codes), but they also added what they had experienced from communication online with their interlocutors from different countries (deductive codes). Thus, their discussion involved the factual and deeper level of cultures and intercultural awareness. The next part demonstrates the participants' engagement in the discussion.

7.5.1 Frequency and length of participants' engagement

The results demonstrate the pattern of participants' discussion, which indicates their engagement in sharing their online intercultural communication experiences and reflecting their ideas and perceptions of the use of English for intercultural communication online.

There are two important reasons for assessing the frequency and length of participants' engagement in the group discussion. First, the assessment can indicate how well each participant engaged in the discussion and determine the degree to which they corroborate each other. In the case of unbalanced talk during the discussion, the amount of each participants' engagement in the group discussion can be compared to their data received from other methods of data collection and possible reasons for this problematic situation can be ascertained, for instance, whether it was a result of more or less-talk caused by ineffective moderator control or the personal characteristics of the participant and if this affects the data received and in which ways.

Table 7.2 shows the pattern of the participants' discussion. It is obviously seen that Ken was the most frequent contributor and also contributed the most. Within the total 50 minutes of the group discussion, he took 33% of the turns and talked for an average of 14 words per one minute. Most of the time, Ken followed the provided guidelines and extended his discussion to support his ideas. He also came up with other points relevant to the current topics of discussion. When his discussion was relevant to other members, he always asked them to share their ideas and experiences. In these ways, other participants could add their opinions and this resulted in a lively discussion. As such, Ken was considered as the leader of the discussion.

Ken's active engagement in the group discussion indicates his extensive experience of online intercultural communication. Considered together with the results of the questionnaire and the first round of interviews, Ken, who has a modest proficiency in English based on his IELTS results, employs online channels as his primary mode of communication and consider this as important as face-to-face to practice in order to improve his English. This method encourages him to learn both English and the various cultures of his interlocutors.

Jo talked for quite similar amounts of time to Ken with 13 words per minute even if his number of turns was considerably lower (24%). This ratio is unsurprising in that Jo always initiated his ideas towards the guided questions and provided lots of information very quickly. He also usually supported others' discussion and added his thoughts. However, he sometimes interrupted others' discussion and over-talked. The researcher needed to reduce these problems by asking him to slow down and also encouraging less-talkative participants to join the discussion through various techniques, such as asking questions, asking for their ideas and experiences and agreement or disagreement. Jo was another active participants in this activity.

Kae actively expressed her ideas about online intercultural information based on the guided questions. She took a large number of turns (22%) and talked ten words per minute. She provided lots of useful and interesting content.

Clearly Jo and Kae frequently offered information about their online intercultural experiences and perceptions of the use of English online. Further, they brought examples of their online communication and interesting data emerged. Therefore, Ken, Jo and Kae seemed to go beyond the investigative boundaries but it was very interesting and relevant to the study.

The other two participants; A and North showed little engagement with the discussion. Particularly, A was very quiet at the beginning but later on increased his contributions steadily. He took turns only 12% and spoke three words per minute during the discussion. One possible reason for his lack of expression could be age power. A was the youngest member of this group and this made him very careful with his expression patterns. According to Thai culture, younger people always let older ones talk and listen to them in order to show their respect and humbleness. In both rounds of interviews, A was very active and produced a lot of information about his experiences and perceptions of English use for online intercultural communication.

North was a different case. She contributed little in either both round of interviews or the group discussion due to her limited experience of online intercultural communication. As seen, she took only 10% of the turns and spoke four words per minute. As a result the fact that her Master's degree class had a large number of Chinese students in it, she has experienced the use of English for online intercultural communication with mostly Chinese friends. Although she was keen about the communication online, her experiences were mostly limited to a particular group of people and could not be used to explain or exemplify various situations in online communication. However, she attempted to share her ideas by supporting others' discussion occasionally. She was encouraged to enlarge on her ideas by asking for her thoughts about and/or beyond the discussed topics.

Table 7.2 Frequency and word length of participants' engagement in the group discussion

Participants	Turn taking		Word length	
	Number	%	Number	/min
Ken	60	33	660	14
A	21	12	132	3
Jo	43	24	608	13
Kae	40	22	475	10
North	18	10	191	4

Overall, the figures revealed that all of the participants actively engaged in this group discussion. Even if, unsurprisingly, a few participants contributed less, their data were still useful and were extended holistically by other members' discussion. Ken, Jo and Kae were the most extensive contributors in relation to talking turns and length of speaking words. This indicated the sophistication of their online intercultural experiences and their confidence with using English for communication online at an intercultural level. Additionally, given their extensive experience of online intercultural communication reported in both rounds of the interviews, large contributions were received from them. On the other hand, A and North seemed to be the least able to participate in the group discussion compared to the other three research participants due to the age power in A's case and North's limited experience of online intercultural communication. However, this did not mean that they could not contribute, as they provided interesting data in both rounds of the interviews (7.3 and 8.5) and online observations (8.4). The following section presents the results of the focus group.

7.6 Results of the focus group

The previous coding and categorising indicates three main cultural aspects, consisting of the roles of cultures (cultural representation and construction), intercultural communicative competence (ICC) and perceptions of English use for online intercultural communication. This part will offer some relevant examples of these aspects from the recordings of the group discussion.

7.6.1 Cultural representation and construction

The two examples presented here illustrate how the participants represented and constructed their cultures in online communication.

Example 7.24

1 Kae: As far as I see, native do not normally post photos, but Asia do it
2 a lot.
3 Researcher: Which Asian countries?
4 Kae: Mostly [Thai
5 Ken: Sorry], what kinds of photos?
6 Kae: Photos of different activities. 'Farang' do not normally post
7 photos and check-in. But my Indonesian, Japanese and Thai friends
8 always check-in on Facebook all the time. One of my friend is

conducting a research about the security on Facebook. He told me that it is dangerous of checking-in on Facebook but Asian people do not care about it@.
Jo: There was a news (.) a beautiful lady posted her current place, activity and person who was with her. And a bad person who followed her online made something bad with her.
Ken: different purposes, I think. Thais check-in on Facebook because they want to tell others publicly that they are still alive @@@ People from other cultures from my online experiences, they also post photos, videos, etc.
Jo: That's true, Thai can't live without Facebook. This is shown in current research studies. Most Thai always check mobile phone at the first thing after they wake up (.) that's so true. There are research studies about it.

Example 7.24 shows a discussion about cultural representation in relation to racial classifications. Kae indicated that posting photos or checking-in in a current location were general behaviours of Asian people while NESs or what she classified as 'farang' (see its definition from Example 7.20) had different online behaviours. Kae's description illustrated her beliefs about the habits and lifestlyes of both NESs and NNESs based on her first hand experiences. As a Thai, she realised that Thai users of Facebook shared quite similar online behaviours to her other Asian friends in frequently updating their lives on Facebook. From her current experiences of living in an NES country, she knew that Facebook was not as important as email or mobile phone messages for NES. Based on her data, she discussed cultural representation at the level of everyday lived experience and her beliefs about NESs and NNESs.

Example 7.25

Ken: "When I feel shy or embarrassed, I use P to show my tongue and smile. However, some of my friends do not understand my purposes of doing so. They ask me why I laugh at them because the topic of our conversation is not funny (.). Perhaps our cultures 'smile' conveys a range of meanings, including friendliness, amusement, thank you, apology and embarrassment, for instances. But they feel differently from me"=
Jo: ="I think we need to consider 'body language of each country. Body languages of each country have different meanings. We do these body

languages in our country to show a particular meaning but it does not mean we can do the same with people from other countries. For them, these body languages might have different meanings from our countries."=
Ken: ="Thais like laughing, for examples, when they are blamed. It seems like we look down our [interlocutors."
Jo: "Ah..yes yes] It involves cultures."
North: "My tutors also always ask me why I laugh. It is not funny at all."@
Kae: "Laughing, Thais like typing '555' my 'farang' friends are so interested. When I told them (.) they have never heard about it before."
Researcher: "They never use it?"=
Kae: ="yea, and after that they type '555' instead of 'hahaha' because they said it was short."

This example illustrates many cultural aspects but, here I focus only on cultural representation and the construction of the participants, while other aspects, for instance, ICC and language and cultures are discussed later on in the next part.

In terms of cultural representation, the participants showed their clear understanding of cultural differences. They realised that a smile is the main characteristic of Thai people and represents Thai culture. They all agreed that they always used "P" for their smiles in their online chat to show their different feelings, such as embarrassment. This example indicated that cultures can be expressed through behaviours and language, and most of the time these are unconscious. Their smiles can be further associated with cultural construction in that they influence the behaviours of online interlocutors from other languages. As seen from line 19, Kae indicated that her friends used '555' instead of 'hahaha' to show laughing. More discussion of this example with relevance to ICC and the relation of culture and language is presented in the following part.

7.6.2 Intercultural communicative competence (ICC)

In accordance with Example 7.25 in the previous part, the participants obviously showed their intercultural communicative competence (ICC) in terms of knowledge about themselves and other cultures and critical cultural awareness. As seen from lines 2 to 7 and 14 to 15, Ken showed his awareness of the semiotic language (P). He realised that his online interlocutors did not understand the embedded meanings in his semiotic language and that this caused unpleasant

feelings. Moreover, Jo showed his intercultural awareness and knowledge of self and other cultures (see lines 8 to 13). According to their expressions, the data implies the participants' realisation of the cultural heterogeneity of online communication.

This example can be further related to cultures and language in that language is a semiotic system and expresses culture and society. The participants used 'P' as a symbol to express their feelings and the meanings which are embodied in this symbol relate to their cultural background. Considering this example, it is obvious that there is an interrelation between language and cultures as well as society. Once the participants interpret the meanings of the semiotic language in their social contact with others from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds they learn and develop their cultural knowledge and ICC and this leads to their orientation and adaptation to each other.

Another interesting example shows the interrelationship between cultures and language. Example 7.26 indicates that patterns of English language use are related to people from a particular culture. Jo exemplifies a Chinese case as follows.

Example 7.26

1 Jo: "Because writing, pattern these sorts of things are used in a
2 particular group. It is, for example, Chinese people, they have their
3 own writing pattern. They have their own signs. Only they who know
4 these particular patterns. Therefore, when Chinese use these patterns
5 to anybody who are not Chinese, non-Chinese will not understand.
6 Nevertheless, Chinese still use these patterns and later explain the
7 meanings to their interlocutors. For example, they type their
8 conversation, but I do not understand them, so I ask them a questions.
9 They then explain the meanings to me. There is one research which
10 reveals that a particular pattern can be used in a particular group,
11 regarding to their language habits and/ or normal practices in
12 communication. And these particular patterns cannot be applied to
13 other communicative situations. We need to see if our interlocutors
14 understand our patterns of communication."

According to this, Jo tied English language use to a particular culture. Nevertheless, he and other participants were aware of different ways of using English among multilingual users.

Example 7.27

1 Ken: " For me (.) I do not have anything to blame them about their
2 English language use. Actually, I learn different styles of using English
3 language of people from different countries.
4 Jo: "Can you distinguish the differences?"=
5 Ken: ="Yes, kind of"
6 Researcher: "How do you distinguish their English language use?"
7 Ken: "Well, I look at their vocabularies used."
8 Kae: "I can't distinguish their counties but I can do it in terms of a level
9 of their English competency. I can know that these people have stayed
10 here for awhile…."
11 North: "Mostly, I can't learn a correct English from them."
12 Ken: "I can consider from their vocabularies used. But it is not only the
13 use of vocabularies. I need to know them as well. For example, I have
14 so many Italian friends. So, I know that this is an Italian English styles.
15 When they type their messages, they always initially start very broadly
16 and later on focus on their communicative topic."

The participants agreed that English(es) is used differently by users with different first languages and cultures but they could not exactly distinguish a clear tie between English and a particular culture. Ken expressed in line 5 that he can somewhat indicate the different English uses of his interlocutors but only those with whom he is familiar. Kae further stressed in line 8 that she could not tell her interlocutors' home languages and cultures from her online communication. She was only able to indicate her interlocutors' English competency in relation to their experiences of living in the UK. This example shows the complexity of English uses in multilingual online environments and this aspect is further enlightened in Example 7.28. Although Ken characterised English use based on his interlocutors' ethnic backgrounds, this is generally broad. He was aware of cultural heterogeneity in that there were still differences in the English use of people who shared a common national and cultural tradition due to other influential factors, such as experiences of living in the native language country.

Example 7.28

1 Ken: “Normally, I type what I want to say. It is similar to my speaking.
2 My Asian friends share similar Asian conversation styles because it is
3 Asian cultures. For European or non-European who are or are not
4 native English speakers, they have their own styles. They have their
5 own cultures. However, these people can speak similar to British
6 people if they stay here for 7, 8 or 10 years. My Iranian friend, for
7 example, he is here for 8 to 9 years and his English use is similar to
8 British.”

ICC in terms of the perceptions of the intercultural speakers is also found in the group discussion. Kae showed her willingness to accept different ways of greeting people online as follows:

Example 7.29

1 Kae: “Simply say that if I chat to this friend, he will say ‘hey’. It is not
2 actually him if he says ‘hi’”

Even though Kae did not like the way her friend greeted her online because ‘hey’ is impolite in Thai culture, she accepted it and understood that this is a normal way for British teenagers to greet their friends. This demonstrates her openness to other cultures and to see others based on their behaviours, beliefs and values which are different from hers. Her response is in accordance with her expressions in the first round of interviews (see Example 7.6).

Ken shared his use of several ICC aspects in the group discussion. These include (1) knowledge, (2) attitudes and (3) skills of discovery and interaction. According to the following example, he is not only eager to provide information about his culture, but he is also curious to learn about other cultures from his online communication.

Example 7.30

1 Ken: “Exactly, English is international language. If we can communicate
2 and make mutual understanding, we can then learn. In contrast, my friends
3 normally ask me about my cultures. This is the starting point. Personally, I
4 do not normally start asking them, but later on I become being more
5 curious and want to know about other cultures.”

Ken had knowledge of performing social interaction online. He was willing to provide his cultural knowledge to his online interlocutors while he was also open-minded and ready to learn about other cultures. As such, he showed his ability to acquire new knowledge of cultural practices and operate as well as adapt his knowledge and/or skills to his online communication.

7.6.3 Perceptions of the participants regarding English for their online intercultural communication

The discussion shows very positive participant perceptions of using English with people from multilingual and multicultural backgrounds. It obviously indicates the ways in which they (and their international interlocutors) actually used English and how they felt about English use in such multilingual and multicultural online environments. They further demonstrated techniques for supporting successful online communication and reaching their communicative goals. However, there are also some negative views towards online communication, mainly in relation to the nature of the medium rather than the diversity of online English users.

Example 7.31

Jo: "……..the point is our mutual understanding, to make the point clear, that's it. Therefore, my English use online is rather short, concise in order to save my typing time. I think I will waste my time if I type a lot of information. I prefer to use very clear and concise statements. My interlocutors can know and understand immediately my communicative meanings. Mostly, I will focus on contents instead of grammar. I want everyone understand in the same way about the purposes and meanings of the communication."

To facilitate time management and avoid confusion of English language use, short and concise statements/ sentences were used in online communication. Ken and A also supported Jo's statement that abbreviations are always used among online English users while Jo extends Ken and A's ideas by saying that the short forms of words are always used, especially among close friends because their intimacy facilitates automatic understanding of these abbreviations.

Example 7.32

Jo: "Well (.) in terms of abbreviations, I think if we are very close to that interlocutors, we of course understand their background and we

3 know the meanings of the abbreviations immediately. This is like a
4 common signs between us."

At this point, however, Ken revealed some different ideas from Jo in the above example. Although he knows his friends so well, their intimacy did not always facilitate his understanding of the use of abbreviations.

Example 7.33

1 Ken: "Sometime I don't understand them, for example, they type 'B4'.
2 Every word is shortened and I cannot catch them up."

Kae indicated that her online interlocutors, both native and non-native, used English without any abbreviations.

Example 7.34

1 Kae: "There are both native and non-native in my online conversation.
2 It is apparently noting that British always type full sentences while
3 American use a lot of abbreviations, such as wanna, gotta and also
4 slangs. People from other countries usually mix use between British
5 and American English."

Regarding the participants' discussion about the general characteristics of English use, the data illustrates diverse use of English among people with different first languages and cultures. The possible reasons for this might relate to their personal backgrounds, such as education, experiences of using English language both online and abroad, English language competency, and so on.

It also emerged from the data that the diversity of English use online causes some misunderstandings and problems during communication. As such, the participants extended their discussion and indicated their techniques for dealing with these problems. These are exemplified in Example 7.35 to Example 7.36.

Example 7.35

1 Jo: "Sometimes, I have some communicative problems, such as
2 vocabulary or what I would like to express differ from what I type. Err
3 (.), sometimes I cannot think of the exact words. I sort this kind of
4 problem by explaining vocabularies (.)"

Example 7.36

1 Ken: “I discuss in the aspects of both online and face-to-face
2 communication. I sometimes unsure of the communicative meanings
3 or even the pronunciation. I usually make sure my understanding by
4 checking online dictionary and/or google.”

Moving on with the participants’ perceptions of real practical English use online, the participants showed their ideas about the differences of English use (both online and face-to-face) and English textbooks.

Example 7.37

1 Ken: “I had ever talked to my friends that when I type, it is
2 grammatically correct; there is subject, verb and object. I asked my
3 friend how he felt about what I wrote. He said it made perfect sense.
4 Everything was OK but this is different from daily English use. For
5 example, he swop the word positions and add ‘off’ in the sentence. I
6 never know this way of English communication if I don’t interact with
7 my international friends. We will not never know because it is not in
8 English text books.”=
9 Kae: =“My supervisor also told me that what his international students
10 write is grammatically correct, but he knows that they are not native.
11 But we do not know [@@@.”
12 Jo: “But] teachers from the same country or nationality have dissimilar
13 writing styles as well”
14 Kae: “Some people are very good at speaking but very poor in writing.”

The participants realised that English language in practice is different from what they have learnt from English textbooks. This showed their awareness of different English usage even among people from the same country or nationality (see lines 12 to 13). This example is also evidence of an understanding of diverse forms of English use

It is interesting that online and face-to-face are considered as mediums of communication that have very little effect on changing participants’ English language use. In other words, online is another social community that is used for contacting and interacting with others. According to Example 7.38, the participants used English in very similar way in these two mediums.

Example 7.38

1 Ken: “We need to ask A how does he feel about online communication
2 because he has international friends the most. A, how do you feel
3 about your English use online?”=
4 A: =“I do not feel any differences. I’m very familiar with it.”
5 Researcher: “Do not you feel any differences between online and face-
6 to-face communication?”
7 A: “I feel very similar because when I read my friends’ chat, I feel like I
8 hear they are talking to me.”
9 Ken: “Well, their faces and mouths move? @@@”
10 A: “@@@Yea, just like that. I know their intonation and how they are
11 going to say this sentence.”
12 Kae: “So, English is the same but different channel of communication.”
13 A: “Yes, just places of communication changed”
14 Researcher: “What’s about others?”=
15 Ken: =“Well, kind of but it’s 100%. as I mentioned earlier, we have
16 opportunity to revise our language.”

The participants had other positive perceptions of online intercultural communication in terms of convenient communication and the opportunity to interact with people with other first languages and cultures.

Example 7.39

1 Jo: “It makes me meet people from different countries. It also
2 encourages me to contact them. It is difficult to face-to-face with
3 multinational people but through online, we can list everyone from
4 many countries we know to the same group and chat easier.”

This example is interesting in that online communication influences the participants’ communication with people from different countries. Although they are in the UK, a place of multilingualism and multiculturalism, and have many opportunities to meet and interact with international people face-to-face, the Internet is still an important mode of daily English communication for them.

7.7 Summary

This section provides the results from the focus group. Among the five participants, it appears that Ken offered the most contributions to the group

discussion, followed by Jo and Kae. A and North provided fewer contributions due to age power for A and the lack of diversity amongst North's interlocutors. Nevertheless, their data were extended by other members of the group and were still useful for the data analysis.

The data shows that the participants had a deep understanding of cultures and English language and carefully considered these. In terms of cultural representation and construction, the participants represent their cultures through both photos and semiotic language. Their beliefs, values and perceptions are also embedded in their written English texts (8.4). In addition, they unconsciously constructed their cultures through language use, as in Example 7.25, where smile (P) presents Thai culture (as a common habit of Thai people), while '555' illustrates the relationship between Thai language and culture and relates to English language use on a global level. Number 'five' is 'ha' in Thai. This is why Thais represent laughing as '555' in written form. The participants' interlocutors with different first languages and cultures can learn, orient as well as adapt this to their English use in other online conversations.

In terms of the ICC that the participants applied to their online intercultural communication, the participants had positive attitudes about themselves and other cultures. They were open-mined and ready to learn other cultures and decentre themselves from their own cultures. They had the ability to critically evaluate their interlocutors and situations in their online communication based on their knowledge and experience (see Example 7.25).

With regard to cultures and language, all the participants expressed the same view of the relationship between culture, language and communication. Although some participants believed that people who share a common ethnic background, such as Asians or Europeans, have generally similar cultures and patterns of English communication, this is a very broad frame. Under these kinds of homogeneous entities, they were, however, also aware of the differences of cultural practices in English which involve other relevant factors, such as experiences of living abroad (see Example 7.27, Example 7.28 and Example 7.29). This demonstrates the blurred boundaries between cultures and English language as well as the mixed cultural forms associated with English language use in globalisation. The next chapter presents the results from online observations and the second round of interviews.

Chapter 8: Qualitative results: online observation and the second round of interviews

8.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the results from the online observations collected from the five selected participants and their clarification from the second round of interviews about the meanings of their online conversations. The chapter begins with how the results from these methods are coded and categorised. The results of online observation are then illustrated, followed by those of the second round of interviews. The discussion of online observations is supported by data from the second round of interviews, which involves mainly the participants' explanations of their conversational purposes and meanings. In conclusion, the results demonstrate how English is naturally used, as opposed to perceptions of it, in an ELF online community and how it relates to intercultural communication.

8.2 A review of online conversation records

The primary purpose of online observation is to investigate the nature of participants' English language use for intercultural communication online. During the observation of online conversations, the second round of interviews were conducted with these five selected participants during June to August, 2013 (Figure 5.2) in order to gain an insight into their online conversation records and their extended ideas about their online communication experiences and perceptions of the use of English language (5.5.2.2).

One distinctive feature of online communication is that most conversations are in the written form. As such, the participants' conversations can be observed and copied to Microsoft Word straight away along with their surrounding features, such as photos, videos and hyperlinks. A total of 139 scripts or 209 Microsoft word pages of online conversation records were collected from January to August 2013 (Figure 5.2). These scripts includes 28 online conversations from A for 24 pages, 24 from Ken for 49 pages, 38 from Kae for 47 pages, 24 from North from 29 pages and 25 from Jo for 61 pages.

During the observation process, these data were double checked immediately after each collection for accuracy and to ascertain whether there were any missing parts of the online conversation. Then, whole records were transferred to NVivo10 at the end of the fieldwork for organising and coding.

8.3 Online observation: coding and categorising data

All 139 scripts were inductive and deductive coded. The data showed a variety of conversation topics, as part of which the participants shared their activities and ideas on Facebook about their studies, daily lives, entertainments, cultures, and so on. The coding process shows that lots of data share relevant codes with the inductive codes from the first round of interviews and the focus group. The inductive codes consisted of three main categories based on the research questions (1.2), including 'the roles of cultures', 'intercultural communicative competence', and 'perceptions of English use for online intercultural communication'. Interesting data about cultural and language use for online intercultural communication also emerged during the coding process. These are grouped into deductive codes, consisting of 'cultural (and language) fluidity', 'language choice', and 'cultural comparison'. These codes are illustrated in Table 8. 1. The coding details are as follows.

- Inductive codes
    - The roles of cultures: This code consisted of two sub-codes which were cultural representation and cultural construction.
        - Cultural representation refers to the process by which members of a culture use language (signs and symbols) to produce meaning. In particular, in relation to the online communication context of this study, it includes written words, statements, photos, videos, electronically produced images, external web links, and any other interactions on Facebook which stand for or represent to other people the participants' concepts, ideas and feelings.
        - Cultural construction refers to an invention or creation of cultural meanings. The meanings are developed through the dialogues.
    - Intercultural communicative competence: This code focused on the participants' ability to interact effectively with people from different cultures and with different first languages by looking mainly at five

savoirs (Byram, 1997), including attitudes, knowledge of self and others, skills to interpret and relate, skills to discover and interact and critical cultural awareness.

- Perceptions of English use for online intercultural communication: This code emphasized characteristics of English use in their online intercultural communication in terms of, for example, emoticons, word and sentence structures and typographical errors.

- Deductive codes
  - Cultural (and language) fluidity: According to the online observation data, cultural practices and forms were dynamic, fluid and emergent through the use of English online, depending on the topic. This code, therefore, looked at dynamic, fluid and emergent cultures in online intercultural communication.
  - Language choice: This code emphasized the language choices used by the participants (and interlocutors) in their online communicative encounters. It represented the languages used and how they were mixed with English.
  - Cultural comparison: During online conversations, it was found that the participants sometimes compared their cultures with those of their interlocutors. This code focused on the way in which cultures were compared in different issues between the participants and their interlocutors.

The coding of online observation can be categorised in Table 8. 1 below:

Table 8. 1 Codes of online observation

	Codes	Sub-Codes
Inductive codes	The roles of cultures	Cultural representation
		Cultural construction
	Intercultural communication competence	Five savoirs (Byram, 1997)
	Perceptions of English use for online intercultural communication	Characteristics of online communication

Deductive codes	Cultural (and language) fluidity	Dynamic, fluid and emergent cultures
	Language choice	Language uses
	Cultural comparison	Cultural comparison about different issues

8.4 Results from online observation

Regarding the large amount of data from the online conversations (8.2), the examples which presented the key themes (Table 8. 1) were selected as being representative of the data. As stated in 5.4.2, the main participants were Thai international students. They were, therefore, part of a wider community which was not limited to Thai friends and interlocutors. Rather, they had more opportunities to expand their network through their contact with multinational people in their current setting (UK). As a result, they employed English for their online communication and were active online English users. The following presents the results from the online observations. Any scripts with Thai elements in the exchanges were translated in parentheses after each turn. Pseudonyms of the participants' interlocutors were used to protect their anonymity. It should also be noted that the formats of the conversations from Facebook walls and private Facebook messages were kept unchanged in order to present the original patterns of the participants' online conversations.

8.4.1 The roles of cultures

According to the coding categories in Table 8. 1, the roles of cultures consisted of two sub-codes, including cultural representation and cultural construction. This part presents and discusses the results in terms of how people represented and constructed their cultures.

8.4.1.1 Cultural representation

This first example was selected from Ken. He shared a photo about 'Being British' from '9GAG'on his Facebook wall. '9GAG' is an entertaining website which contains fun photos and videos. Both Ken's British friend, Cathy, who was from Manchester and did her PhD in the same school as Ken, and Mai, his Thai friend in Thailand interacted with this post.

Example 8.1

1. Cathy Quite accurate.
   9 hours ago · Like
2. Ken A friend of mine who is British always order fish and chips when
3. we were in a pub.
   9 hours ago · Like · 1
4. Cathy Fish n Chips is standard!
   8 hours ago: · Like
5. Mai Being Thai อาจเติมต่อท้ายในบ้านติดแอร์ยี่ห้อไทยแต่ชื่อญี่ปุ่น See Translation
6. *(Being Thai, probably be added at the end that an air-conditioner in*
7. *Thai houses with Thai brand but Japanese name.)*
   7 hours ago via mobile · Like

The participant and his interlocutors represented British culture(s) through a posted photo. Apparently, Ken observed British consuming habits from his face-to-face contact (lines 2 and 3), related his encounters to what he found online and shared this with others.

This online interaction indicates three interesting points; (1) national culture(s), (2) global cultural connections and (3) cultural comparison. In terms of the first point, it is interesting that the participant represented other national culture(s) rather than his own. It shows his cultural interests are not limited to his own culture(s), but also extend to other cultures, such as British in this case. Second, the example represents cultural connections at a global level. It is true that each

culture can adopt and adapt other cultures to their own, resulting in mixed up cultures. This mixed cultural practice also happens in Thailand, as seen in lines 5 to 7, according to the participant interlocutor's cultural comparison.

Example 8.2

ไหนพี่น้อง ขอดูโทรศัพท์หน่อยซิ?

(Everyone, can I take a look at your mobile phone?)

See translation

คาวบอย - ไอโฟน (Official MV)

Cowboy - IPhone

www.youtube.com

โหลดริงโทนและเสียงรอสาย โทร. *492212 กด 2 ถือฤกษ์เบิกชัย เปิดตัวพร้อม iPhone 4s ในประเทศไทย

*(Download this as a ringtone and song for waiting the mobile phone responses. Tel. *492212 Press 2. Welcome the song at the same time with the launch of iPhone 4s in Thailand.)*

Like · · Share · Saturday at 17:15 ·

Woraluck likes this.

1. Symeon I'm not so sure for the purpose of this video...but it makes me
2. laugh...What does he say?

Saturday at 17:42 · Edited · Like · 1

3. Toh give me one pls.
   Saturday at 17:42 · Like · 1
4. Ken Symeon This guy names himself 'cowboy'. He is trying to mimic
5. one of the most famous Thai band named 'Carabao'. The word
6. 'Carabao' means 'water buffalo' in Tagalog language widely used in
7. Philippine. Moreover, 'buffalo' is closely pronounced like 'fine' so 'I'm
8. fine' has the close meaning to 'You are a buffalo' in Thai. That's the
9. reason why you can see a lot of buffaloes in the music video.
   Saturday at 17:47 · Edited · Like · 1
10. Symeon
    Saturday at 17:49 · Like
11. Ken Are you fine?
    Saturday at 17:49 · Like
12. Symeon I'm flying on Wednesday and perhaps I'll come to the Uni...So,
13. I'll see you then
    Saturday at 17:50 · Like · 1
14. Ken 'you are fine' means 'you are a buffalo'
    Saturday at 17:51 · Like · 1
15. Symeon haha...and what's the relation to the iphone?
    Saturday at 17:54 · Like
16. Ken The name of this music is iPhone. The similarity of the
17. pronunciation is played 'I-Phone' -> 'I-Fine'. The meaning of this music
18. is pretty ironic. It's saying that 'Everyone has iPhone. if I don't have
19. iPhone I will look like I-Fine (buffalo)'. ha ha
    Saturday at 18:01 · Edited · Like
20. Symeon
    Saturday at 18:02 · Like
21. Symeon Anyway...it seems hilarious
    Saturday at 18:03 · Like
22. Ken Yes it is
    Saturday at 18:04 · Like

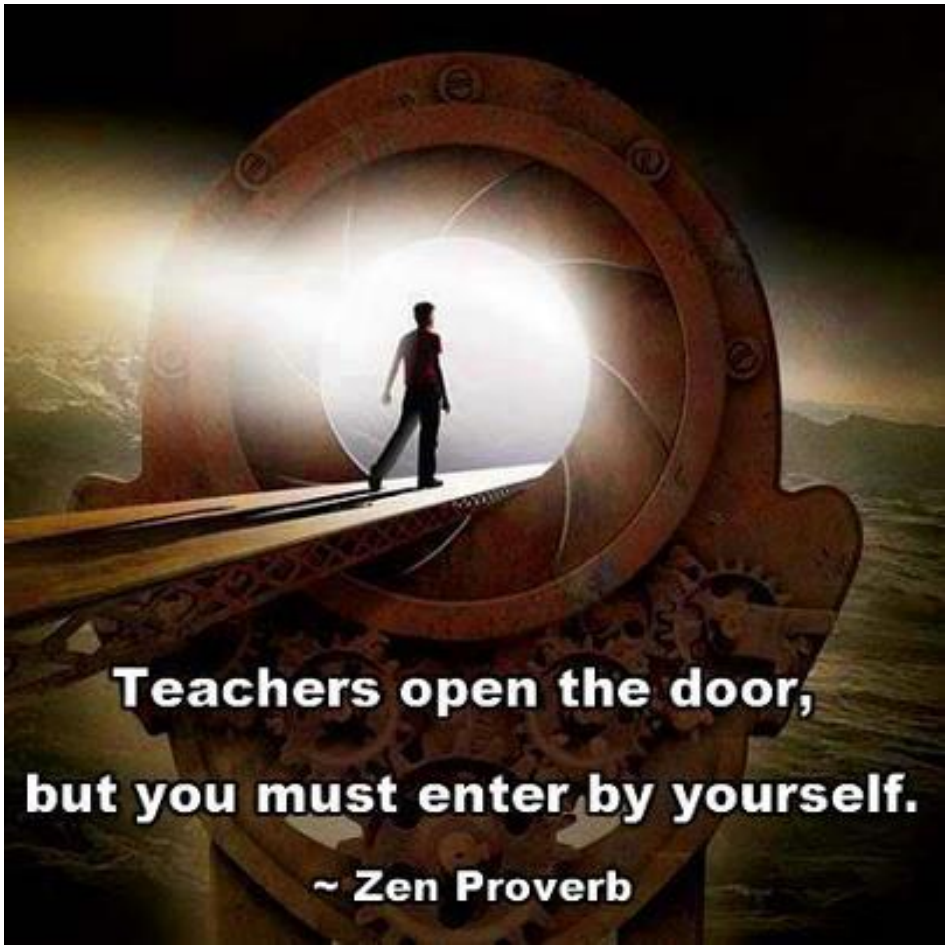
Ken referenced Thai culture(s) through the video and his explanation about the implied meaning of ‘buffalo’ and ‘I-Fine’. In the second round of interviews, he clarified that he wanted his Greek friend to understand the meanings of the music video. He made clear the ironic meanings of ‘buffalo’ and ‘I-Fine’ in Thai culture(s) below.

Example 8.3

1 Ken: "As we (Thais) have known, 'buffalo' or 'Kwai' (or distortedly
2 called 'Fine' among Thai adolescences @) is believed as a stupid labour
3 animal which is used for hard working, especially in farm. This animal
4 is always used to compare with anybody who is lazy, stupid and lack
5 of intelligence. According to the video, anybody, who does not have an
6 'iPhone', is considered as a 'buffalo' because they are old-fashioned
7 and different from most people in Thai societies."

This example represents Thai culture(s) at the national level of a traditional Thai belief about 'buffalo' and iPhone'. Ken's explanation (lines 5 to 7) also links the ironic meanings of 'buffalo', 'iPhone' and 'I-Fine' to the materialism in Thai society. It is the fact that a brand-name is widely preferable in order to gain social acceptance and a good social image.

Example 8. 4



1. Rosie YEAH!
   10 hours ago · Like

2. Ken Good morning teacher Rosie
   10 hours ago · Like
3. Rosie Good morning Ken! :)
   10 hours ago · Like
4. A well my teacher hide that door
   10 hours ago · Like
5. Maureen agreed – sometimes people have to be pushed a little!
   5 hours ago · Like · 1

This example is particularly interesting because the participant and his interlocutor interacted with a post that was not from neither of their cultures. As seen, Ken the main Thai participant posted about a Japanese proverb while his interlocutors with different first languages and cultures interacted with it, including Rosie who is Italian, A who is Thai and another main participant from this study and Maureen who is British. Ken explained his purpose in posting this photo in the second round of interviews, stating that he wanted to share his experiences of studying abroad with his friend and this photo could clarify what he felt. This example clearly indicates cultural representation at global level, in which Ken presented his perceptions of his British supervisor through a Japanese proverb while multilingual and multicultural people (Thai, Italian and British) were interested and expressed their opinions about it.

Comparing the online observation results about cultural representation to the data collected using the previous methods, including questionnaires (Table 6.2), the first round of interviews (7.3) and the focus group (7.6), the results from all data collection methods are relevant in that the participants mainly represented their culture(s) either consciously or unconsciously through posting photos. What is more apparent from the online conversations is that culture was also represented through the multimedia features of SNS, such as photos and videos. The participants' responses and conversations were additional ways of representing their cultures.

8.4.1.2 Cultural construction

Cultural construction frequently appears in the records of online conversation. The participants unconsciously constructed their culture(s) through their different topics of conversation and Facebook posts. Evidence can be seen from Example 8. 5 to Example 8.6 as follows:

Example 8. 5

SoeSan: Vegetarians do eat shrimp !

Me: No....

Soesan: Yes they do eat shrimp

Patrick & Vibhu

Can you two are tell her please cause you guys are Vegetarians.

1. SoeSan Vegetarians dont eat meat - -
   11 February at 15:47 via mobile · Like · 1
2. A FYI
3. Vegetarians don't eat meat and seafood.
4. Pescetarians eat seafood but not meat.
   11 February at 15:50 via mobile · Like · 2
5. Ken Yes they do eat shrimp. whatever don't have spline is fine to be
6. eaten.
   11 February at 15:53 · Like
7. Patrick I class shrimp as an animal, so no lol
   11 February at 15:53 · Like · 1
8. Ken That's your definition but not for others
   11 February at 15:54 · Like
9. A Thank you Patrick Grimes
10. Cause all vegetarians that I know don't eat seafood
    11 February at 16:24 via mobile · Like
11. Parul Vegetarians dont eat shrimp
    11 February at 16:29 via mobile · Like
12. A Weird Soesan told me you eat shrimp Parul
    11 February at 16:30 via mobile · Like
13. Parul I am not vegetarian
    11 February at 16:30 via mobile · Like
14. A Hahahaha SoeSan is that clear now!
    11 February at 16:31 via mobile · Like
15. Parul Lol
    11 February at 16:32 via mobile · Like

16. Gunn Jasperian cannot eat any land animals
    11 February at 17:50 · Like · 1
17. On *land or flying
    11 February at 18:01 · Like · 2
18. Vibhu i dont eat fish.. (in my case not even egg).. but i am fine with
19. milk etc.. so not
20. vegan.. :s i am kinda messed up
    11 February at 22:11 · Like

This example involves multilingual and multicultural people, including Thais (A, Ken, Gunn and On), Myanmar (Soesan), Indians (Parul, and Vibhu) and British (Patrick). They constructed their ideas (and practices) about vegetarians' consuming behaviours. The main purpose of participant 'A' in posting this statement on his Facebook wall was to make clear to his Myanmar friend 'Soesan', who is a vegetarian but eats shrimps, that vegetarians cannot eat shrimp. To strengthen his post, he tagged his British vegetarian friend (Patrick) and Indian vegan friend (Vibhu) to clarify the appropriate consuming practices of vegetarians.

The example shows a cultural construction about the consuming behaviours of vegetarians. As seen from the discourse, people provided their own descriptions of vegetarians and discussed the term through the whole conversation. They constructed their culture(s) in that they explained what they believed and/or practiced based on the rules of the vegetarian diet and the ways in which they had adapted these rules as well as their experiences. They could not agree on the definition of a vegetarian (see line 1, and lines 3 to 8). Cultural constructions found in this example are further discussed in Example 9.7.

The next part presents the results of the online conversations which indicate how the participants used and learnt about ICC.

8.4.2 Intercultural communicative competence (ICC)

Data from the online observations illustrates the participants' intercultural communicative competence (ICC) in relation to their critical cultural awareness, knowledge about their own and other cultures, positive attitudes towards intercultural communication and ability to acquire new and/ or different knowledge and interact in real time using online intercultural communication.

As previously discussed in Example 7.6 and Example 7.29, Kae was open minded about the different greeting practices in Thai culture(s) and British culture(s). Although 'hey' sounds rude in Thai culture(s), Kae realised that this was a normal practice, especially among British adolescents. The example below is an extract of a private conversation between Kae and her British interlocutor via a Facebook private message. It is evidence of her expressions in the first round of interviews (Example 7.6) and in the focus group (Example 7.29).

Example 8.6

Colin Williams

1. hey Kae

Kae

2. hi

Colin

3. how was your day?

Kae

4. what the plan for tomorrow
5. good thanks and you

It clearly shows at the beginning of the conversation that Kae carried on her online conversation with her British interlocutor even though she did not like his online greeting 'hey', as discussed earlier (Example 7.6). This represents her open-mindedness with regard to other cultures and her understanding of cultural differences based on behaviours, beliefs and values.

Example 8.7

North

1. My lovely daughter
2. Thank you for your moon cake
3. It's really delicious
4. I gave P'Sa and P'Yui already
5. and I'll give P'Beau on this Sat

Ling

6. U r welcome, and the mid-autumn festival is this Sunday, enjoy~
7. Can u tell P'Sa , she can get her bag back now~
8. I think maybe she doesn't want it back....haha

This example illustrates the cultural awareness of the participant's interlocutor. As seen from (lines 4 and 5), the participant, North, used hierarchy words in Thai cultures "P'Sa, P'Yui and P'Beau" with her Chinese interlocutor, Ling. In Thai culture(s), 'P' needs to be when speaking to an older person in order to show respect

According to North's clarification in the second round interview, it is interesting in that Ling did not know anything about these kinds of practice in Thai cultures but North still used this practice with her. In response, Ling showed her respect to the participant's friend who is older than her by calling her 'พี่' or 'P', followed by her name 'P' Sa'.

This is a good example which clearly indicates that both the participant and her interlocutor engaged in the emergent practice of a specific culture (Thai) and oriented themselves to this instance of intercultural communication.

Example 8.8

Ken

การโวทย์(vote) เป็นส่วนหนึ่งของการปกครองระบบประชาธิปไตยซึ่งน่าจะเป็นสิ่งที่ดีที่ประชาชนในชาติทุกคนมีสิทธิมีเสียงเท่าเทียมกัน แต่ ...

มันก็เป็นสิ่งที่บ่งบอกถึงพฤติกรรม วิสัยทัศน์ ระดับสติปัญญา etc. (โดยเฉลี่ย) ของประชากรในชาติด้วยเช่นกัน

คนส่วนมากเป็นแบบไหนก็ได้ผู้นำแบบนั้นนั่นแหละครับ พรุ่งนี้เราก็คงจะรู้กันว่าคน กทม. ส่วนมาก "เป็นแบบไหน"

See translation

Like · · Share

Prasan and 25 others like this.

(Vote: It is a part of the democracy which is probably the best of the population in the country in order to provide them the equal rights. However, it also indicates average behaviours, visions and intelligence, etc of the country's population as well. How the most people are, they would get a similar leader to them. We will know "how the most Bangkokian are" tomorrow.)

1. Junpong คนที่โหวตทุกคนก็คิดว่าตัวเองมี พฤติกรรม วิสัยทัศน์
2. ระดับสติปัญญา etc. ที่ดีที่ถูกทิ้งนั้นนี่ครับ ไม่มีอะไรเป็นเกณฑ์ได้See Translation
3. *(All voters believe that their behaviours, visions and intelligent levels are right. There are no exact criteria.)*
   2 March at 14:56 · Like · 2
4. Pum ผมก็ไม่เป็นเหมือนคนกรุงเทพส่วนมากครับSee Translation
5. *(I'm different from most Bangkokian krub.)*
   2 March at 14:58 · Like
6. TaeTae ผมเลือกอาจารย์เคนครับ !!!!See Translation
7. (I chose you, Ajarn Ken, krub.)
   2 March at 14:59 · Like · 2
8. Sonia except for the last sentence, the translation is quite good
   2 March at 15:05 · Like · 1
9. Wasan ถ้าคนที่ผมเลือกไม่ได้เป็นผู้ว่า
10. คนที่ได้ต้องโกงมาแน่ๆ
11. รับรองต้องมีกระแสนี้มาแน่ๆครับSee Translation
12. (If the person I select aren't elected as the Bangkok's Governor
13. The selected person must cheat the election definitely
14. I confirm this idea will emerge after the election.)
    2 March at 15:11 · Like
15. Boydkc อยากได้พี่โต้อะ จะได้เลิกเปิดเพลงสุนทราภรณ์ตอนวันปีใหม่
16. (I would like P'To. Soontaraporn's songs will be stopped playing on
17. New Year's Day.)
18. แล้วเปิด MV บียองเซ่ แทน
19. (and turn on MV of Beyoncé instead.)
    2 March at 15:31 via mobile · Like
20. Nipon ประเทศไหน ที่มี ประชาชนส่วนใหญ่ที่ไม่เอาไหน
21. (Which countries have most unqualified population)
22. ก็จะได้นักการเมืองส่วนใหญ่ที่ห่วยแตก ไม่เอาไหน เช่นกัน...See Translation
23. (They will get most unqualified politicians.)
    2 March at 16:00 · Like · 1
24. Ken Sonia This impress me a lot. I never
25. thought that Bing translator could translate my message from Thai
26. into English like this. I would say, the translates in the 1st and 2nd
27. paragraph convoyed the whole meaning.
28. "character of a leader indicates how a major number of people in the

29. social is and tomorrow we will see how Bangkokian be" (we have a
30. selection of Bangkok Mayor tomorrow). This is what I said in the last
31. sentence.
    2 March at 21:37 · Edited · Like
32. Sonia I am Italian, and we had the government election last
33. week, so I really understand what you wanted to say, and I
34. unfortunately think you're totally right. (In our case is unfortunately
35. because the leader could be so much better...)
36. Good luck with your elections (as your team member you have all my
37. support!!!
    2 March at 21:44 · Like · 2
38. Nipon Sonia Taddei...Politica italiana è come quella
39. della Thailandia.
40. La gente si annoia con i politici. Hanno sempre giocare i servizi labbro
41. ("Lip service" in Inglese).
    3 March at 02:57 · Like · 2
42. Aong กูคิดว่าประชาธิปไตยเป็นระบอบที่ออกแบบมาเพื่อประชาชนจะได้เลือกผู้ปก
43. ครองที่ เหมาะสม สมควร คู่ควร กับพวกเขานั่นแหละ
44. (I think the democracy is created for the population to select their
45. appropriate governors to them.)
    3 March at 06:49 via mobile · Like
46. ฉัตรรัฐฐ์ 555 เป็นจริงที่สุด
47. (555 So true)
48. คนเลือกเป็นแบบไหนก็ได้คนแบบนั้นSee Translation
49. (The selectors will get a similar kind of people to them.)
    3 March at 08:33 via mobile · Edited · Like
50. Toh คนแบบนั่น เลือกคนแบบนั้น See Translation
51. (They select their similar people.)
    3 March at 19:51 via mobile · Like

This is another example which presents the intercultural communicative competence of the participant and their interlocutor. As a result of her experiences in a similar situation in her country, Sonia, the Italian interlocutor, can understand Ken's feelings about the election of Bangkok's governor in Thailand. She can evaluate his idea and how he feels through his statement.

It is worth briefly raising one additional point about translation technology for online intercultural communication. It is interesting to find that Sonia, as an Italian English user understood Thai post by copying the statement into a web-based aided translator, Bing, and then interacted with the participant's post actively. This indicates her interpreting skills and relating skills.

According to all representative examples about intercultural communicative competence (ICC), the participants have skills in communication across cultures, especially 'attitudes to intercultural speakers' (Example 8.6) and 'cultural awareness' (Example 8.7). These skills supported their online communication in that they could understand people with other first languages and cultures and carried on their conversations in order to achieve their communicative purposes.

8.4.3 Characteristics of online communication

This section represents examples from the online observations in order to show the way in which online English users use languages for their online intercultural communication. It mainly focuses on the characteristics of online communication. The discussion was supported and triangulated with the results from questionnaires (6.3), the first round of interviews (7.3) and the focus group (7.6).

Most records of online conversations demonstrate that there was prevalent use of emoticons, abbreviations, short and/or incomplete sentences, contractions, orthographic play (especially the repetition of letters) and typographical errors. The following examples present the different emoticons uses among the participants (and also their interlocutors).

Example 8.9

North

1. tomorrow is the mother's day in Thailand
2. it's Queen birthday, so i changed my profile picture
3. i miss grandma so much T_T

Ling

4. grandma looks very young, dont be sad mum, u still have me^_^

North

5. it's really good to have u be my daughter ^^

6. sometimes my mom looks younger than me.

Ling

7. noooo, haha, u two look like sister, i can c the good relationship in my
8. family~~~

North

9. mom and i are really close together like u said
10. and like u and me ^^
11. u know google translate is very very very useful for me
12. i found information in Thai and translated it in English
13. Soooooo Cool!!!!!!

Ling

14. hahaha, google is amazing~~~

There are different emoticons used in this English conversation on Facebook private messages between North and her Chinese interlocutor. In line 3, T_T means 'crying'. This presents North's sadness because she misses her mother. Her sad feeling is connected with an important traditional day in Thailand; Mother's Day, which is also the Queen's birthday and is on 12th August. The Queen is an emblem of the mother in Thai culture. Thais realise the importance of this day and commemorate their mothers. As such, North uses this emoticon to present her feeling. While there are other emoticons, ^_^ to show a smile (line 4), ~~~ to complete the sentences with no meaning (lines 8 and 14).

In terms of abbreviations, this characteristic can be found in some examples. Referring back to Example 8. 5, A used the abbreviation 'FYI' or 'For your information' (line 2) in order to tell his Burmese friend the information. The interviewed participant, A, suggested that he got used to abbreviations in online conversations because of their frequent use. Another abbreviation he used can be found in Example 8.12 (line 4), 'DIY' or 'Do it yourself'.

Other common characteristics of online communication can be found in this online observation. These include short and/or incomplete sentences, small and/ or capital letters, excessive use of exclamation/ question marks, contractions and typographical errors.

Example 8.10

Jo

1. hey
2. sleeping?

Zhi

3. no
4. slides
5. I just want to ask you, the first week in semester 2,do we have course
6. ?or no course

Jo

7. of course
8. we have course
9. tutors here are very active
10. if their is nothing change
11. there is
12. why??

Zhi

13. but the following 2 weeks we dont have, right?
14. I saw the records on the ststem, that 2 weeks no course
15. i dont know way ,

Jo

16. really? i haven't checked it yet

Zhi

17. just no course. maybe others will have exam, and classrooms is not
18. enough
19. check your APP on IP4S
20. my southampton APP
21. you gave me a good idea
22. because my outline of presentation is like yours

Jo

23. 16 dec to 6 jan is holiday

Zhi

24. 1, introduction. 2, in my school, 3, factors influence CLT,
25. 4,recommendation.
26. 5,conculsion
27. good night. i have workshop tomorrow
28. anyway , bye ,good dream

Jo

29. Ok

This example illustrates a private conversation between Jo and his Chinese friend. It is apparent that the participant only used small letters, short responses and/or incomplete sentences. Further, the repetition of question marks (line 12) and an abbreviation (line 19) can be found. Typographical errors are noticeable, for instances, line 10 and line 14. The participant made clear in the second round of interviews that he was more concerned with communicative meanings than sentence patterns and grammatical mistakes. He did not normally change the size of the letters and always used small ones for typing convenience and to save time.

Triangulating the results of the online observations with other methods of data collection (the first round of interviews and the focus group), the participants accepted that abbreviations, emoticons, small and/or capital letters, repetition of question marks and/or exclamation marks, and typographical errors were often used in their online intercultural communication.

8.4.4 Cultural (and language) fluidity

Another distinctive point that emerged from the observation of online conversations was the fluid nature of online communication. This section presents the results that show the fluidity of cultures and languages.

8.4.4.1 Cultural fluidity

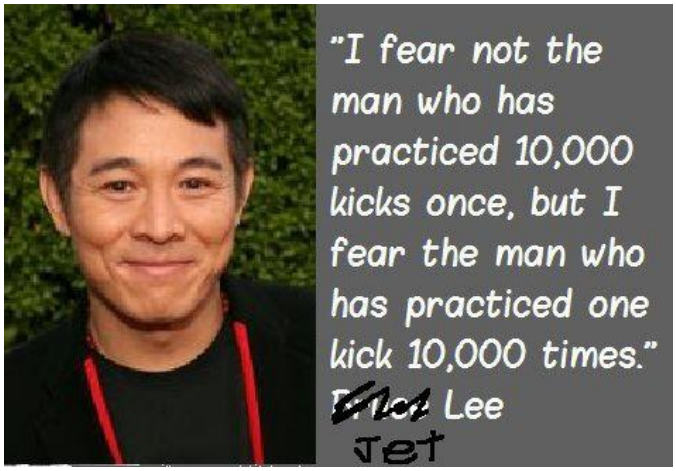
Most online conversation records demonstrate that many participants' cultures are not clearly identifiable and are not bound entities. Rather they are mixed,

dynamic and undergo change mainly according to the topics of online communication, interlocutors and the surroundings of online mediums.

An obvious example can be seen in Example 8.11 which illustrates how much more multicultural, complex and fluid online conversations are when the users communicate about third or other cultures which are not those of any of the interlocutors.

Example 8.11

Ken to Hessam



Hope you like it. Good night ...

Like · Share · 9 hours ago ·

SM likes this.

1. Hessam: you are a bastard Ken! I am gone kill you! :)
   9 hours ago · Like · 1
2. Ken: You are very welcome ;)
   9 hours ago · Like · 1
3. Hessam: the family name is also need correction! it should read "Li" instead of "Lee"
   9 hours ago · Like
4. Ken: OK Thanks That's gonna be the next version
   9 hours ago · Like · 1
5. Hessam: bastard! I really like this guy! and he was the true champion
6. of china from the age of 11 to 19 for 8 consecutive years winning gold
7. medals! now you are making joke with him... I am gone show you the
8. cannon feast punch tomorrow!
   9 hours ago · Like · 1

9. Hessam: just kidding of course! no need to move away from
10. Southampton mate!

9 hours ago · Like · 1

In this example, Ken, the participant and an Iranian English user, Hessam, talked about a Chinese global superstar 'Jet Lee'. Ken edited and posted this photo to Hessam's Facebook wall with the aim of teasing him because Ken knew that Hessam was a fan of Bruce Lee and hated Jet Li. The interesting point that emerged from this example was that people who did not share the same language and culture talked about another culture which belonged to neither of them. Further evidence for this point can be found in the example below.

8.4.4.2 Language fluidity

Records of online conversations revealed not only hybrid and dynamic cultures, but also a fluidity of languages. Looking back to Example 8.8, an Italian interlocutor interacted with the participant's post which was in Thai language while other Thai interlocutors also commented on this post in both Thai, English and Italian (lines 38 to 41).

This example reveals a unique characteristic of online communication in that it is not fixed to one language. Speakers of different languages can understand the communication with the aid of communication technology, such as web-based translators.

In a similar way, language is fluid and changes during the online communication process, depending on the interlocutors' preferences. Example 8.12 below indicates language fluidity in that the interlocutors communicated in another language but then they changed this and/or mixed it with English (line 4).

Example 8.12

Andreas's classy DIY pipe collection stand — with Andreas.

Like · · Share

Ken and 12 others like this.

1. Marios pu en tuto re?
   20 May at 19:00 · Like
2. Andreas sto domatio mou.
   20 May at 19:07 · Like
3. Marios ti lalis re? eshis ergostasion pippon?
   20 May at 19:10 · Like
4. Andreas haha, ethela polla. to "DIY" ennoi to stand/holder
   20 May at 19:13 · Like
5. A I wish I can translate them
   20 May at 23:25 · Like
6. Marios i'll teach you A
   21 May at 13:02 · Like · 1

Although the participant's post was initially in English, his Cypriot friends interacted with it in their own language. This reveals varied discourse in communication practices. A explained in the second round of interviews that he did not mind when his friends responded to his posts in other languages because he could translate their languages and understand the conversation, using Google Translate.

8.4.5 Language choices

Data emerged showed that language choices were used among the participants and their Thai friends in online intercultural communication. This section examines the mixed linguistic repertoires evident in a selected example of their online interactions.

Example 8.13

Like · · Share · 7 hours ago ·

11 people like this.

1 share

1. Jo On the way to the university...
   7 hours ago · Like
2. Venice I can recognize it, the bus stop near St Margaret, rite?
   7 hours ago · Like
3. Jo definitely right!!!!!
   7 hours ago · Like
4. Jo ทางเดินไปมหาลัย
5. (On the way to the university)
6. ในฤดูใบไม้ร่วง
7. (In Autumn)
   7 hours ago · Like · 1
8. Pienporn beautiful autumn..
   about an hour ago · Like
9. Pienporn Where do you stay?
   about an hour ago · Like
10. Jo St. Margaret House. It is also a university accommodation but more
11. focus for postgraduate student both taught and research programs. It
12. closes to the Avenue campus and 10 to 15 walk to the Southampton
13. city's centre kap.
    56 minutes ago via mobile · Like
14. Pienporn so nice ja...
    36 minutes ago · Like
15. Zhi diligent bird
    at 13:42 via mobile · Like

This is a conversation on Jo's Facebook wall in which Jo posted his photos and his friends with different first languages interacted with his post. The friends were Vietnamese (Venice), Thai (Pienporn) and Chinese (Zhi). The example illustrates language choices in which English is prominent and combined with Thai. Jo clarified in the second round of interviews that he used sentence-end discourse particles when he responded to his interlocutors such as 'kap' (line13) while his interlocutor also used 'ja' (line 14) to show her friendliness to the participant who was younger than her. It is interesting that there was mixing and switching

between Thai and English although other interlocutors who did not share these linguistic and cultural backgrounds also participated in the conversation.

Example 8.14

Giant Penis @frederickplatt @lustychris

Like · · Share

L and 13 others like this.

1. SoeSan That's why they were making the balls so big....
   18 January at 16:49 via mobile · Like · 1
2. SoeSan I mean I thought they were going to make a giant snow man
3. ^^^^
   18 January at 16:50 via mobile · Like · 1
4. Peter Thought someone would have done that!
   18 January at 16:56 · Like
5. Tipsuda
   18 January at 17:12 via mobile · Like
6. JaJa U bath 55
   18 January at 17:43 via mobile · Like
7. Parinoot O_o !
   18 January at 17:52 · Like
8. Alan Brilliant 3 years at uni & my son can make a giant set of
9. Bolx..dead proud of you Greg...lol
   18 January at 19:02 · Like · 4
10. Collette Omar looks happy
    18 January at 20:19 · Like

11. Greg ***like a turtle haha
    18 January at 20:24 · Like
12. Collette you said it!
    18 January at 20:24 · Like · 1

This example comes from a conversation between A and his friends who have different first languages and cultures, including Burmese (SoeSan), British (Alan, Collette, Greg and Collette) and also Thai (Peter, Tipsuda, JaJa, and Parinoot). Their conversation is about a picture of a snowball (in the shape of penis). The example demonstrates the mixed use of linguistic resources, in which Thai words are rendered into English ('U bath 55'). 'U bath' is 'karaoke language', which is similar to the subtitles used in karaoke videos (Mayes, 2009). It conveys a similar meaning to 'very disgusting' in English. A reflective comment on this exchange was expressed in the second round of interviews in that this word is very rude and impolite in Thai, so the interlocutor put the word into English to make it sound softer for the Thai audience but it represented the same feeling. This indicates the adjusting behaviour of online English users who recognise Thai cultural behaviours and adjust to the cultural context.

8.4.6 Cultural comparison

Considering the data from the online conversations, there are interesting cultural comparisons between the participants and their interlocutors. This section discusses how people assessed the similarities and differences between two or more cultures.

Example 8. 15

1. Ling u(◠∇◠), Queen... isn't my Mum,haha, what is ur animal year?
2. Ling It is cold this spring, I feel frozen in London, Did u see the
3. wonderful beach in Swansea? There are two beach in Swansea, one is
4. famous for the sunset, the other is available for swimming, I only saw
5. the sunset last time with my sister...T_T
6. North Haha
7. North My animal' s year is depend on which culture
8. For Thai is Horse
9. For Chinese and International is Goat
10. but i prefer Horse
11. I haven't seen the sun set at all

12. because it was raining all day T_T
13. I've been to Worms Head
14. I think Wales's very very beautiful. I'd like to come here again in the
15. summer
16. What's your animal's year?
17. Ling My animal year in Chinese is snake, what is my animal year in
18. Thai? (I'm born in April ,1989) I hope we can visit wales together next
19. time～ （＾∇＾）
20. North In Thai your animal's year is small snake
21. Thai New Year is 13 of April
22. I hope to go to Wales with u as well ☺
23. Miss u

This example shows a conversation between North and her Chinese interlocutor, Ling. It is interesting in that both the participant and her interlocutor exchanged information about their animal birth years in their own cultures and compared them (lines 7 to 9 and lines 17 to 18). Their cultural comparison indicates some overlap between their cultures.

Further cultural comparisons can be found in previous examples. In Example 8.1, the participant' s interlocutor compared mixed cultural practices in the UK with the prevalent adaptation of other cultures in Thai society, such as the use of a Japanese name for a Thai made air-conditioner. In Example 8.8, the interlocutor compared her feelings to those of the participant about elections in their countries.

Apart from an explanation of the communicative meanings, the participants also expressed their perceptions of English use for online intercultural communication. These are presented in the next section in detail.

8.5 Results of the second round of interviews

The second round interviews clarify the participants' communicative purposes and meanings as well as their perceptions of their English use for online intercultural communication. This section mainly illustrates the participants' perceptions of their English use online while their communicative purposes and meanings are also presented along with a discussion of examples in 8.4.

The participants expressed their perceptions of several issues about English use for online intercultural communication. These included 'reasons for using English for online intercultural communication', 'the mixed use of English and Thai', and 'the relationship between the use of English and Thai culture(s) in online intercultural communication'. These issues are presented and discussed as follows.

8.5.1 Reason for using English for online intercultural communication

The participants made clear in the second round of interviews that they often used English for their online communication because they wanted everyone (either Thais or international friends) on their Facebook friend list to understand their communication. Kae expressed her opinions about her use of English for online intercultural communication below.

Example 8.16

Kae: "When I post in Thai, my friends from other countries always ask what it is (.) well when we have friends from many countries, I think it's better to use English to make everyone understand. If my Thai friends want to know or understand the meanings, they can use Google translation. In case they don't really understand the meanings, it is a way to encourage them to practice their English. Some of my Thai friends don't want to use English because they are afraid that their friends might blame them in using English rather than Thai in online communication. But if somebody starts using it, they might feel more confident to use English in their own posts and/ or their communication"

Kae perceived English as a means of online intercultural communication. As a former international student in Australia and a current international student in the UK, she had friends from both Thailand and other countries. Therefore, she believed that it was more useful to use English to create mutual understanding amongst everyone on her Facebook friend list.

It is also interesting in that all participants were aware of the benefits of translation technology for their online communication. Some examples can be found in Example 8.6.

In relation to Ken, he grouped his posts into two types, those for his international friends and those for his Thai friends. He preferred to post his statements and everything in English in order to allow his friends from other countries to understand his posts. If he particularly focused on his Thai friends, he often provided a Thai explanation along with the English.

Example 8.17

1 Ken: "I divides my posts into two groups. If I write English, that means
2 I want my friends from other countries understand my posts. For some
3 posts which I want to communicate with Thai friends, I will write Thai
4 along with my English"

This stresses the role of English, which dominates the participants' mother tongue mainly due to the fact that some interlocutors do not share the same first language. Nevertheless, English is still used alongside Thai (and other languages) in online intercultural communication and this point is discussed next.

8.5.2 The mixed use of English and Thai

The interview results demonstrate that the participants were aware that they used English alongside or in combination with Thai as well as other languages (if they could speak other languages apart from English and Thai) in online intercultural communication. Kae discussed this point in relation to Thai culture(s), in that a mixed use of English and Thai discourse aims to represent Thai culture(s), particularly with Thai online interlocutors.

Example 8.18

1 Kae: "Actually (.) if my online interlocutors are Thai, I will try to use
2 English but don't forget Thai cultures. I try to add 'ka' because I feel
3 alright with it. We knows its meaning among Thais. However, I don't
4 use this word with my interlocutors from other countries. But they
5 sometimes want to know what 'ka' mean."

From the interview, it is obvious that Kae mixed Thai in her English use in order to represent her 'Thainess' to other Thais and to share her cultural linguistic identity. As seen in Example 7.4, Thai women always say 'ka' while men say 'krub' at the end of their communicative sentences to show their politeness to their elder interlocutors.

Jo illustrated similar ideas to Kae in that he was always aware of Thai identity even if he used English for communication with people with different first languages and cultural backgrounds. Therefore, he always used sentence-end discourse particles to show his politeness to Thais and even non-Thai interlocutors if they had Thai cultural background.

Example 8.19

1 Jo: "……even though 'please' is very polite in English communication.
2 I still add 'krub' at the end of sentences because it makes English
3 sounds softer (.) However, I need to consider my interlocutors if they
4 share similar cultures to myself or if they have any experiences in Thai
5 culture(s), for example."

Transliteration from Thai into English also happened in online intercultural communication. According to A's explanation, he sometimes transliterated Thai into English. This is known as 'karaoke language' or 'pasa karaoke'. He suggested that the switches were made primarily for communicative efficiency among his Thai and international friends (who can speak Thai).

Example 8.20

1 A: "I think it is so normal to mix Thai with English in my online
2 communication. I often do it in my online communication with Thai
3 friends but not with non-Thais because they don't understand."

This is a form of ad hoc transliteration using approximate phonetic rendering of the Thai words. It results in variation within the spelling of the same words and innovative replication of Thai orthography, especially the tone system in the Roman alphabet.

8.5.3 The relationship between the use of English and Thai culture(s) in online intercultural communication

All participants agreed that English related to Thai culture(s) through their language use. Even if they did not aim to focus on culture(s) in their online communication, their culture(s) could be represented and constructed in their discourses. For example, the way in which the participants used 'ka' or 'krub' presented Thai culture(s) and this stimulated the curiousness of their interlocutors who did not share the same mother tongue.

Jo believed that language(s) and culture(s) were closely linked and influence communication across cultures. This can be considered from his statement below.

Example 8.21

1 Jo: “Language is a tool of our communication. It is not just a
2 communication in front of the mirror. But in order to communicate
3 with other people and achieve communicative purposes, culture(s) is
4 another part which influence successful communication. For me,
5 language(s) is like a dish, bowl and spoon while culture(s) can be food.
6 Whenever we want to achieve our communication, we need to select
7 appropriate dish, bowl and spoon to suitable food. Language(s) and
8 culture(s) are main parts to reach successful intercultural
9 communication.”

This reflective perception is in accordance with the results of other data collection methods in this study in that culture(s) is unconsciously related and cannot be separated from the use of English language in online communication.

8.6 Summary

The results of the online observations and the second round of interviews were presented and briefly discussed in this chapter.

According to the results of the online observations, multimodality is a prevalent feature which the participants employed along with the use of English for online intercultural communication. From the second round of interviews, the results show that all participants regarded English as the most important means of their online intercultural communication in order to make everyone on Facebook understand their communicative purposes and meanings. They showed their positive perceptions of the use of English for online intercultural communication, which relate to the results of other methods of data collection; the questionnaire, the first round of interviews and the focus group.

Even though English dominates other languages in online communication, the results still indicate that English is commonly used alongside or in combination with other languages, such as the first languages of the participants and their interlocutors. Further, the conversations can be in other languages (e.g. the first language of the participants’ interlocutors) although the participants created their

public statements on Facebook in English. Regarding the fact that most online conversations often involved interlocutors who did not share first languages and cultures, particularly those on the public Facebook wall, the participants were able to interact with others in either their first language or in English. This generated a mixed discourse in which English language is prominent, but frequently combined with English users' first languages. For example, Thai was used along with English by the main participants by using sentence-end discourse particles such as 'ka', 'krab' and 'ja'.

In relation to intercultural communicative competence, all participants and their interlocutors created mutual understandings among themselves. They showed their critical cultural awareness, knowledge about their own and other cultures, positive attitudes towards intercultural communication and the ability to acquire new and/ or different knowledge and interact in real time via online intercultural communication.

Considering the characteristics of English use for online intercultural communication, the use of emoticons, abbreviations, short and/or incomplete sentences, contractions, orthographic play (especially the repetition of letters) and typographical errors was prevalent. These are common characteristics of English for online communication.

In terms of the relationship between languages and cultures, the results revealed that languages and cultures are fluid and dynamic. The participants and their interlocutors formed their languages and cultures as adaptive and emergent resources and these were negotiated and context dependant. These relate to the way in which English is used by incorporating knowledge of intercultural communication into awareness of dynamic cultures and communication skills in online intercultural communication.

Language choice is another distinctive feature of online intercultural communication. The participants and their interlocutors chose languages which were the most appropriate for their online communication contexts, such as the transliteration from Thai into English or 'karaoke language' when the communication was about taboo topics.

Further, cultural comparison is commonly found in data from online observations. During the conversations of people with different cultural backgrounds, they are able to share and/or compare the similarities and differences of their cultures. In

this way, they can put themselves into other situations and carry on smoothly as well as achieve intercultural communication.

Chapter 9: Discussion

9.1 Introduction

The central emphasis in this chapter is to analyse the research results (6.3, 7.3, 7.6, 8.4 and 8.5) to answer the research questions (1.2 and 5.1). In order to gain an insight into the research results, they are divided into three different relevant themes for in-depth discussion based on the research questions, consisting of (1) cultural representation and cultural construction in online intercultural communication, (2) essential intercultural communicative competences (ICCs) for online intercultural communication and (3) perceptions of English for online intercultural communication. The results of these three themes are discussed based on the earlier theoretical backgrounds (Chapter 2: to Chapter 4:).

The discussion begins with the first theme and answers the first sub-research question of RQ1; (1.1) in what way do Thai international students in the UK represent and construct cultures through their online English intercultural communication?, followed by the second sub-research question (1.2) how do cultures influence Thai international students' online communication in English?. The discussion of these two sub-research questions should elaborate on the role of culture(s) in online intercultural communication in English (RQ1). The chapter then moves onto the second theme in order to answer RQ2; what intercultural communicative competences do the participants apply and/or learn for meaningful and satisfactory online intercultural communication? The last theme about the participants' perceptions of their use of English for online intercultural communication with people with different first languages and cultures is discussed at the end and answers RQ3.

9.2 Cultural representation and cultural construction in online intercultural communication

This section discusses how cultures are represented and constructed and how cultures influence Thai international students' online communication in English. The discussion of these two aspects explains the role of cultures in this communicative platform. Examples of the results presented in 7.3, 7.6, 8.4 and 8.5 are selected for in-depth discussion here because they can offer articulate examples of cultural representation and cultural construction. The in-depth

analysis can further elucidate dynamic, fluid and emergent cultures and languages in online intercultural communication. The selected examples are repeated here for the convenience of the reader.

9.2.1 Cultural representation in online intercultural communication

As already presented (7.3), the main purposes of the participants' online communication on Facebook do not involve cultures. Rather, they aim to present themselves and share their activities, experiences, ideas and interesting information with their friends, both Thai and non-Thai. Other studies also find that the creation and uploading of personal profiles are the main Facebook activities (Boyd and Ellison, 2007;Eisenlauer, 2014;Gross and Acquisti, 2005). The evidence can be found from Example 9.1 below (more related results and examples can be found in 7.3.1.).

Example 9.1

1 A: "When I post something on my Facebook, I just want to let my
2 friends know how I am. I don't think about cultural representation.
3 However, it's kind of sharing my culture when I post photos."

'A', one of the main participants, explains his purposes of online communication on Facebook (line 1 and 2). It clearly shows that 'A' desires to provide updates on his life to his friends on Facebook. The way in which 'A' (and other participants as seen in 7.3.1) performs activities on Facebook can be understood as self-presentation because he provides information about his and other people's lives as well as his ideas and those of others on different issues through different modes of online communication, such as status updates, comments, images, videos, external links and so on.

Leary (1996: 2) defines self-presentation as "the process of controlling how one is perceived by other people". It makes others accept the images individuals claim for themselves (Goffman, 1971). Ellison (2013) notes that social media offers people opportunities to share self-presentational content, or 'brand oneself online'. This is undoubtedly why self-presentation is frequently evident in this thesis. Androutsopoulos (2010) calls social media a 'spectacle' page where different resources can form a spectacle through which audiences can extract information.

Many scholars relate self-presentation to people identities in online communication (Ellison, 2013;Lee, 2014). Ellison (2013), for example, notes that online platforms and SNSs in particular contain a set of social and technical affordances (3.3.2) which online users can use to present themselves and these potentially affect their (selective/ multiple) identities. The core concern here, however, is not to see how the participants view themselves and others but how this behaviour connects to their cultural representation and how it elucidates their cultural representation through online intercultural communication. In other words, the concept of self-presentation is applied to understand the way in which the participants represent (and construct) their cultures in online intercultural communication.

Back to Example 9.1 above, self-presentation relates to cultures in which different aspects of the communicative medium (photos) can reveal the participant's cultures (line 3). Meyrowitz (1985) claims that properties of media influence people's behaviour. Further, cultures reside in various aspects of a complex phenomenon, such as the Internet (Pauwels, 2012). Considering the multimodal features of a particular online communicative medium: Facebook, in this thesis, it is, thus, beneficial to bring multimodality literature into the discussion and elucidate how these features influence the participants to represent their cultures in online intercultural communication via Facebook.

As previously discussed in approaches to data analysis (5.6.4), multimodality is defined as an approach for understanding communication and representation which involves not only language, but other kinds of non-linguistic modes of communication, such as images. Through the non-linguistic modes, communicative meanings can be made, distributed, received, interpreted and remade in interpretation (Jewitt, 2009). Leander and Vasudevan (2009) claim that multimodality offers a framework for understanding cultures and cultural production, and the modes and modalities involved in communication. With a variety of online communicative modes and the possibility of combining two or more modes (written texts and images, for example), new kinds of communicative practices can be performed. Example 9.2 (also as seen in Example 7.1) further illustrates the multimodal capabilities of Facebook for cultural representation.

Example 9.2

1 NORTH: "Well (.), there are photos. I always post photos of my

2 activities. In relation to culture, I mostly post photos of making merit
3 with Thai international students here. Actually, the main purpose of
4 posting photos is to show my activities to my friends and share the
5 photos with those who join the same activities @. I, however, think
6 about a representation of Thai culture to my friends from other
7 countries as well."

This example is in accordance with Example 9.1 in which the participant, North, always updates her life on Facebook by specifically posting photos of her activities. When she was asked about her methods of cultural representation on the site, she clearly indicated that she performed it through posting photos, as can be seen in lines 4 and 5. Short written descriptions are also produced along with the photos to describe her cultural activities. Domingo *et al.* (2015) explain that writing is used together with images to describe and convey what people have done up to a particular point. Jewitt (2009) also raises the point that communicative meanings are made through the interaction between modes. These practices are frequently seen in social communicative mediums where a number of different modes are used together for meaning representation and construction (Domingo *et al.*, 2015). As culture is a complex concept related to people's communicative meanings and interaction, culture and communicative technologies are intertwined and shape forms of communication. Available semiotic resources for communication support each other to make clearer communicative meanings. For example, when issues are difficult or impossible to clearly explain through writing, images and other visible modes, such as videos are additional visual choices for writing and meaning explanation. According to North's example above, she makes use of writing and images (photos) to share and distribute cultural meanings on Facebook. This encourages her friends, particularly those who do not share the same mother tongue or cultural background, to see Buddhist activities in Thai special events in the UK.

What is also interesting from Example 9.2 is that it indicates that the participant's cultural representation is not fixed in a specific locale where she and others perform Thai religious activities in a native English environment. Rather, it is mobile when she shares her cultural activities through posted photos and the communicative medium encourages the circulation of her cultural representation to others who are part of her online sphere. Castells (2000) defines this social practice as the 'space of flows' which encourages an understating of culture on the move.

It is worth noting that the main participants do not only post photos about Thai cultural practices, but also other photos of their interests. As seen in Example 9.3, Jo posted a photo of his surroundings in autumn on his Facebook page. The example further illustrates other methods of cultural representation online. Jo believed that transliteration from Thai into English was another way to present his culture apart from photos. In corresponding with other participants, most of them believed that they represented their cultures through cultural information and explicit expression of Thai cultural practices, for example, the mixed use of the Thai words; ka or krap, to represent Thai cultures (Example 7.4 and Example 8.13).

Example 9.3

(See full extract of this online conversation from Example 8.13**)**

8. Pienporn beautiful autumn..
   about an hour ago · Like
9. Pienporn Where do you stay?
   about an hour ago · Like
10. Jo St. Margaret House. It is also a university accommodation but more
11. focus for postgraduate student both taught and research programs. It
12. closes to the Avenue campus and 10 to 15 walk to the Southampton
13. city's centre kap.
    56 minutes ago via mobile · Like
14. Pienporn so nice ja...
    36 minutes ago · Like
15. Zhi diligent bird
    at 13:42 via mobile · Like

As seen, Jo, the main participant rendered Thai utterances into English forms "kap" (line 13) to represent his politeness to his Thai online interlocutor who is older than him. In Thai culture(s), younger men should say "krap" and younger ladies should say "ka" at the end of their sentences when they converse with older people. In contrast, older speakers have the option of choosing from "krap", "ka", or "ja" to show their politeness to younger interlocutors. This can be seen from line 14 when Pienporn responded to the participant's comment. Mayes (2009) calls this practice 'karaoke language'. The mixed use of Thai and English linguistic resources has been seen to occur in other cases of online communication (Seargeant and Tagg, 2011;Seargeant *et al.*, 2012).

These three examples (Example 9.1, Example 9.2 and Example 9.3) suggest that the cultural representation of the participants is not merely bound to the first culture (C1). Rather, it is more complex and involves different layers of cultures (9.2.3). Looking back to Example 8.1 and Example 8.2, the participant; 'Ken', posts photos, which are taken from other websites, on his Facebook page. These photos illustrate British cultures (Example 8.1) and Thai cultures (Example 8.2) and are seen by the participant's interlocutors from different cultures, e.g. British and Thai in Example 8.1 and Greek in Example 8.2.

At this point, the results provide a complex picture of cultures in intercultural communication in that cultures are not merely interacted by the first culture online users; rather, they can interact with any cultures in which they are interested, although this is still on a national level. Also given the support of the communicative medium, Facebook, users are more able to access abundant information and employ its multiple modes, such as text, images, videos, music and animations in their intercultural communication online. Through this, the participants involved in the communication can access wider cultural information. Together with the fact that the communicative medium can be overlapped with other photo display sites (for example, '9GAG'), the links between Facebook and other sites support participants to search for further cultural information and perhaps discover more interesting cultural issues. Drawing on the multicultural practices and multiple modes of Facebook, it is interesting to note that cultures are diverse in online intercultural communication through English, instead of fixing identifiable language entities and target cultures, such as the English language and English-speaking cultures.

Considering the multicultural and multiple modes of online intercultural communication, the results can be explained through the 'local in the global' (Canagarajah, 2005) in which cultures are perceived as hybrid, diffuse and deterritorialized in global contexts. According to this notion, cultural practices in English should move away from reference to inner circle and native English speakers. The notion of the 'third place' (Kramsch, 1993) is also relevant to the results about multicultural practices online. According to this notion, second language communication occurs in the intersection between the users' first language and culture (L1/C1) and the target language and culture (L2/C2), but is not part of either. As such communicative practices are independent from references of L1/C1 and L2/L2 and involve wider linguistic and cultural perspectives.

The results of the participants' cultural representation presented in this section answer the first sub-research question in that the participants represent either their own cultures or those of others mainly through texts and photos on Facebook. The results are in accordance with the concept of culture in lingua franca communication (Meierkord, 2002) in that cultures can be related to L1 cultures, shared communities, third place cultures, or hybrid cultures. Baker (2009a) suggests that cultural practices using English among people with different first languages and cultures or ELF (2.3.1) move between global, national, local, and individual orientations. The results of cultural representation are returned to in 9.2.4 along with those of cultural construction in relation to the role of cultures in online intercultural communication through ELF.

It should be noted that cultures are not only represented, but also constructed as a relevant process. As Kurylo (2013) notes, cultures are both represented in and constructed through communication. In order to gain a wider understanding of cultures in intercultural communication through English on Facebook, the next section discusses how cultures are constructed in communication.

9.2.2 Cultural construction in online intercultural communication

Kurylo (2013) claims that culture is represented and created or constructed through verbal and nonverbal communication. It is constructed and embedded in the process of communication (Kurylo, 2013). As the discussion in the previous section demonstrates, different modes of the investigated communicative medium, Facebook, facilitate the participants' cultural representation, mainly through texts and photos. In the same vein, meaning is also constructed through the interplay of two or more web elements (Pauwels, 2012). The evidence can be seen in this thesis (Example 9.4) in that the participant constructs her ideas about others from the multi-features available on Facebook. Pink, the participant from the first round of interviews clearly expresses that she does not need to interact with her Facebook interlocutors straight away. She can develop her understanding about others at different times, particularly via her interlocutors' posts and photos.

Example 9.4

1 RESEARCHER: "How do you form and/ or develop your culture(s) from
2 Facebook conversation?"
3 PINK: "I like Facebook because I can follow up my friends' conversation

4 what they are talking about and I can see from the photos. So, it's ok a'
5 I can catch up their activities and ideas."

One of the main participants in the study; Ken, expresses that the cultural construction of different issues can be seen from online communication (Example 9.5). Linking the result to an analysis of websites as cultural expressions, Pauwels (2012: 257) notes that "the Point of View (POV)" or "VOICE(S)" reside in many aspects of the website, such as visuals, text, and so on. This explains online intercultural communication through English on Facebook in that the participants employ the communicative medium and its multiple modes to propagate their ideas and points of view to others in their online community. They can then construct their ideas about whatever has been posted by other users and vice versa. In this way, different cultures are manifested and the participants can determine the cultural meanings of others. This indicates the intersemiotic semantic relationships between the visual and verbal modes interacting to construct the integrated meanings of multimodal texts.

Example 9.5

1 KEN: "I think online communication opens up my minds in that I know
2 how people from other countries construct their ideas about different
3 things. It, however, depends if I notice them or not."

According to the results from all data collection methods, it is interesting to note that cultural construction occurs vividly among the main participants who regularly engage in online intercultural communication in English. Saritas (2006) explains that constructivism is based on active interaction in authentic and meaningful contexts. People can construct knowledge through continuous social interactions (Larochelle *et al.*, 1998), although some of the participants in this study seem unsure about the ways in which they construct their own and other cultures online because of their limited understanding of cultures (9.2.1). Most of them unconsciously articulated their cultural construction during either the first round of interviews or the focus group (7.3.1and 7.6.1). Further, their cultural construction appears clearly in records of their online intercultural communication in English (8.4).

Jo, one of the main participants who frequently uses English for intercultural communication online with his friends, indicated in Example 9.6 that he constructed the cultures of others during his online communication through

asking questions and comparing his own culture with others. He also encouraged others to construct their own ideas of his cultural practices.

Example 9.6

JO: "…..mostly it happens when my friends ask me something during our online conversation @. I always explain them and this links to my culture. If I simply tell them that I can or can't do something, it doesn't make sense. But if I tell them that I can't go to the bars or pubs, for example, because it's wrong (.) according to my religion, they will simply understand. There is also another group of my close friends who ask me directly, such as what this means in my culture, can they do this or that, etc. because they have heard about it from other sources. It's because they are very close to me, so they feel comfortable to ask me the questions. When I tell them about my culture, I always ask them about their cultures as well @ in order to see in what ways my and their cultures are similar or different. Rather than they know about me, I know about them too."

That means that he reflects his beliefs to his online interlocutors. In turn, the exposure to and engagement with the conversation further reinforces their construction of different cultures. As Bakhtin and Emerson (1984) explain, knowledge results from co-participation in cultural practices. It is a socially negotiated and constructed truth in that the participants co-construct different cultures from their own from their interaction with their interlocutors.

Other records of online conversations also indicate social construction between the participant and his interlocutors on Facebook (also see Example 8. 5).

Example 9.7

SoeSan: Vegetarians do eat shrimp !

Me: No….

Soesan: Yes they do eat shrimp

Patrick & Vibhu

Can you two are tell her please cause you guys are Vegetarians.

1. SoeSan Vegetarians dont eat meat - -
   11 February at 15:47 via mobile · Like · 1
2. A FYI
3. Vegetarians don't eat meat and seafood.
4. Pescetarians eat seafood but not meat.
   11 February at 15:50 via mobile · Like · 2
5. Ken Yes they do eat shrimp. whatever don't have spline is fine to be
6. eaten.
   11 February at 15:53 · Like
7. Patrick I class shrimp as an animal, so no lol
   11 February at 15:53 · Like · 1
8. Ken That's your definition but not for others
   11 February at 15:54 · Like
9. A Thank you Patrick Grimes
10. Cause all vegetarians that I know don't eat seafood
    11 February at 16:24 via mobile · Like
11. Parul Vegetarians dont eat shrimp
    11 February at 16:29 via mobile · Like
12. A Weird Soesan told me you eat shrimp Parul
    11 February at 16:30 via mobile · Like
13. Parul I am not vegetarian
    11 February at 16:30 via mobile · Like
14. A Hahahaha SoeSan is that clear now!
    11 February at 16:31 via mobile · Like
15. Parul Lol
    11 February at 16:32 via mobile · Like
16. Gunn Jasperian cannot eat any land animals
    11 February at 17:50 · Like · 1
17. On *land or flying
    11 February at 18:01 · Like · 2
18. Vibhu i dont eat fish.. (in my case not even egg).. but i am fine with
19. milk etc.. so not
20. vegan.. :s i am kinda messed up
    11 February at 22:11 · Like

The participant, A, posted the face-to-face dialogue between him and his friend, SoeSan, on his Facebook and tagged SoeSan as well as inviting his two vegetarian friends to explain to her their vegetarian practices. He aimed to make SoeSan

understand how vegetarians actually practice by providing her with information from other vegetarians. Cultures in this way are social constructs in which a group of people share values, beliefs, social practices and rules. People then socially acquire and construct their ideas about the traditions and lifestyles of other members of a society.

While A employed the social construction of the cultural practice, it is interesting that people in this conversation defined 'vegetarians' in their own different ways throughout the conversation based on their individual understandings and practices. This indicates heterogeneous perspectives on culture in that people have different views on traditional practice. In fact, vegetarians refrain from the consumption of meat, including red meat, poultry, seafood and the flesh of any other animal. In addition, they may not eat the by-products of animal slaughter. Even if there are a variety of vegetarian diets, not everyone in the conversation believes and/or practices the common rules of being vegetarian (seen lines 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8). At one point, an individual defines types of animals differently (lines 5 to 7). At another point, the participants indicate the flexible practices of vegans or vegetarians who do not eat animal products, including egg, dairy, beeswax and honey. Vibhu, who was the participant's interlocutor and was tagged in the conversation, is flexible about milk. Further, Gunn, the participant's interlocutor, self-defined the term for his friend, Jasper, as a Jasperian cannot consume land animals. According to these points, cultures appear to be dynamic, complex and negotiated. They vary greatly depending on the users and the context of use.

The selective results of cultural representation and cultural construction discussed here indicate the role of culture(s) in online intercultural communication among people with different first languages and cultures through ELF. The discussion is continued in 9.2.4 in detail. Before that, the awareness of cultures on intercultural communication in English among the participants is discussed in the next section since the results apparently indicate that cultures are represented and constructed on Facebook in different ways.

9.2.3 Awareness of cultures in online intercultural communication

The discussion in this part aims to explain the participants' awareness of cultures in intercultural communication online through English. According to the discussion about cultural representation (9.2.1) and cultural construction (9.2.2),

participants show their awareness of cultures in online intercultural communication through English as the different levels of their intercultural awareness are shown in the findings in 7.3.1, 7.6.1 and 8.4.1. As such, this shows the influence of cultures on online intercultural communication and to clarify this point, typical examples from the findings in these mentioned sections are selected and discussed here, applying a model of intercultural awareness (ICA) proposed by Baker (2015). This model is useful to distinguish the different levels of intercultural awareness and gain a conscious understanding of cultures as fluid, complex and emergent in intercultural communication (4.5.2). It should be noted that many of these examples have previously been presented in their own sections but are repeated here for the convenience of the reader.

Level 1 of ICA can be seen from the participants' general understanding of cultures in which they connect their understanding of cultures to their first culture (C1). North, in Example 9.8 below, posted her images on Facebook to update her friends about her activities. It is important to note in this example that the participant frames her understanding of culture in relation to her C1 which influences her posts of photos about her cultural activities (lines 2 and 3). According to Baker (2009b; 2011; 2015), this level of basic cultural awareness involves a conscious understanding of C1 and the manner in which it influences behaviour, beliefs and values in communication.

Example 9.8 – Level 1: A basic understanding of culture

1 NORTH: "Well (.), there are photos. I always post photos of my
2 activities. In relation to culture, I mostly post photos of making merit
3 with Thai international students here. Actually, the main purpose of
4 posting photos is to show my activities to my friends and share the
5 photos with those who join the same activities @. I, however, think
6 about a representation of Thai culture to my friends from other
7 countries as well."

An understanding of culture in relation to C1 appears general among most of the main five participants. A possible reason for this is that these participants had a variety of educational backgrounds (6.4) and perhaps have a limited understanding of the concepts of cultures. Therefore, they generally frame their understanding of culture based on their C1 rather than understanding culture as fluid, dynamic and emergent as seen from their cultural practices through English in online intercultural communication (8.4).

Example 9.9 below further stresses the participants' own culturally based perspectives and their awareness of the differences in other cultural practices.

Example 9.9 – Level 1: Addressing one's own cultural perspective and the differences in other cultures

1 Kae: As far as I see, native do not normally post photos, but Asia do it
2 a lot.
3 Researcher: Which Asian countries?
4 Kae: Mostly [Thai
5 Ken: Sorry], what kinds of photos?
6 Kae: Photos of different activities. 'Farang' do not normally post
7 photos and check-in. But my Indonesian, Japanese and Thai friends
8 always check-in on Facebook all the time. One of my friend is
9 conducting a research about the security on Facebook. He told me that
10 it is dangerous of checking-in on Facebook but Asian people do not
11 care about it@.
12 Jo: There was a news (.) a beautiful lady posted her current place,
13 activity and person who was with her. And a bad person who followed
14 her online made something bad with her.
15 Ken: different purposes, I think. Thais check-in on Facebook because
16 they want to tell others publicly that they are still alive @@@ People
17 from other cultures from my online experiences, they also post photos,
18 videos, etc.
19 Jo: That's true, Thai can't live without Facebook. This is shown in
20 current research studies. Most Thai always check mobile phone at the
21 first thing after they wake up (.) that's so true. There are research
22 studies about it.

Example 9.9 is a finding taken from the focus group (Example 7.24). The example again shows a general understanding of cultures in relation to one's own and other cultures as well as a visible object. Kae, in relation to North in the previous example, believes that posting photos on Facebook is a method of cultural representation. She ties this online behaviour to her C1 (Thai culture) (line 4) and other cultures. However, she cannot explain in detail why her English friends do not normally post photos or why other Asian interlocutors do post these on their Facebook pages. According to Baker (2015), level 1 of intercultural awareness may not include a specific knowledge of other cultures. Apparently, Kae understands the cultural identity of others based on her C1 knowledge in which

she called her native English interlocutor 'Farang' (see an explanation of the term in Example 7.20). It is particularly interesting that another main participant, Ken, who is an active online English user, seems to disagree with Kae's beliefs about the online practices of people with different first languages and cultures in intercultural communication (line 5). This is because he has different experiences of online intercultural communication, as his online international interlocutors also post photos. This level of intercultural awareness is, thus, moving into the next stage, in which the participants identify cultural meanings, consider possible misunderstandings and compare their own culture with others.

Example 9.10 – Level 2: More complex understanding of cultures and a negotiation of communicative misunderstanding

(See the full extract of this online conversation in Example 8.2)

4. Ken Symeon This guy names himself 'cowboy'. He is trying to mimic
5. one of the most famous Thai band named 'Carabao'. The word
6. 'Carabao' means 'water buffalo' in Tagalog language widely used in
7. Philippine. Moreover, 'buffalo' is closely pronounced like 'fine' so 'I'm
8. fine' has the close meaning to 'You are a buffalo' in Thai. That's the
9. reason why you can see a lot of buffaloes in the music video.
   Saturday at 17:47 · Edited · Like · 1
10. Symeon
    Saturday at 17:49 · Like
11. Ken Are you fine?
    Saturday at 17:49 · Like
12. Symeon I'm flying on Wednesday and perhaps I'll come to the Uni...So,
13. I'll see you then
    Saturday at 17:50 · Like · 1
14. Ken 'you are fine' means 'you are a buffalo'
    Saturday at 17:51 · Like · 1
15. Symeon haha...and what's the relation to the iphone?
    Saturday at 17:54 · Like
16. Ken The name of this music is iPhone. The similarity of the
17. pronunciation is played 'I-Phone' -> 'I-Fine'. The meaning of this music
18. is pretty ironic. It's saying that 'Everyone has iPhone. if I don't have
19. iPhone I will look like I-Fine (buffalo)'. ha ha
    Saturday at 18:01 · Edited · Like

In Example 9.10, the participant, Ken, posted a video of a Thai song on his Facebook page and his Greek friend interacted with his post. The video reflects the materialistic perspective of people in Thai society regarding a communicative device (a mobile phone) and the participant could explain this perspective to his Greek interlocutor quickly (lines 16 to 19). At this point, the participant showed his complex understanding of culture, as he could explain the origin of the word 'Carabao' from other cultures (lines 6 and 7) and analyse the ironic meanings of the song (lines 18 and 19). According to Baker (2015), level 2 of ICA involves more complex understanding of cultures and a specific knowledge of other cultures.

To be clear about the relationship between 'buffalo' and 'IPhone', according to the meanings in the video, the researcher needs to further clarify the implied meaning of 'buffalo' in Thai culture as follows. 'Buffalo' or 'Kwai' in Thai is a kind of animal used for agricultural work, such as ploughing a rice field before sowing. It is alternatively called 'Fine', particularly among Thai teenagers. Thais believe that buffalo are idiotic animals because they usually work only as their owners' order. People will be compared to a buffalo if they do something stupid and/or are not accepted in Thai society. For example, you are like a buffalo (I-Kwai or I-Fine) if you only achieve Grade D in any subject. In the video; therefore, a buffalo is used to represent a bad image of people in Thai society who do not have an IPhone as communicative device. The sarcastic meaning of this video reflects the persistent materialistic perspective of many people in Thai society.

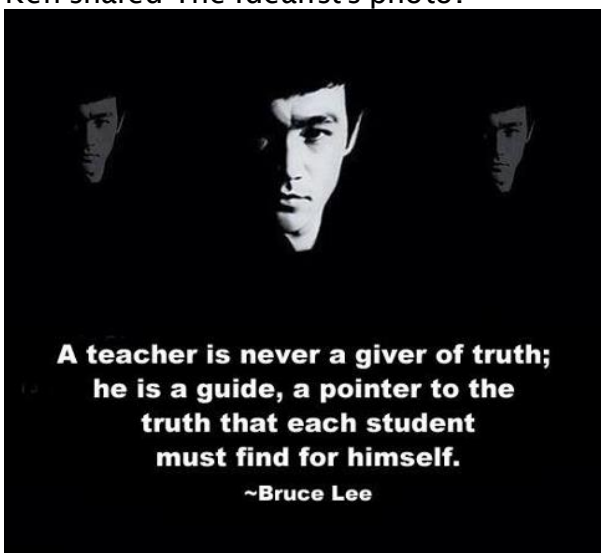
It is noted that the participant's explanation was not entirely clear, as he did not clarify the meaning of buffalo in Thai to his Greek interlocutor as explained above and this caused his interlocutor to misunderstand the term's implied meaning (lines 11 and 12). At this point, the participant noticed the misunderstanding and immediately made clear its meaning during their online intercultural communication. As seen in line 14, the participant responded to his interlocutor within one minute. Baker (2015) elucidates that at level 2 of ICA, misunderstanding and miscommunication can happen due to a specific knowledge of other cultures, but this can be predicted and dealt with in the specific instance of intercultural communication.

Level 3 intercultural awareness can be seen in Example 9.11. This example has been collected from Ken's Facebook wall where he communicated with his Iranian friend. It represents a dynamic intercultural communication in that the participants from different cultures (Thai and Iranian) talk about a well-known

global superstar from neither of their original countries. This indicates that intercultural communication is not necessarily bound to specific cultures. It can move and flow to a wider frame of cultural references, which can involve any culture and may or may not relate to those of the intercultural participants. The example also represents a deeper level of culture, where the participant and his interlocutor are unconscious of their online behaviours towards one another. As close friends, they are not aware of the tone of their online communication. This possibly affects their relationship, as it is evident that Ken's interlocutor did not further reply to his comments in this conversation.

Example 9.11 – Level 3: Global flow of online intercultural communication and unawareness of the politeness of communicative practices

Ken shared The Idealist's photo.



Top of Form
Like · · Share · 7 hours ago ·
7 people like this.

1. Hessam: Ken again from this guy!
   7 hours ago · Like · 1
2. Ken: ha ha
   7 hours ago · Like
3. Hessam: he couldn't master himself! and nor his own massive ego!
   7 hours ago · Like
4. Hessam: now passing judgement on other things and matters he didn't
5. even have a clue is sounding super hypocritical!
   7 hours ago · Like
6. Ken: boring .... better to finish your phd then get a job rather than
7. wasting your time and you father's money with these stupid stuffs.
   7 hours ago · Edited · Like

According to the different levels of intercultural awareness that appeared in the participants' online intercultural communication, the second sub-question can be answered in that cultures do influence the online intercultural communication in English of the participants. Culture is another effective tool that carries communicative meanings and value for communicators. Therefore, it is necessary for the participants to understand the dynamic, fluid and emergent nature of cultural meanings, forms and practices for successful intercultural communication. The answer to this second sub-question could be related to the main RQ 1 about the role of cultures in intercultural communication and this is discussed in the next section.

9.2.4 RQ 1: The role of culture(s) in online intercultural communication through ELF

The discussion in all three sections above (9.2.1, 9.2.2, 9.2.3) highlights the various roles of cultures in online intercultural communication. This section aims to answer the main RQ1: What is the role of culture(s) in online intercultural communication for online English users?

As with the cultural representation and cultural construction (9.2.1 and 9.2.2), all of the main participants (A, Ken, Jo, Kae and North) engage in cultural aspects mostly unconsciously since they aim at self-presentation rather than cultural purposes. Since cultures and communication are closely linked, their cultural engagements clearly relate to the way in which they interact with their online interlocutors. The remaining participants, in contrast, are not frequently involved in online intercultural communication using English (see 7.3). These participants, therefore, are not able to demonstrate how they represent and construct their cultures in this context. This would suggest that experiences of online intercultural communication cause intercultural engagement through multiple modes of Facebook and continually develop understanding of intercultural communication in English among people who do not share the same mother tongue and/or cultural background.

It is important to notice the relevant point of cultural representation and cultural construction in that English language competency and experiences of visiting and/or living abroad are not necessarily related to the frequency of online intercultural communication through ELF. In terms of English language competency, the results from the online questionnaire (6.3.1) show that Ken is at the modest user of English level with an IELTS scores of 5.5, which is the lowest

in the group of five main participants and lower than most of the total research participants (39). Furthermore, he had never studied abroad before his current degree in the UK and has no any experience of living in or visiting foreign countries. However, he is a very active user of English for online intercultural communication. North is a competent user of English who had an IELTS score of 6. This is a comparatively low score and she did not have any experience of living in or visiting foreign countries before starting her degree in the UK. These two points, however, do not prevent her from frequently engaging in online intercultural communication in English.

It is clear that cultures play extensive roles in online intercultural communication, with regard to the variety of linguistic and cultural backgrounds of the users and the advancement of the communicative technologies which support communication in different ways. To answer the first main research question, cultures play roles in online intercultural communication through ELF as follows.

First, cultures play a role in the representation of the participants' ideas, beliefs and perceptions. The participants use the power of the images and symbols of the SNS, Facebook, to represent their activities and different issues that interest them. In the same vein, cultures help to construct their understanding of intercultural communication and make their communication meaningful. The research findings suggested that Facebook has brought people from different languages and cultures into a global community. This current phenomenon directly links to cultures in that the participants can present their beliefs, values and points of view and build an understanding of those of others with the same or different linguistic and/or cultural backgrounds through online intercultural communication in English.

Second, cultures play a role in interpreting communicative meanings. The participants present their different levels of intercultural awareness in either representing or constructing cultures in an online intercultural communication context. They induce both their own behaviours, values, beliefs and those of others and make use of their intercultural communicative abilities to articulate these. These encourage them to smooth their online communication with people from other cultures. ICC for successful online intercultural communication is discussed in detail in 9.3.

Finally, the roles of cultures are relevant to the cultural frames of reference in communicative practices. According to the results, cultures and languages are

not always bound to national conceptions. The participants bring a variety of cultural issues to the SNS, ranging from individual thinking concepts connected to their first culture (C1) to other cultures at local, national and global levels. As such, it can be considered that cultural based frames of reference are related to specific cultures and also fluid and emergent cultural references in intercultural communication online. As Appadurai (2001) notes, the world is now in motion where there is a flow of different objects, including ideas and ideologies, people and goods, images and messages, technologies and techniques. Cultures, therefore, cannot be oversimplified or homogenised based on a culture-language-nationality correlation (e.g. Baker, 2009a, 2011, 2015) or only at physical involvement (Leander and Vasudevan, 2009). Rather, the movement of cultural forms across the globe should be understood from a heterogeneous perspective, in that languages and cultures are likely to be complex, dynamic and emergent (e.g. Baker, 2009a, 2011, 2015). According to Kramsch (2011: 355), cultures are characterised based on a poststructuralist view in that:

> "Culture today is associated with ideologies, attitudes and beliefs, created and manipulated through the discourse of the media, the Internet, the marketing industry, Hollywood and other mind-shaping interest groups. It is seen less as a world of institutions and historical traditions, or even as identifiable communities of practice, then as a mental toolkit of subjective metaphors, affectivities, historical memories, entextualizations and transcontexttualizations of experience, with which we make meaning of the world around us and share that meaning with others."

This conception corresponds to recent global communication, in the sense that culture is a complicated concept to use to try and understand people's communicative meanings and interactions. This is particularly true of the SNS, Facebook, which has brought multinational people into contact. Different cultures spread widely through this communicative medium with the aid of its modes. In this thesis, cultures are, as a result, seen as heterogeneous, multi-layered and dynamic constructs, depending mainly on the users and modes of social network sites. The next section discusses essential ICCs for online intercultural communication.

9.3 Intercultural communicative competences (ICCs) for online intercultural communication

The intercultural communicative competences or ICCs of the main participants can be seen from the discussion of findings in 9.2 where they represented and constructed cultures in online intercultural communication through ELF. This section aims to answer RQ2: what intercultural communicative competences do the participants apply and/or learn for meaningful and satisfactory online intercultural communication?

As discussed in 4.5.2, the ICC model of Byram (1997) is considered as a broad concept to frame essential skills for intercultural communication while the alternative concepts of Kramsch (2009; 2011) and Baker (2015) are also applied to consider how these essential skills are helpful to manipulate the complexities of online intercultural communication through ELF. Therefore, the ICCs mentioned in the findings could be divided into knowledge, skills of interpreting and relating, skills of discovery and interaction, critical cultural awareness, attitudes and symbolic multimodality. Each of these competences are discussed in detail in the following sections, supported mainly by the examples selected from the first round of interviews (7.3.2), focus group (7.6.2) and observations of online communication (8.4.2). Some other examples are also included. These examples have been selected and included as they provide clear illustrations of the participants' competences in terms of ICC.

9.3.1 Knowledge

In Example 9.12, Kae took part in the first round of interviews, expressing her experiences of online intercultural communication in English with her NES friend. It is obvious that Kae applies her knowledge of British cultures and the individual preferences of her NES friend to her online intercultural communication. Her experience of living in the UK for three and a half years and regular contact with people from different cultures both offline and online (6.4) enabled her to acquire such knowledge. In her online intercultural communication, therefore, it was clear that she understood British cultures, for example, the fact that most British people like meeting up in a pub rather than at a department store like most Thai people (Example 7.6). Her knowledge is also related to the skills of interpreting and relating, which are discussed further in 9.3.2.

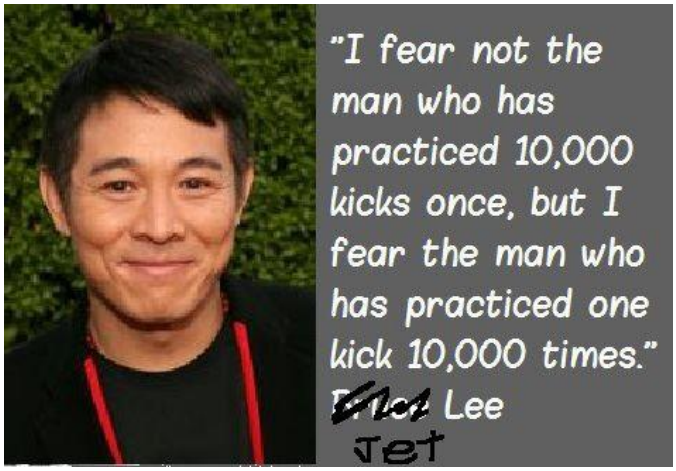
Example 9.12

KAE: "Err: I learn about other cultures in the sense that, for example err::chatted to one of my native English friend online last time to meet up together on Sunday. This friend doesn't normally like going to a department store. He likes going to a pub and have the same menus, such as pizza, Carbonara, Sunday roast, etc. He asked me to meet up at the pub because he wanted to have 'Sunday Roast' @@@ But he was afraid to try some Asian sauce because of the spicy taste. Moreover, in terms of greeting words online, he likes saying 'Hey'. I sometimes don't reply him. I feel that it's too rude. I tell him I don't like it and you can say 'hi', but he still does it. It's a kind of teenager language. I err: feel that he is a man and I'm a women, so he should be nicer. He has never do it face-to-face though, only online even now. So, let it goes @."

This result is in accordance with Byram (1997), who states that knowledge is one of the key ICC components which includes knowledge of one's own and other cultures as well as the general processes of societal and individual interaction. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that the knowledge found is bounded between cultures due to the particular topic of communication. This is not always the case.

Example 9.13

Ken to Hessam



Hope you like it. Good night ...

Like · Share · 9 hours ago ·

SM likes this.

1. Hessam: you are a bastard Ken! I am gone kill you! :)

9 hours ago · Like · 1

2. Ken: You are very welcome ;)
   9 hours ago · Like · 1
3. Hessam: the family name is also need correction! it should read "Li" instead of "Lee"
   9 hours ago · Like
4. Ken: OK Thanks That's gonna be the next version
   9 hours ago · Like · 1
5. Hessam: bastard! I really like this guy! and he was the true champion
6. of china from the age of 11 to 19 for 8 consecutive years winning gold
7. medals! now you are making joke with him... I am gone show you the
8. cannon feast punch tomorrow!
   9 hours ago · Like · 1
9. Hessam: just kidding of course! no need to move away from
10. Southampton mate!
    9 hours ago · Like · 1

Example 9.13 shows the non-linguistic knowledge of the participant, Ken, and his Iranian interlocutor, Hessam, in online intercultural communication in English. Ken explained in the second round of interviews that he edited this photo by merging Jet Li's photo with Bruce Lee's quote. Then, he posted this edited photo on Hessam's Facebook page in order to tease his friend because he knew that Hessam liked Bruce Lee but not Jet Li (Example 8.11).

At one point, this example added to Byram's model (1997) in that knowledge does not necessary involve cultures of NESs when English is used for intercultural communication. However, the cultures represented in this example go beyond one's own and other cultures, according to Byram's model (1997), to those which do not belong to either of the participant or his interlocutor.

Therefore, another point that is relevant to Baker's ICA model (2015) is the finding that knowledge, skills and attitudes in intercultural communication are flexible and context specific. These are not necessarily about national cultures, rather these can be relevant to the world and/or global perspectives, since the communication topics can be anything and are not limited to a particular culture. Risager (2007) agrees that knowledge of the world is important because participants are potentially engaging in processes and issues that are of global importance. It is worth noting that this example also shows critical cultural awareness of the participant and this is discussed in 9.3.4.

9.3.2 Skills of interpreting and relating

Skills of interpreting and relating (Byram, 1997) were found in the Example 9.12. The participant, Kae, interprets her British friend's behaviour based on her experiences abroad and knowledge that it is normal for British people to meet up at a pub. In addition, she can also relate this practice to her C1, so that meeting in a pub during the day in British cultures is similar to Thais meeting up their friends in department stores.

The skill of interpreting and relating is also found in observations of the participants' online conversation. In Example 9.14, Sonia, who was the participant's interlocutor, supported the participant in her views about the political election in Thailand and showed her understandings of this situation since it had just happened in her country, Italy. This is evident from lines 32 to 37 while the whole dialogue can be seen in Example 8.8.

Example 9.14

Ken

การโวทย์ (vote) เป็นส่วนหนึ่งของการปกครองระบบประชาธิปไตยซึ่งน่าจะเป็นสิ่งที่ดีที่ประชาชนในชาติทุกคนมีสิทธิมีเสียงเท่าเทียมกัน แต่ ...

มันก็เป็นสิ่งที่บ่งบอกถึงพฤติกรรม วิสัยทัศน์ ระดับสติปัญญา etc. (โดยเฉลี่ย) ของประชากรในชาติด้วยเช่นกัน

คนส่วนมากเป็นแบบไหนก็ได้ผู้นำแบบนั้นนั่นแหละครับ พรุ่งนี้เราก็คงจะรู้กันว่าคน กทม. ส่วนมาก "เป็นแบบไหน"

See translation

Like · · Share

Prasan and 25 others like this.

(Vote: It is a part of the democracy which is probably the best of the population in the country in order to provide them the equal rights. However, it also indicates average behaviours, visions and intelligence, etc of the country's population as well. How the most people are, they would get a similar leader to them. We will know "how the most Bangkokian are" tomorrow.)

(Earlier conversation lines 1-7)

8. Sonia except for the last sentence, the translation is quite good
   2 March at 15:05 · Like · 1

(Follow-up conversation line 10-23)

24. Ken Sonia This impress me a lot. I never
25. thought that Bing translator could translate my message from Thai
26. into English like this. I would say, the translates in the 1st and 2nd

27. paragraph convoyed the whole meaning.
28. "character of a leader indicates how a major number of people in the
29. social is and tomorrow we will see how Bangkokian be" (we have a
30. selection of Bangkok Mayor tomorrow). This is what I said in the last
31. sentence.

    2 March at 21:37 · Edited · Like

32. Sonia I am Italian, and we had the government election last
33. week, so I really understand what you wanted to say, and I
34. unfortunately think you're totally right. (In our case is unfortunately
35. because the leader could be so much better...)
36. Good luck with your elections (as your team member you have all my
37. support!!!

    2 March at 21:44 · Like · 2

Although the skill of interpreting and relating obviously comes from the participant's Italian interlocutor, Sonia, it clearly indicates that a network resource of online communication (web-based translation service) provides opportunities for the communicators to interpret communicative meanings and share ideas related to their own situations. From this conversation, the participant also realised the advantage of online communication about web-based translation services and he checked the accuracy of the translation (lines 24 – 27). The next part presents the skills of discovery and interaction that were found in the focus group data.

9.3.3 Skills of discovery and interaction

In Example 7.27, the participants' discussions in the focus group indicate their discovery of the different English practices of online users from different cultures from their online interaction. In relation to Byram (1997), the participants have the skills of discovery and interaction with different English practices (lines 2, 3, 7, 8, 9, and 10) and apply this knowledge to their real time online interactions (lines 13 to 16).

Example 9.15

1 Ken: " For me (.) I do not have anything to blame them about their
2 English language use. Actually, I learn different styles of using English
3 language of people from different countries.
4 Jo: "Can you distinguish the differences?"=

5 Ken: ="Yes, kind of"

6 Researcher: "How do you distinguish their English language use?"

7 Ken: "Well, I look at their vocabularies used."

8 Kae: "I can't distinguish their counties but I can do it in terms of a level

9 of their English competency. I can know that these people have stayed

10 here for awhile…."

11 North: "Mostly, I can't learn a correct English from them."

12 Ken: "I can consider from their vocabularies used. But it is not only the

13 use of vocabularies. I need to know them as well. For example, I have

14 so many Italian friends. So, I know that this is an Italian English styles.

15 When they type their messages, they always initially start very broadly

16 and later on focus on their communicative topic."

The way in which the participant can spot the different English practices of online users from different first cultures (not only NESs) is relevant to the skills of discovery and interaction of the participants of Byram (1997) model to a model of ICA Baker (2015). To be clear, the participants can compare the different English practices of other online users and distinguish these according to a particular culture (lines 14 to 16) and English language competency (line 8 to 10). This shows their advanced intercultural awareness in level 2 of the ICA model (Baker, 2015) because they can understand more complex cultures by comparing specific cultural frames of reference. Although Jo did not show his abilities in discovery and interaction in the group discussion above, he indicated the relevant idea to Ken in the first round of interviews about a particular online writing style employed by Chinese English users. The following illustrates part of his explanation.

Example 9.16

1 Jo: "Because writing, pattern these sorts of things are used in a
2 particular group. It is, for example, Chinese people, they have their
3 own writing pattern. They have their own signs. Only they who know
4 these particular patterns. Therefore, when Chinese use these patterns
5 to anybody who are not Chinese, non-Chinese will not understand.
6 Nevertheless, Chinese still use these patterns and later explain the
7 meanings to their interlocutors. For example, they type their

8 conversation, but I do not understand them, so I ask them a questions.
9 They then explain the meanings to me. There is one research which

(See a continued extract in Example 7.26)

Example 9.15 and 9.16 stress the ability of the participants to discover the different English practices of English users from two different cultures, and their ability to mediate these differences in their real time communication in order to reach mutual understanding and successful intercultural communication (Example 9.16: lines 7 to 9). The next part shows the critical cultural awareness of the participants in their online intercultural communication.

9.3.4 Critical cultural awareness

Referring back to Example 9.13, it is interesting that this shows that Ken gave no response to Hessam at the end of the conversation. As seen from lines 5 to 10, Hessam was rude to Ken. In the second round of interviews, Ken explained that he felt a bit unhappy with Hessam's comment, so he did not reply to him. Ken's lack of response immediately affected Hessam's reaction as he made an excuse at the end of the conversation (lines 9 and 10).

In doing this, Ken and Hessam engaged in level 3 of Baker's model (2015) in that they were aware of cultural differences and mediated these differences during the conversation. Ken used silence to show his displeasure with his interlocutor while at the same time his interlocutor noticed this and tried to conciliate Ken and continue their online conversation.

Ken further clarified in the second round of interviews that his silence during that online conversation was to stop Hessam being aggressive in their later online conversations. Their mediation in real time conversation can be linked to level 3 of the ICA model (Baker, 2015) in that intercultural communication at this level requires intercultural awareness and the ability to mediate the emergent nature of cultural forms, references and practices.

Critical cultural awareness is also found in the observed online conversation records (Example 8.7). In this example, both participant, North, and her Chinese interlocutor, Ling, oriented themselves to Thai culture in that North introduced Thai cultural practice to Ling during their online conversation (lines 4 and 5) and Ling accepted this and behaved in the same way to North (line 7).

Example 9.17

North

1. My lovely daughter
2. Thank you for your moon cake
3. It's really delicious
4. I gave P'Sa and P'Yui already
5. and I'll give P'Beau on this Sat

Ling

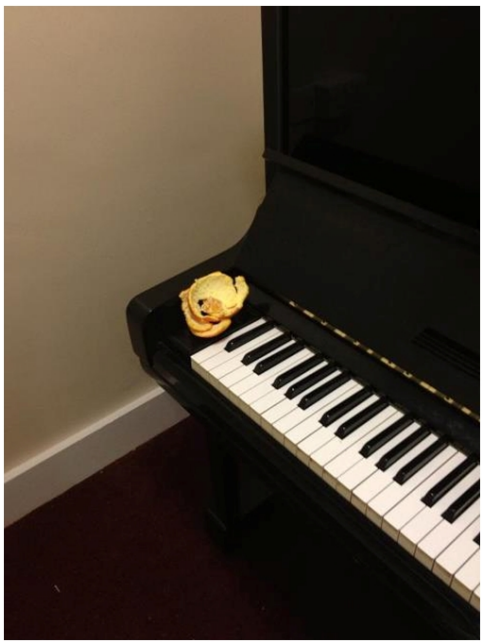
6. U r welcome, and the mid-autumn festival is this Sunday, enjoy~
7. Can u tell P'Sa , she can get her bag back now~
8. I think maybe she doesn't want it back....haha

This example can be related to intercultural awareness at level 2 of the ICA model (Baker, 2015) in that the participant and her interlocutor encountered the cultural practices of a specific cultures and were able to deal with this emergent practice in a real time online intercultural communication.

The last example was not included in the results of online observation as there are plenty of other examples, but it is shown here as it presents the skills of the participant in negotiating his communicative meaning.

Example 9.18

Who the fuck eat an orange and left it in practice room !????
Disgusting — with Olivia.



1129Like · · Share
28 people like this.

1. Da กินเองละลืมป่าวSee Translation

28 February at 15:56 · Like · 1

2. Ploy O____o

28 February at 15:56 via mobile · Like

3. Alvin you asians are so fussy

28 February at 16:04 · Like · 6

4. Soe Hahahhahah like Alvin comment

28 February at 16:07 via mobile · Like

5. A Alvin I mean at least put it in the bin ! Not left it on the piano

28 February at 16:07 via mobile · Like · 2

6. Kate Ewwwwww

28 February at 16:13 · Like

7. A Now I found who left it. It's Olivia!!

11 March at 01:35 via mobile · Like · 9

8. Eliz You should try living with her - she's an animal that girl

11 March at 02:36 via mobile · Like · 3

9. A Thank you for Never have I ever game

11 March at 03:12 · Like

10. Sue fucking amazing

11 March at 04:32 · Like

11. Olivia And I thought I'd gotten away with it too, curses!

17 March at 01:18 · Like · 1

This example illustrates level 3 of intercultural awareness from the ICA model (Baker, 2015) with participant, A, clarifying his culture based perspectives to his interlocutors. His interlocutors were Thai (Da and Ploy), Vietnamese (Soe) and British (Alvin, Kate, Eliz, Sue and Olivia). Obviously, his post is not about his C1 or the cultures of his interlocutors, but it reflects the social norms of practice in general, or social etiquette. As seen from the example, participant, A, posted a photo about pieces of orange peel which were left at the piano in the shared piano practice room. He explained in the second round of interviews that he knew who left the pieces of orange peel there because there was a specific group of

people who regularly used this room. His post, thus, aimed to warn his friend, Olivia, that he knew it was her and that she should not do it again.

The openness of A's feelings about the situation can be understood from his personal background and his relationship with his British friend, Olivia. At one point, A personally knew Olivia well because they studied an undergraduate course in the setting of this thesis together for three years. Also, they were both members of the setting piano society and performed in the same piano events several times. In addition, A graduated from international high school in Thailand and was very used to intercultural communication with his international friends. Therefore, he was not reluctant to express his ideas and feelings to his friends in online intercultural communication.

A's intercultural awareness can be further considered from the negotiation of his communicative intention and meaning. As seen from lines 3 to 5, he defended his British friend and saved his face in the conversation. As he said in the second round of interviews, his intention when posting was not to be fussy. Rather, as this piano practice room was shared by many people, the previous users should have made sure that the room was tidy and ready for the next users. He believed that this was polite and general good practice. It was not about being Asian or European. A's ability to negotiate his communicative intention and meaning, therefore, clearly shows his intercultural awareness of emergent cultural references and practices.

9.3.5 Attitudes

Attitudes also appear as ICC used in online intercultural communication. In Example 9.19, 'A' posted a photo of his activity with his international friend during winter. In this photo, they made a snow penis (rather than a snowman as normal) and presented this to public on his Facebook wall.

This example indicates the openness of the participant, moving away from Thai cultural norms. To be more explicit, this photo would be considered to be impolite in Thai culture. The participant, however, adapts himself to European culture which is more liberal in terms of talking about and/or presenting sexual topics. In relation to Byram (1997), 'attitudes' is a competency found in the research results, but this is not limited to the participant's own and other cultures. Rather, it is an openness to more global practices while the cultures are framed based on global references in intercultural communication (Baker, 2015).

Chapter 9

Example 9.19

Giant Penis @frederickplatt @lustychris

Like · · Share

L and 13 others like this.

1. SoeSan That's why they were making the balls so big....
   18 January at 16:49 via mobile · Like · 1
2. SoeSan I mean I thought they were going to make a giant snow man
3. ^^^^
   18 January at 16:50 via mobile · Like · 1
4. Peter Thought someone would have done that!
   18 January at 16:56 · Like
5. Tipsuda
   18 January at 17:12 via mobile · Like
6. JaJa U bath 55
   18 January at 17:43 via mobile · Like
7. Parinoot O_o !
   18 January at 17:52 · Like
8. Alan Brilliant 3 years at uni & my son can make a giant set of
9. Bolx..dead proud of you Greg...lol
   18 January at 19:02 · Like · 4
10. Collette Omar looks happy

18 January at 20:19 · Like

11. Greg ***like a turtle haha
    18 January at 20:24 · Like
12. Collette you said it!
    18 January at 20:24 · Like · 1

The last part shows ICC applied in online intercultural communication among the participants. It is 'multimodal symbolism'.

9.3.6 Multimodal symbolism

Photos, videos and even (image) emoticons used on Facebook are all symbolic and represent ideas, values, and perspectives, for examples those of the communicators or online users. It can be said that multiple modes of online intercultural communication help the participants to represent and construct their ideas about different (cultural) issues (9.2). These are the mental toolkits of subjective metaphors (Kramsch, 2011: 355) which contain multiple meanings and there are various interpretations.

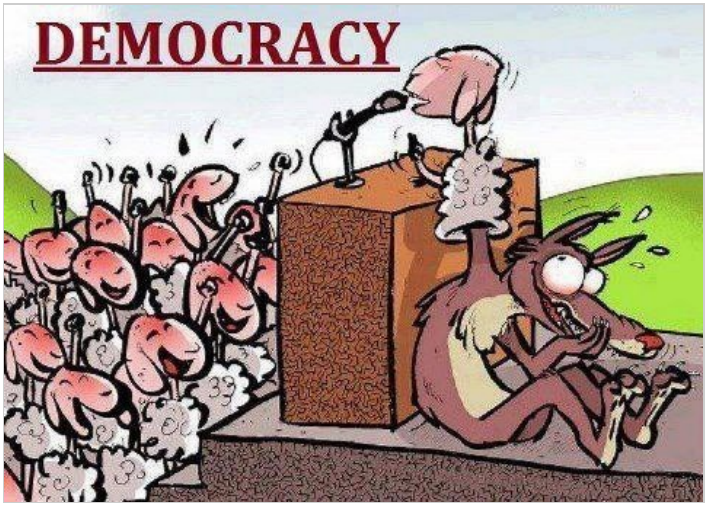
Example 9.20 illustrates the participant's use of multimodal symbolism in his online intercultural communication. This example presents a photo of a wolf as representative of politicians. In general, wolves are believed to be deceptive animals that never tell the truth. Wolves' characters can be seen in many children's fairy tales, for example, "Little Red Riding Hood". In the same way as many politicians, they are believed to be unreliable. For instance, they promise people whilst canvassing that they will launch campaigns to benefit people, but they do not and/or cannot do it once they are elected. In the photo, therefore, a politician is compared to a wolf and this represents their lack of reliability.

The participant's interlocutors from different first languages and cultures from Columbia (Diego), Thailand (the participant: Ken), and India (Nikhil) expressed their beliefs about democracies in which representatives who want their party to form a government usually convince people to elect them by launching various policies and then do not do implement them once they are elected. This indicates their ability to evaluate the nature of democracy based on explicit democratic practices in their own countries.

Chapter 9

Example 9.20

Ken shared Rationalist's photo.



Like · · Share · 18 hours ago ·

10 people like this.

1. Diego sometimes.....

18 hours ago · Like

2. Ken always .

18 hours ago · Like

3. Diego jajajaja, unfortunately you may be right

18 hours ago · Like

4. Nikhil Yayyy.. Look the speaker on the stage is a goat, just like us..

16 hours ago via mobile · Like

5. Ken No ... We are more cute ha ha

16 hours ago via mobile · Like

The example can be also related to the third level of intercultural awareness (Baker, 2015) in that the participant and his interlocutors can compare and negotiate different democratic systems.

It is worth noting that multimodal symbolism appears not only through modes on the communicative medium (Facebook), but can also be found/ used in written

texts. In Example 9.21, the participants showed their multimodal symbolic ability in their online intercultural communication in that they all understood the different meanings of each of the symbols used in written texts, such as P means smile, :P means smile with tongue, x means kiss. These were clearly explained during the second round interviews when the five main participants explained the communicative meanings of their online intercultural communication with their interlocutors and they explicitly clarified symbolic meanings.

Example 9.21

Ken: "When I feel shy or embarrassed, I use P to show my tongue and smile. However, some of my friends do not understand my purposes of doing so. They ask me why I laugh at them because the topic of our conversation is not funny (.). Perhaps our cultures 'smile' conveys a range of meanings, including friendliness, amusement, thank you, apology and embarrassment, for instances. But they feel differently from me"=
Jo: ="I think we need to consider 'body language of each country. Body languages of each country have different meanings. We do these body languages in our country to show a particular meaning but it does not mean we can do the same with people from other countries. For them, these body languages might have different meanings from our countries."=
Ken: ="Thais like laughing, for examples, when they are blamed. It seems like we look down our [interlocutors."
Jo: "Ah..yes yes] It involves cultures."
North: "My tutors also always ask me why I laugh. It is not funny at all."@
Kae: "Laughing, Thais like typing '555' my 'farang' friends are so interested. When I told them (.) they have never heard about it before."
Researcher: "They never use it?"=
Kae: ="yea, and after that they type '555' instead of 'hahaha' because they said it was short."

Example 9.21 demonstrates the participants' multimodal symbolic competency in that they are aware of the different symbolic values of different cultures (lines 4 to 7). As Kramsch (2011: 356) claims, there are diverse explanations for the symbols due to the fluidity of the 'discourse world'. Further, the participants are able to draw on the semiotic diversity of multiple languages. For example, '555'

is used among Thais to represent laughing, but this is not known in other languages. Kae explained this to her NES friend and they adjusted themselves to each other in their online intercultural communication (lines 19-23).

9.3.7 RQ 2: ICC applied and learnt for meaningful and satisfactory online intercultural communication

The discussion of ICC findings in this section elucidates a range of ICCs essential for successful online intercultural communication through ELF. Therefore, the second research question can be answered in that intercultural communicative competences were applied and this resulted in meaningful and successful online intercultural communication including (1) knowledge, (2) the skills of interpreting and relating, (3) skills of discovery and interaction, (4) critical cultural awareness, (5) attitudes and (6) multimodal symbolism. These competencies (1 to 5) are relevant to Byram's model (1997), but the fundamental difference is that the participants engage in wider cultural references, such as global cultures; rather than simply engaging with national cultures. They also present different levels of intercultural awareness in their online intercultural communication through English. The ICC competencies in online intercultural communication founded in this thesis are, thus, also relevant to ICA (Baker, 2015) which highlights fluid, dynamic and emergent cultures. In this thesis, the participants' online intercultural communication involved flexible topics of communication which not only concerned their national cultures but also those on a global scale. The next section discusses the perceptions of the participants regarding their use of English for online intercultural communication.

9.4 Perceptions of the participants regarding their use of English for online intercultural communication

Finally, this section turns to answer RQ3 about the perceptions of Thai English users regarding English for their online intercultural communication. This research question aims to understand the ways in which the research participants perceive their English use in a multicultural online context from a general views in intercultural perspective.

9.4.1 Used and preferred English for online intercultural communication

The two examples below illustrate what kinds of English the participants use in online intercultural communication as well as their awareness of different kinds of English.

Example 9.22

1 A: "Mostly I use British English. I can't use exactly the same as NESs
2 because I don't know how to do it perfectly @, but I'm myself and try
3 to improve my English to be British English all the time."

Example 9.23

1 Jo: "It does not fix for me. It is uncomplexed English which is short and
2 can be understood easily. I concern about contents rather than
3 grammar. I can't identify what kinds of English I use because I don't
4 know if I use British or American. My Thai English teachers didn't even
5 know if they used British or American @. If we look at English
6 language curriculum in Thailand, contents were on the focus but not
7 different kinds of English(es). Therefore, students know only English
8 contents but do not know English types. For me, I think I mixed use
9 between British and American English and I do not care about it as far
10 as I am able to achieve my communicative purposes."

In Example 9.22, A, a graduate student from a British international high school in Thailand with an undergraduate degree from the UK, had very good experiences of English use for intercultural communication both online and face-to-face with friends and teachers with different first languages and cultures (6.4). Despite his ELF experiences, he still believed he could not use English in the same way as NESs (lines 1 and 2). This point, thus, interestingly implies that conformity to NES standards is not necessary for successful online intercultural communication. A can still effectively use English to interact with others and negotiate as well as to co-construct communicative purposes and meanings in his intercultural communication online. Evidence for this can be seen from a range of his examples of online conversation, including Example 8.12, Example 8.14, Example 9.18 and Example 9.19, although as he stated clearly in line 3, native British English is his preferred norm in intercultural communication.

In relation to Example 9.23, Jo another participant, who also had good experiences of intercultural communication both online and face-to-face (6.4),

showed an overarching concern with the use of Englishes in relation to communicative content for creating mutual understanding and intelligibility in intercultural communication. He made a strong point that he could not distinguish the difference between British and American English and non-conformity to native English was not an obstacle to his successful online intercultural communication. His practice can be described as that of a content focused user of English in accordance with Ehrenreich (2009). Therefore, his perceptions of the use of English online moved away from a traditional conception of conformity to native English and he accepted his own way of using English which he believed helped him to create mutual understanding with his interlocutors and achieve intercultural communication.

The findings seem to show the participants' awareness of the diversity of Englishes in online intercultural communication between online users who do not share a first language and/or culture. These suggest that mutual understanding and intelligibility in intercultural communication do not link to conformity to NESs, but require intercultural communicative competences to negotiate and co-construct meanings for variable communicative purposes (9.3). These competences, nevertheless, do not help ELF users to use English in a native-like manner (Baker, 2015;Jenkins, 2007) as can be seen from A's description of his perception in Example 9.22.

The other main participants are also aware of English variations (Example 7.37). Considering the positive perceptions of the participants with regard to English variations in relation to their ELF experiences in online intercultural communication, the findings are corroborated by Wang and Jenkins (2016) who state that experience of intercultural communication influences participants' perceptions of English. As they found out, participants with successful ELF experience realised the effectiveness of English variations for successful intercultural communication. Those who lacked ELF experience, in contrast, believed that conformity to native English was necessary in order to understand each other.

Still native English (British and American) is preferred as the exclusive reference point by the main participants, as seen in Example 9.22. Only Jo was not concerned with a conformity to native English (Example 9.23) and this is perhaps because he was a PhD in Modern Languages and had background knowledge of the use of English in the world today.

It is also interesting to look at the perceptions of English from other participants who were not so active as online English users as the main participants. Although they were uncertain about the differences between American and British (Example 7.15) and did not conform to native English in their online intercultural communication (Example 7.16), they preferred native English as their exclusive point of reference. These two examples are re-illustrated here for a reading convenience as follows.

Example 9.24

Bee: "I think I use American English because I learnt it in Thailand. I don't know the differences between British and American English though. Therefore. I don't concern about what kinds of English I use but I focus on mutual understanding of the communication. It might be because I use English online with my acquaintances. However, I like British English, especially its accent. I like everything British. It is cool! But I do not know how they are different anyway @."

Example 9.25

Dew: "I think I use English as my style. I mix between British and American English. I don't fix to use a particular kind of English, but I try my best to use British English because it affects my academic writing."

The findings that show that native English is preferred for online intercultural communication are supported by Jenkins (2011) in that NESs English is still widely regarded as the most desirable kind of English. Although the participants presented their preferences of being native-like, in practice they were aware of different Englishes in the online context and did not use English in the same way as NESs. Mutual understanding was rather their primary concern. The participants' English in practice is illustrated in the next part in order to relate to the discussion of why the participants have positive perceptions of English variations in online intercultural communication.

9.4.2 Characteristics of online intercultural communication: mix linguistic repertoires and language choices

Although characteristics of English for online intercultural communication are not the focus of this thesis, it is necessary to discuss these in order to consider the relevance of the participants' awareness of English variations and their natural

use of Englishes in their online intercultural experiences. As many researchers claim, personal experience plays an important role in shaping language attitudes (Garrett, 2010;Wang, 2015;Wang and Jenkins, 2016). Noticing the behaviour of other people then results in learning their attitudes (Garrett, 2010: 22). Data from online observations are, therefore, included in the discussion here, aiming to provide an understanding of why the participants have positive perceptions of English variations by looking at their behaviours of English use in online intercultural communication.

As seen in 8.4 and 8.4.3 in particular, the participants exploited several linguistic resources in order to make communication comfortable for themselves and their interlocutors. Example 8.10 and Example 8.14 are used for a discussion below as these manifested several linguistic resources which are commonly used in ELF communication. These two examples are presented in Example 9.26 and Example 9.27 respectively.

Example 9.26

Jo

1. hey
2. sleeping?

Zhi

3. no
4. slides
5. I just want to ask you, the first week in semester 2,do we have course
6. ?or no course

Jo

7. of course
8. we have course
9. tutors here are very active
10. if their is nothing change
11. there is
12. why??

Zhi

13. but the following 2 weeks we dont have, right?

14. I saw the records on the ststem, that 2 weeks no course
15. i dont know way ,

Jo

16. really? i haven't checked it yet

Zhi

17. just no course. maybe others will have exam, and classrooms is not
18. enough
19. check your APP on IP4S
20. my southampton APP
21. you gave me a good idea
22. because my outline of presentation is like yours

Jo

23. 16 dec to 6 jan is holiday

Zhi

24. 1, introduction. 2, in my school, 3, factors influence CLT,
25. 4,recommendation.
26. 5,conculsion
27. good night. i have workshop tomorrow
28. anyway , bye ,good dream

Jo

29. Ok

Jo's example above shows relevant findings with his perceptions of variations of English use. In the example, he and his Chinese interlocutor used simple and straightforward syntactic structures, short sentences, abbreviations, acronyms and excessive punctuation in their online intercultural communication. These are common characteristics of online communication (Lewin and Donner, 2002). This example is also in accordance with Vettorel (2014), in that blog interactions frequently make use of multimodal materials and more concise comments.

What is more interesting from the example is that it shows the omission of the indefinite article in the conversation by both the participant and his interlocutor. This can be seen in lines 5, 8, 23, and 27. The omission of the indefinite article

happens several times in this example and it is possibly perceived as communicatively redundant (Vettorel, 2014) as Jo made clear earlier he tended to use short sentences and simple English in order to facilitate easy mutual understanding (Example 9.23).The use of plural nouns with 'is' is also found in this example (line 17). Supporting a discussion by Hülmbauer (2010: 84), this English practice can be seen as a redundancy reduction as the plural is already expressed in the -s morpheme of the noun, therefore it simplifies the process of communication (Vettorel, 2014). The redundancy reduction found in this thesis is also found in other ELF studies, for example Ranta (2010);Seidlhofer (2011);Vettorel (2014). The findings here stress Jo's concern with mutual understanding and his sense of the irrelevance of native English for ELF communication.

Considering further the data that emerged from the online observations, there are different language choices made by the main five selected participants and also their interlocutors, resulting in mixed languages in online intercultural communication (8.4.5), occurring within turns. From the second round of interviews, A, for example, reports that his friend transliterates Thai words into English (Example 8.14 and Example 9.19: Line 6) in order to avoid using Thai taboo which sound very rude while it could sound softer in English characters. The participants (and their interlocutors in this example) apply their ICC skills to maintain politeness in their online communication. The transliteration from Thai into English is called 'Karaoke language' (Mayes, 2009). In accordance with Ken, he explains in the second round of interviews that:

Example 9.27

1 Ken: "In the case of Thai English users online, I think they use
2 'Karaoke' language. Actually, it mixes between English and Thai. For
3 English use between Thais and people from different first languages,
4 English is of course used in communication."

A number of studies also find mixed language use in English for online communication (Seargeant, 2011; Seargeant, et al, 2012). Apart from politeness, language choice can be made to facilitate convenience in online intercultural communication, particularly when Thai scripts cannot be accessed on the keyboards of the participants (and their interlocutors) (6.3). Also, networked resources such as web-based translation services offer the participants more language choices for their online intercultural communication (Example 8.12).

As such, it is apparent that language choice presents the localised and emergent nature of the communication. It emerges in an ad hoc manner in order to meet the immediate communicative demands of a particular interaction.

The findings discussed in this part illustrate the participants' English uses in their real-life experience. Clearly, the participants with considerable experiences of online intercultural communication exploited a number of linguistic resources (9.4.2) and intercultural communicative competences (9.3) in order to engage their interlocutors successfully. Therefore, it can be summarised that the participants' successful online intercultural experiences through Englishes influence their awareness of the lack of relevance of native English for ELF online encounters and their positive perceptions of ELF.

9.4.3 RQ 3: Perceptions of the participants regarding their Englishes for online intercultural communication

The discussion of the participants' perceptions of Englishes for online intercultural communication shows that the participants with ELF experiences online are more open minded and have more positive perceptions of English variations in intercultural communication than people who do not share the same linguistic and/or cultural backgrounds. The findings show the irrelevance of native English for ELF communications, since the participants did not conform to native English in their online intercultural communication. It is also evident that contents and mutual understanding are the primary criteria for their acceptance of fluid and various linguistic forms. However, it is also true that native English is still seen as more prestigious among most participants.

9.5 Conclusion

The research results indicate that the participants represent their cultures through (a mixture of) texts, photos and other multimodal mediums on Facebook. They further construct different cultures through either conversations (on the Wall and personal chat) or multi-modes of Facebook which present the ideas, values and perceptions of their interlocutors. It is clear that cultures are embedded in online intercultural communication through English. As such, it plays an important role in English communication in this context, in terms of not only cultural representation and cultural construction as clearly found, but also diverse interpretations of cultural meanings.

It is a fact that different people have different cultures. Even those who have the same nationalities do not always share similar cultures due to various social factors, such as different upbringings, living places and educational backgrounds. As Baker (2015) claims, there are multiple voices within a national culture. In this online communication context, it is found that cultures are even more complex when people can interact on a global scale without geographical borders while the multiple modes of the communicative platforms are available and people can either use mono-or mixed modes to facilitate their online intercultural communication. As a result, cultures in this investigated context are fluid and dynamic, and there is a need for participants to apply intercultural communicative competences for meaningful and satisfactory online intercultural communication.

A range of ICCs have been found in this study, including knowledge, skills of interpreting and relating, skills of discovery and interaction, critical cultural awareness, attitudes and multimodal symbolism. It is interesting that these competencies are not bound within and/or between the national cultures of the participants and their interlocutors, but are related to wider frames of cultural reference, ranging from local to national and global scales.

Lastly, the main participants with ELF experience are aware of a variation of Englishes and do not conform to native English norms in their online intercultural communication. Rather, they rely on the use of Englishes in their own way and adapt and orient them to their intercultural interlocutors, networked resources and affordances available on the site. As such, they express their positive perceptions of English language use for online intercultural communication with people from different first linguistic and cultural backgrounds. However, they still believe that native English should be their exclusive reference point and British English norms are the most prestigious English among the participants since they are based in the UK. Nevertheless, their communication is not totally based on their preference for British English in their online intercultural communication. It is clear that the main participants make use of different English characteristics, such as simple and straightforward syntactic structures, short sentences, abbreviations, acronyms and excessive punctuation in their online intercultural communication. In addition, common ELF forms, such as indefinite articles and plural nouns with 'is' are also found in the representative findings. There is also a mixed use of English with other languages in order to meet the immediate communicative demands of a particular interaction, such as a politeness and convenience in typing.

Chapter 10: Conclusions

10.1 Introduction

This chapter aims to provide a summary of the thesis. It starts to revisit the rationales and motivations for this study. Research methodology is then restated, showing how the data were collected, followed by a synopsis of the research findings. The limitations of this study are also discussed together with possible areas for future research. Finally, the contributions and implications of this thesis are considered.

10.2 Research rationales and motivations for the study

This research was motivated by the recent phenomenon of English use on SNSs by NNESs as the majority of online users. It cannot be denied that communication on SNSs is very popular today. There were 1.96 billion SNSs users around the world in 2015 (Statista, 2016). The top five leading SNSs currently are Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Google+ and Youtube (Moreau, 2016). As an open and continually advancing communicative platform, most people around the world are connected and share their interests as well as discover what is going on in the world. The world has, thus, shrunk as never before and we have entered a state of global connectivity. With such a large number of users, it is clear that SNSs, particularly Facebook, involve much diversity, including people with different languages and cultures. English has undoubtedly become the main means of intercultural communication for about 948.6 million users (Internet World Stats, 2015b). It is also the most dominant language used on SNSs (Crystal, 2012).

In Thailand, a particular SNS, Facebook, is very popular among Thai people (2.4.2). English is used as a lingua franca for intercultural communication online to connect Thai English users to non-Thai native speakers in the wider world (Baker, 2009a, 2009b). English is the first most important foreign language in Thailand. It is a major subject in schools and a compulsory subject at various educational levels, such as higher education. It further plays a role in media, government, business and tourism. NES models of English are still prevalent in the country and Thailand currently does not have its own codified variety of English. Rather, English is used in a hybrid, fluid and flexible manner (Baker, 2009a, 2012b).

The phenomenon of English use by the majority of online users recalls the complexity of English communication when the language is used in contact with a myriad of first languages and cultures of users. A number of ELF studies have responded to the use of English for intercultural communication in globalisation (Baker, 2015;Jenks, 2013;Seargeant and Tagg, 2011;Seargeant *et al.*, 2012;Vettorel, 2014). However, the use of ELF for online intercultural communication, and through SNSs in particular has been under-researched. There is gap between the extensive use of English online by NNESs and the limited research about it in the ELF field. Therefore, this thesis explores the complexity of English language and culture in online intercultural communication, emphasising the role of culture in the use of English and the essential intercultural communicative competences (ICCs) for successful online intercultural communication through English among people with different first languages and cultures (ELF). The perspectives of online English users regarding English norms and/ or references are also examined and whether NES norms are followed when their English communication online involves multi-languages and multi-cultures and NESs are in the minority. In cultural studies, it is necessary to focus on a particular culture in order to gain insights into the investigated phenomenon. Regarding the researcher's Thai native speaker background, this thesis focuses on Thai online English users who are experienced in using English in a global online context (Facebook - 6.4) with other English users who do not share the same first language and/or culture.

10.3 Research questions

This thesis was conducted in order to offer an insight into the complex use of English and cultures and the essential ICC for successful online intercultural communication through ELF. For these purposes, this thesis seeks to answer the following three main research questions and sub-questions:

1. What is the role of culture(s) in intercultural communication for online English users?

    a. In what way do Thai international students in the UK represent and construct cultures through their online English intercultural communication?

    b. How do cultures influence Thai international students' online communication in English?

2. What intercultural communicative competences do the participants apply and/or learn for meaningful and satisfactory online intercultural communication?

3. What are the perceptions of Thai international students in the UK regarding English(es) for online intercultural communication?

10.4 Research methodologies

This research is predominantly based on a qualitative approach in order to gain insights into the complex use of English and cultures in online intercultural communication for a small number of research participants. This approach was selected as it involved different inquiry processes to explore the investigated phenomenon in a natural setting. It also involved multilevel analysis that allowed an understanding of the data in-depth and facilitated the emergence of relevant data and new areas for further investigation. This approach provided rich data and a holistic picture of English and culture in online intercultural communication.

Four main research instruments were used to collect the data, consisting of an online questionnaire, online observations, two rounds of semi-structured interviews and a focus group. The online questionnaire was conducted at the beginning of the process of the fieldwork. It aimed to find out; first, which participants regularly used English for online intercultural communication with other online users with different first languages and cultures and; second, the most popular SNS of the participants for online observation of English use and cultures in online intercultural communication. Apart from these two purposes, the online questionnaire could also provide an initial understanding of the participants' experiences of their online interactions and the ICC that they applied to their online intercultural communication as well as the perceptions that influenced their evaluations of the natural use of English for online intercultural communication. Further, with this quantitative method, the participants' biographic backgrounds were examined and correlated with their online intercultural practices and their perceptions of English use in online mediums.

Online observation was used to investigate how the participants represented and constructed their cultures through ELF on the selected online medium. This method aimed to capture the dynamic online interaction over a period of time.

Two rounds of semi-structured interviews were used to collect the data. To be specific, the first round of interviews aimed to follow-up interesting points and extend explanations from the participants' answers to the online questionnaire. It also aimed to explore the participants' online intercultural experiences and perceptions of the use of English for global connections. The comparison between the online questionnaire responses and the findings from the first round of interviews allowed for the verification of some findings and also revealed new gaps in understanding the participants' online intercultural interactions and perceptions. The second round of interviews mainly aimed to listen to the participants' explanations of their online communicative meanings, which further assisted with an analysis of the data from the online observations.

Last, the focus group aimed to gain the collective views of the participants about the use of English online, cultures and ICC based on their online intercultural experiences. These four methods offered a richness of data from different dimensions and allowed for triangulation between data (Cohen *et al.*, 2011;Creswell, 2013, 2014;Robson, 2011).

The fieldwork took place over eight months between mid-December, 2012 and mid-August, 2013. A particular cultural group of participants, Thai international students from different disciplines at the selected UK university, was the focus for gaining an in-depth understanding of the various uses of English and cultures in online intercultural communication. Overall, 39 Thai students participated in the online questionnaire. Fifteen participants were selected for the first round of interviews in order to gain data from both those who regularly used English for online intercultural communication and those who did not often do so. A further five participants were chosen for online observation, the second round of interviews and the focus group because they were very active and produced a lot of English conversation on Facebook with people who did not share the same mother-tongue and/or cultural background. Facebook was selected as the most popularly used SNS for the participants' online intercultural communication through ELF.

Different analytical approaches were utilised to analyse data from the four methods. These included frequency distribution on SPSS for data from the online questionnaires, content analysis for the data from the interviews, focus group and online observations. Latent content analysis was also used together with content analysis to analyse the focus group data. In addition, multimodal analysis was joined with content analysis for analysing data from the online observations. The

qualitative data from both rounds of the interviews, the focus group and the online observations were transcribed and coded in NVivo 10. These qualitative data were categorised and coded based on 'inductive' and 'deductive' approaches. Then, the data were interpreted, using different analytical approaches for each data set as mentioned above.

10.5 Research findings

In answer to RQ1, the findings suggested that cultures played important roles in online intercultural communication through ELF in three aspects. Given the power of the multimodal and network resources of the selected SNS (Facebook); the first role of cultures involves cultural representation and cultural construction at different levels, ranging from local to national to global. The participants represent their ideas, beliefs, values and perceptions, using a single resource or a combination of online resources, mainly photos and messages in their online intercultural communication. In a reciprocal process of communication, they also construct or build an understanding of other online users from the ways in which the ideas, beliefs, values and perceptions of their interlocutors are represented. Second, cultures played a role in interpreting communicative meanings. In other words, they helped with acknowledging the behaviours of other online ELF users and relating these to real time online intercultural communication, for example to choose appropriate communication topics for particular online ELF users or to consider any implied meaning of the communication. The last role of cultures was associated with complex, dynamic, fluid and emergent cultural practices through ELF. To be clear, cultures in online contexts discovered in this thesis were not usually linked to English speaking cultures and/ or any particular cultures. Rather, these were borrowed, edited, and adapted as alternative cultural productions. Cultures in online intercultural communication through ELF are therefore, heterogeneous and various, depending on individual different ideas, attitudes, experiences, preferences and so on. These characteristics of cultures in online intercultural communication match those presented by Baker (2015);Kramsch (2011);Pennycook (2007).

It is interesting to note that most participants were not aware of their cultural representation and cultural construction. This resulted in their unawareness of cultural roles in their online intercultural communication through ELF. In fact, they did represent and construct cultures through the process of their online interactions and these were evident in the records of their online conversations.

Most participants were able to elucidate their cultural representation and cultural construction as well as discuss cultures only at surface level, while the deeper level of their beliefs, values and perceptions were underlined in their observable communication practices online. The lack of awareness of cultural roles among most of the main participants could be explained in relation to their educational backgrounds, in that these participants came from different branches of academic knowledge and were not familiar with what is meant by cultures and cultural characteristics in any-depth. Their understanding of cultures, therefore, was tied in with a traditional conception of cultures in terms of one own and the cultures of others, for example. Nevertheless, their cultural practices online involved more complicated levels of cultures and they showed different levels of intercultural awareness. All of the main participants exhibited more than one of the different levels of intercultural awareness proposed by Baker (2015), but to different degrees. It became clear that experience abroad and English based test competency was not necessarily related to the main participants' active use of ELF for online intercultural communication, nor did it prevent mutual understanding for successful intercultural communication in the online medium.

In answer to RQ 2, the findings demonstrate that all the factors in intercultural communication proposed in the ICC model of Byram (1997) were applied and learnt from the main participants' online intercultural interactions through ELF. These included knowledge, skills of interpreting and relating, skills of discovery and interaction, critical cultural awareness and attitudes. The intercultural competence of multimodal symbolism also appeared in use for online intercultural communication among the main participants, regarding multimodal features and network resources available for communication in this medium. These intercultural competencies, however, deviated from the ICC concepts of Byram (1997) in that they not only involved national cultures (one's own and other cultures), but were more relevant to wider cultural references, varying from individual to local to national to global cultures. The findings of the ICC applied and learnt for manipulating the complexities of languages and cultures in online intercultural communication though ELF among the main participants, therefore, were more aligned with Baker's (2015) model of intercultural awareness which highlights fluid, dynamic, and emergent cultures in ELF communication and could suggest a relevant concept for understanding intercultural communication through ELF in this online context.

In answer to RQ3, all main participants indicated positive perceptions of variations of English use in their online intercultural communication. They were aware of different uses of Englishes among their online interlocutors with different first languages and cultures. They also accepted that their use of English for online intercultural communication did not necessarily conform to native English. Rather, it could be adjusted and adapted to suit their communication purposes and achieve communicative meanings. These can be seen from several linguistic, multimodal, and network resources exploited in the main participants' online intercultural communication. In this thesis, it can, thus, be claimed that native English norms were not of relevance for successful online intercultural communication.

In relation to the participants' positive perceptions of Englishes, the main contextual factor was identified as ELF experiences in online intercultural communication. ELF experiences in online intercultural communication appeared to be important in shaping and developing the main participants' perceptions. As they experienced how English was actually used and worked, they placed less importance on conformity to native English for mutual understanding among online ELF users. The findings corresponded with a number of ELF research papers regarding perceptions of the English for intercultural communication (Wang, 2015;Wang and Jenkins, 2016).

Nevertheless, there was a contradiction between the use of English in intercultural practices and the participants' preferences. Although English use was not based on native English as the reference point, most of the main participants still wished to use native English. This finding was corroborated by Jenkins (2011) in that English as NESs is still widely regarded as the most desirable kind of English.

10.6 Implications and contributions

Based on ELF perspectives, the results of this thesis have contributed valuable implications to the concepts of English use for intercultural communication with ELF users or those who from different first languages and cultures in online context. This section aims to discuss these implications in specific to two relevant aspects, including ELF researchers and English pedagogy.

10.6.1 Researchers of ELF

On the first hand, implications arising from the data of this thesis directly relate to ELF researchers. These implications offer interesting perspectives on the nature of English used online, cultures, the relationship between language and culture and ICC in the online context as discussed below.

10.6.1.1 The nature of English used online

This study has offered behaviours of Thai users of English online related to their own way of using ELF. The findings suggest that the main participants use English for communication online on a regular basis with mostly NNESs, while NESs are still present in their communication but in the minority. Although the participants are in the native English environment where they can use English face-to-face, online mediums such as SNSs have become another important way for them to communicate through mobile devices with their friends, classmates, colleagues who are local (and also who live far away), given the fact that they are not able to meet each other every day due to their different life routines. SNSs have thus become a communication domain that overlaps with face-to-face communication. And English as a lingua franca has begun to play a crucial role in the participants' online communication for a range of different topics and purposes (e.g. self-presentation, information sharing, academic issues and social contacts) with other online users who are mostly their offline contacts and share or do not share their first languages and cultures.

These results can stimulate ELF researchers to realise the importance of online mediums of communication where there are a large number of ELF users and the variability emerging from the unprecedented spread of English and lingua franca use. Although some ELF researchers has started looking at ELF in online contexts (Jenks, 2013;Ke, 2012;Ke and Cahyani, 2014;Sultana, 2016), they are still in a small number and most of them have investigated ELF in a range of linguistic levels, such as pronunciation, lexis, lexicogrammar and pragmatic in different physical domains but not online settings (Jenkins *et al.*, 2011). Furthermore, these results have provided further support for Jenkins (2011; 2012; 2015), Wang and Jenkins (2016), who suggest the need to move away from the dominance of NES models of language, communication and culture in understanding global English use. According to the participants' perceptions of English used online, native English is not the exclusive reference point. Mutual understanding is rather the goal for communication between online English users with different first

languages and cultures. In the online intercultural practices of the participants, 'personal' Englishes are used and adapted as appropriate for each communicative purpose. These support ELF researchers the fact of using English in a global scale is not necessarily related to NESs. But English has become the language of the world so they can use English with anybody who can use the language. So, this strengthens ELF researchers the shift from the focus of how to become like the NESs to what is more important in successful communication.

The findings in Chapter 6: to Chapter 8: also support criticisms about Kachru's three concentric circle model (2005) among ELF researchers (e.g. Baker, 2009a;Jenkins, 2009b). All of the main five participants; Ken, Kae, North, Jo and A, use English as ELF as their daily language of communication with NNESs, including Thai speakers and NESs. Therefore, the findings support the criticisms of Kachru's three concentric circle model (2005) in relation to the complexity of predominant English use globally, in that the model cannot capture the use of English among people across all three concentric circles (Baker, 2009a;Jenkins, 2009b). In this thesis, the main participants, as English users from an Expanding circle country (Thailand), are not 'norm-dependent' and do not use English as a foreign language (EFL) for online communication outside Thailand with NNESs. Rather, the internet removes geographical and time restrictions for the participants to engage in wider connections with people from anywhere (Vettorel, 2014). They adapt English and other languages, make use of the multimodal features of the online medium and employ network resources from the Internet for their own particular purposes in each instance of their online communication. The use of ELF in this context moves, changes and cannot be taken as the final form.

Further relating to the use of English language within an online multilingual and multicultural environment, it adds to ELF researchers' awareness of language options (or the role of other languages apart from English) in online intercultural communication among English users from different first linguistic and cultural backgrounds. As online ELF users are all at least bilingual, trilingual or multilingual speakers, they can choose to interact with their interlocutors either in English, their own language or another language in their online intercultural communication. The interactions can happen in languages other than English, although English is used to initiate the interaction. In correspond to Jenkins (2015: 73-74), the use of English today is "multilingual franca" in which "English is available as a contact language of choice, but is not necessarily chosen". In other

words, English is known among its users for communication, but is always potentially mixed with other languages of the users. As the evidence in this thesis, the participants are all at least bilingual speakers (Ken, Kae, North, and A) and some are multilingual speakers (Jo) as shown in 6.4 and Example 8.12. Therefore, they choose to use languages of their preferences in each instance of online communication. In Example 8.12, A's Cypriot interlocutors interact with his English post on Facebook in their own language. However, A expresses his tolerance to it and 'lets it go' as it is not crucial for him to understand the communicative meanings and he can make sense of the conversation and understand it using the aid of multimodality (a picture). It is worth mentioning that multimodality is a prevalent feature of online intercultural communication which all of the participants make full use of to fully present their communicative meanings and enhance their understanding of other online conversations (Example 7.22). Network resources such as Google translation and the Google search engine are also found to be useful by the main participants and their interlocutors. They can use these to translate the communicative meanings of languages other than English and check whether their English is correct (Example 7.36; Example 8.8). As Herring (2015);Jewitt (2013);Kress (2013) suggest, multimodality offers the full range of communication forms for understanding online intercultural communication while networked resources also increase the possibility of understanding different languages in networked practices (Androutsopoulos, 2013).

In relation to of the language options above, ELF researchers can also raise their awareness of code-switching and code-mixing together with online multimodal features in online intercultural communication. The findings show that the main participants apply code-switching and code-mixing together with online multimodal features in their online intercultural communication. North in Example 8.7 mixes Thai into her English online conversation with her Chinese friends. The other four participants; Ken, Kae, Jo and A, switch between Thai and English to communicate with Thai English online users, although their interlocutors from different languages and cultures are present in the same conversations (Example 7.23, Example 8.13, Example 8.17, Example 8.18, and Example 8.20). It is interesting to note that the mixed use of Thai and English does not cause any problems in terms of the understanding of interlocutors who do not share the same mother tongues and/or cultures. In contrast, their interlocutors express their interests regarding the participants' code-mixing and adaptation to it as their individual preferences (Example 7.25). Code-switching is

also found in use. A in Example 8.14(or Example 9.19) presents his openness to wider cultures by posting a taboo picture from a Thai cultural perspective and one of his Thai friends switches Thai slang into English to make it look better for Thai people.

10.6.1.2 Cultures

With regard to culture, this thesis has proposed the characteristics and roles of cultures in which ELF researchers can take into their consideration about online intercultural communication through ELF. The findings have suggested that cultures are not usually tied to a national level between, for example, the cultures of the participants and those of their interlocutors. Instead, online intercultural communication involves different levels of awareness of cultures within individual, local, national and global frames of reference (9.2.3). The participants' intercultural awareness in online intercultural communication correspond to Baker's (2015) features of intercultural awareness of intercultural communication through English in global lingua franca. Thus, cultures should be viewed as complex, dynamic, fluid and emergent resources in intercultural communication. As Baker (2015) posits, interactions in intercultural communication are not linear, and people can self-organise, self-modify and change anything in their interactions. This evidence has supported further evidence for ELF researchers the cultural dimensions of intercultural communication in English in online global contexts.

10.6.1.3 The interrelationship between languages, cultures and the multimodality of SNSs

In correspond to the previous points about cultures, the findings make clear the fluid and complex use of English and culture in online intercultural communication, stimulating a reconsideration of the relationship between language and culture. For these participants, language and culture appear to be complex and move around individual, local, national, and global frames of reference. They show that cultures are not clearly identifiable and are not bound entities, but rather mixed, fluid and constantly change depending on the intercultural communication in which they occur. Cultural references, forms and practices in English are not tied to any particular culture. For example, Thai people and Iranian people interact online in English about a Chinese superstar (Example 8.11). In other words, the use of English for online intercultural communication is not necessarily about English cultures. Instead the relationship

between English when it is used as a lingua franca and its cultural topics are complex, dynamic and fluid, and the practices of online ELF users continually co-evolve alongside the increasingly developed multimodal features of online mediums and the Internet. The findings support the transcultural notions of Pennycook (2007) and Risager (2007), which respond to the dynamics and complexity of intercultural communication through global English use. Nevertheless, it must be also acknowledged that fixed cultural references, such as national cultures are still present, but these are switch between fixed, fluid and emergent cultural references and forms (Pennycook, 2007).

ELF researchers should also (re)consider the interrelationship between languages, cultures and the multimodality of SNSs. The findings inform us that, in digital media, communication is not only formed through languages; instead it can be formed by applying the many modes available on the site for presenting communicative meanings. According to Kress (2013), Jewitt (2013) and Herring (2015), language is only one mode among many other modes, such as photos, videos, online network resources and these modes co-operate with each other to present online users' communicative meanings. For example, images support online comments. Through this sense, multimodality provides an extended repertoire of meaning-making resources which the main participants used for self-presentation and thus represent and construct their cultures. Regarding this particular point, Jewitt (2009: 15) explains that communicative meanings are conveyed, distributed, received, interpreted and remade through multimodal modes. They are constructed not just through language; instead the meanings in any one mode are often intertwined with the meanings made with those of all the other modes co-present and 'co-operating' in the communicative event. These emergences offer a new perspective for understanding communication today.

10.6.1.4 Intercultural communicative competence (ICC)

The findings of cultural roles in online intercultural communication have further provided empirical data to support Byram's (1997) ICC model. It had become clear that his five savoirs are a broad frame for explicating the different skills and knowledge essential in online intercultural communication in which English language users can apply in their ELF intercultural communication online. These factors were used by the main participants for successful online intercultural communication, although cultures attached to them are not based on nation, but wider views of complex, dynamic, fluid and emergent cultures. Furthermore, the findings have added empirical data to Baker's (2015) intercultural awareness

about the interrelationship between different levels of intercultural awareness and ICC in intercultural practices through ELF. This has offered a conscious understanding of the roles of cultures in online intercultural communication as these different levels of intercultural awareness of the main participants were represented and constructed through their intercultural communicative competence.

Given that the Internet is currently a popular domain of intercultural communication for users around the globe, this thesis has also put forward the idea of electronically mediated intercultural communication (EMIC). EMIC replaces another traditional term 'computer-mediated communication' (CMC) with the aim of more clearly illustrating the varied methods of current digital communication which do not only occur through personal computers, but also through mobile devices, such as laptops, smart phones and tablets. Also, the main feature of the new term EMIC is the intercultural emphasis. This thesis has, thus, offered an additional way to thoroughly consider approaches to online intercultural communication using digital media.

10.6.2 English pedagogy

Although the pedagogy of English and intercultural communication is beyond the scope of this thesis, the findings provide insightful implications for English language and culture education in Thailand. A number of research studies in ELF examine the pedagogic implications of ELF for English language and intercultural education (Baker, 2009b, 2012b, 2015;Dewey, 2012;Jenkins, 2012;Seidlhofer, 2011;Wang, 2012;Wang and Jenkins, 2016) from several aspects, including classroom teaching practices, teaching contents and materials, and English language tests.

These studies, to name just a few, have raised the main pedagogic challenge to a paradigm shift in English language pedagogy from native English norms to a variation of Englishes spread around the world. It is witnessed in the findings of this thesis that the idealised native English of the main participants (British English) is not used and/or needed in their communication online with their interlocutors from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Although the participants prefer to conform to NES standards, they are aware of different Englishes and place more importance on communicative meanings and purposes than conforming to native English standards (e.g. Example 7.14; Example 7.17; Example 7.31; Example 7.37). They make clear in their first round of interviews

and the focus group that they never learn different kinds of English from their English teachers (Example 7.17) and/or English text books (Example 7.37). At this point, this thesis strongly suggests that English language education should raise language learners' awareness of variations in English use on a global scale and that ELF should be applied in a teaching context as appropriate to language learners' needs and desires. English language teaching should no longer only focus on native English as in practical English language learners can face and experience different kinds of Englishes in intercultural communication. Jenkins (2012) advocates that learners should understand the sociolinguistic facts of the spread of English around the world and make their own choices for communication. Therefore, variations in English should be accepted and the target model for English learners should start to shift from native Standard English (NSE) to ELF practice (Wang, 2012). In summary, the participants reflect on the conflicts between their English preferences and the kind of English they actually use in online intercultural communication. They further reflect on their awareness of different kinds of English and the importance of English variations for successful online intercultural communication. These points suggest the need to adapt current English education in order to prepare Thai learners to be ready for wider communication through ELF with people whose first languages and cultures are different.

A further implication of the findings concerns the teaching of cultures and intercultural communication. Given the complex, fluid and emergent nature of cultures in intercultural communication, instructional materials should highlight different cultures in the world in order to provide language learners with knowledge of how to use English for communicating with English users from other cultures. To focus only on native English or inner circle cultures is clearly inadequate for the needs of English language learners and the use of English in the real world (Baker, 2015). Furthermore, ICC skills and abilities should be supplemented in English language teaching. The ICC findings in this thesis suggest that ICCs do play a role in successful online intercultural communication in that these competences encourage online English users to make use of knowledge, negotiate and mediate communicative meanings in real time instances of online intercultural communication.

Finally, the findings reveal that experience of using English in online intercultural communication appears to be vital in developing ICC and intercultural awareness. The participants can learn how to use English to convey communicative meanings

successfully and apply what they learn from their online experiences to later intercultural communication. Given the fact that Thai English learners have less opportunity to use English outside the classroom (2.4.2), the pedagogic practice can thus supports English learners by creating activities which encourage them to experience English use online with people with different first languages and cultures. This might, for example, involve helping language learners to develop their knowledge of cultures and English language learning and teaching through SNSs. This would encourage a more authentic environment for English use without the limitations of the English language classroom, such as time constraints or a large number of students. It might also involve creating intercultural projects for language learners in a Thai university and those from other from various linguistic and cultural backgrounds. This latter suggestion has been followed by Ke (2012) and Ke and Cahyani (2014) in relation to learners' beliefs about English. (2.3.3). Baker (2015) also supports the idea that the online medium is a source of cultural content in language teaching which represents both local cultures and other cultures through English. Online resources can provide language learners different global cultural forms and practices which may not be included in the text books and other teaching and learning materials, such as audios and videos.

10.6.3 Summary

In sum, all the implications presented above contribute to ELF research concerning the shift away from the dominant NES model in online intercultural communication due to English variations in communication. It is important for English language users to accept the fact that English language is very diverse. They make use of their first linguistic repertoires and cultures and adjust to their interlocutors and the online multimodal features as well as network resources available to them based on their own preferences and decisions. As a result of these dynamics and complexity, the pedagogy of English language and culture needs to go beyond English native based norms to examine the complex, dynamic, fluid and emergent cultures that appear in online intercultural communication. Competences of intercultural communication need to be the focus of pedagogic practices, as these can lead to successful intercultural communication online, demonstrated by the participants in this study.

10.7 Research limitations

As discussed in 5.7, one of the main limitations of this thesis is the small number of the research participants, with only five main participants. Only a small number of the participants participated in the main study because it would not have been possible to conduct an in-depth qualitative study with any more participants. The amount of data would have been overwhelming for one researcher. Despite the small number of participants, the notion of transferability is applied to allow a sufficient thick description of the results. Further, the findings provide useful data for online English users and can be applied or transferred to pedagogic practices in English language and intercultural communication.

Access to private online interactions on Facebook is another limitation of this thesis. Given the fact that private online conversations mostly involve personal issues, some participants might feel reluctant about sharing records of their online conversations with the researchers. This could result in incomplete records being submitted and these cannot be used for the data analysis in this thesis.

Furthermore, it is difficult to approach the interlocutors of the participants and ask for their explanations regarding communicative meanings (which are possibly different to those of the participants), as a result of the following important factors: the lack of an interpersonal relationship between the researcher and the participants' interlocutors, the variety of the participants' interlocutors and the lack of contact information for them, their lack of availability to take part in a research observation.

Bias of the researcher is also regarded as a research limitation. As I share the first culture with the main participants, some parts of the data might be analysed through my narrow point of view. Therefore, it is important to apply multi analytical approaches to analyse data through a wider lense and avoid bias during the data analysis process.

The last limitation of this thesis is that it only focussed on Thai English users. Since this research looks at cultures, it is necessary to focus on a particular culture and investigate it in detail (Cohen *et al.*, 2011). Further, the fact that cultures in online intercultural communication are multiple and various, means that it is impossible to investigate how Thai English users employ English when communicating with Vietnamese English users, for example. Rather, this research

has shed light on how English users from a particular culture communicate with people with different first languages and cultural backgrounds.

10.8 Summary and conclusion

Online intercultural communication has played a crucial role of people daily communication in the age of digital globalisation. People no longer communicate only in the same geographical location, but also on the Internet and SNSs, using either traditional (e.g. PC) or mobile communicative devices (e.g. smart phones and tablets). Given the fact that the Internet has brought people across the globe into closer contact, ELF has become the main medium of intercultural communication on online platforms, such as SNS, and has enabled users to contact others who have different first languages and cultures. Concerning the large number of people engaged in online intercultural communication and the various linguistic and cultural resources they have brought to it, this thesis examines the complexities of the language use and cultures and how they affect successful intercultural communication. Three relevant aspects; the roles of cultures, ICC and perceptions of English use, are the focus of the investigation. It is claimed that online communicative mediums involve rich intercultural communication in which online ELF users are able to represent and construct their ideas about others, using the multimodal features of the technologies. In doing this, the relationships between language and culture through ELF for online intercultural communication are seen to be complex, dynamic, emergent and fluid. As ELF is used by online users with different first languages and cultures, they do not only bring their own resources and cultures to the communication, but also negotiate and adapt these resources to be appropriate to each instance of online intercultural communication. It is hoped that the investigation into the use of English and cultures in online contexts will result in a better understanding of intercultural communication using English online. It is also hoped that such insights will make online English users aware of how to work with Englishes and manipulate dynamic cultures.

Appendices

Appendix A Student research project ethics checklist

UNIVERSITY OF Southampton

Student Research Project Ethics Checklist Nov 2011

This checklist should be completed by the student (with the advice of their thesis/ dissertation supervisor) for all research projects.

Student name: Chittima Sangiamchit Student ID: 23828528

Supervisor name: Professor Jennifer Jenkins and Dr Will Baker

Discipline: Applied Linguistics and English Language Teaching (ELT)

Programme of study: IPhD

Project title: English as a Lingua Franca for Online Intercultural Communication among Thai International Students in the UK

		YES	NO
1	Will your study involve human participants?	✓	
2	Does the study involve children under 16?		✓
3	Does the study involve adults who are specially vulnerable and/or unable to give informed consent?(e.g. people with learning difficulties, adults with dementia)		✓
4	Will the study require the cooperation of a third party/ an advocate for access to possible participants? (e.g. students at school, residents of nursing home)		✓
5	Does your research require collection and/ or storage of sensitive and/or personal data on any individual? (e.g. date of birth, criminal offences)		✓

6	Could you research induce psychological stress or anxiety, or have negative consequences for participants, beyond the risks of everyday life?		✓
7	Will it be necessary for participants to take part in the study without their knowledge and consent at the time? (e.g. covert observation of people)		✓
8	Will the study involve discussion of sensitive topics? (e.g. sexual activity, drug use)		✓
9	Will financial inducements (other than reasonable expeNESs or compensation of time) be offered to participants?		✓
10	Are there any problems with participants' rights to remain anonymous, and/or ensuring that the information they provide is non-identifiable?		✓
11	Will you have any difficulty communicating and assuring the right of participants to freely withdraw from the project at any time?		✓
12	If you are working in a cross cultural setting, will you need to gain additional knowledge about the setting to work effectively? (e.g. gender roles, language use)		✓
13	Are there potential risks to your own health and safety in conducting the study? (e.g. lone interviewing in other than public spaces)		✓
14	Will the study involve recruitment of patients or staff through the NHS?		✓
15	Does the research project involve working with human tissue, organs, bones etc that are less than 100 years old?		✓

Please refer to the Research Project Ethics Guidance Notes for help in completing this checklist.

If you have answered NO to all of the above questions, discussed the form with your supervisor and had it signed and dated by both parties (see over), you may proceed with your research. A copy of the Checklist should be included in your eventual report/ dissertation/ thesis.

If you have answered YES to any of the questions, i.e. if your research involves human participants in any way, you will need to provide further information for consideration by the Humanities Ethics Committee and/or the university Research Governance Office. This information needs to be provided via the Electronic Research Governance Online (ERGO) system, available at www.ergo.soton.ac.uk.

CHOOSE ONE STATEMENT:

☐ I have completed the Ethics Checklist and confirm that my research does not involve human participants (nor human tissues etc).

☑ I have completed the Ethics Checklist and confirm that my research will involve human participants. I understand that this research needs to be reported and approved through the ERGO system, before the research commences.

Signature of student: Chittima Sangiamchit Date: 24/10/2012

Signature of supervisor: Will Baker Date: 24/10/2012

Appendix B Consent form (Online survey)

An Investigation of English Language Use for Online Intercultural Communication among Thai International Students in the UK

My name is Chittima Sangiamchit, IPhD student at the University of Southampton. I would like to ask you to help me by answering all questions in this questionnaire concerning the use of English language for online communication with people from different countries. This survey is conducted as a part of my PhD studies. It aims to investigate the way Thai international students in the UK as the English language users use English language on either social networking sites or messaging services. Your thinking of culture(s) and the use of English online are also under the investigation. Your answers to all questions will be treated with the strictest confidence although you are required to provide your name for associating your answers to this questionnaire with those of other procedures of data collection (interview and group discussion). The information collected will only be used for the purpose of this study and not be made public. All information collected will be stored on a password protected computer and the iSurvey system. Only the researcher will enable to access the whole information. This questionnaire should take about 10 minutes. Your answers are very valuable to this study, so please provide your answer sincerely to all questions in order to guarantee the success of the investigation. Thank you very much for your help.

☐ Please tick (check) this box to indicate that you consent to taking part in this survey

Click here to start this survey

Appendix C Consent form (Face to face)

UNIVERSITY OF Southampton

CONSENT FORM (FACE TO FACE: Version number 1)

Study Title: English as a Lingua Franca for Online Intercultural Communication among Thai International Students in the UK

Researcher name: Chittima Sangiamchit

Student number: 23828528

ERGO reference number: 4181

Please initial the box(es) if you agree with the statement(s):

I have read and understood the information sheet (08-11-12/ Version No. 1) and have had the opportunity to ask questions about the study. ☐

I agree to take part in this research project and agree for my data to be used for the purpose of this study. ☐

I agree for my English language practices on online mediums to be observed and recorded. ☐

I agree for my interviews and group discussion to be recorded. ☐

I understand my participation is voluntary and I may withdraw at any time without my legal rights being affected. ☐

Data Protection

I understand that information collected about me during my participation in this study will be stored on a password protected computer and that this information will only be used for the purpose of this study. All files containing any personal data will be made anonymous.

Name of participant (print name)……

Signature of participant……

Date……

Appendix D Participant information sheet

UNIVERSITY OF Southampton

Participant Information Sheet (Face to Face)

Study Title: English as a Lingua Franca for Online Intercultural Communication among Thai International Students in the UK

Researcher: Chittima Sangiamchit **Ethics number:**

Please read this information carefully before deciding to take part in this research. If you are happy to participate you will be asked to sign a consent form.

What is the research about?

I am an IPhD student in Applied Linguistics and English Language Teaching (ELT) and also a member of the Centre for Global Englishes of the Faculty of Humanities, University of Southampton, UK. I am currently conducting a PhD research on the use of English for online communication of Thai international students in the UK with people from different countries. My first research objective is to investigate the way in which Thai international students use English to represent their culture(s) through online communication on either social networking websites or messaging services. Secondly, it considers the benefit of online communication with people from different languages. Thirdly, a perception of Thai international students towards their language use online is also investigated. These objectives would also help the researcher exploring pedagogical implications of online communication for English language learning in Thailand.

Why have I been chosen?

This research focuses on Thai users of English in accordance with the research objectives. You are, therefore, invited to take part in this research because you are Thai international students who have either experience or high possibility to use English for communicating with people from different first languages.

What will happen to me if I take part?

Appendix D

Everyone who takes part in this research is required to do Thai questionnaire online via iSurvey while some participants may be asked to do a short-term interview and a group discussion. The purposes of asking you to participate in questionnaire and/ or interview and group discussion are to indicate and describe your English language use, and what you think about the benefits of online communication and the use of English for communicating online with people from different countries. Please note that the short-term interview and group discussion will be audio recorded for facilitating the data analysis of the research.

I would also ask to observe and possibly record your written English use on online mediums that you most frequently used (such as Facebook, MSN, Skype, etc.). In doing so, I will ask you to add me as your friends if you communicate online with people from different countries via social networking sites, such as Facebook, Twitter, etc. Or if you use other online mediums which can be accessed by only you and the person you communicate with, such as messaged chat via the messaging services, I would ask you to copy the conversation and send me by email.

Are there any benefits in my taking part?

There may be no benefit to the individual, but the outcomes and implications of this study will not only add new knowledge to the field of my study, but also indicate the way in which English is used in the real world. Furthermore, some suggestions arising from the study would help Thai education system to reconsider and/ or reshape English language learning in Thailand.

Are there any risks involved?

There are no any risks, besides those that occur in everyday life (e.g. fatigue, anxiety, etc.), which may occur during the data collection in case you get tired for some reasons. In this case, you can take a break at any time.

Will my participation be confidential?

Your participation in this study will be treated with the strictest confidence. Even if you are required to provide your name in the questionnaire, this is in order to associate your answers to the questionnaire with those of interview and group discussion. Your name will not be disclosed publicly. All data will be stored on a password protected computer and iSuvey questionnaire system to ensure that they will remain confidential. Individuals will not be identified in future presentations or publications.

What happens if I change my mind?

You can change your mind at any time without your legal rights being affected. During the study, you can stop taking part in any procedures of the data collection at any time. Your data will be discarded if you change your mind after the data collection has ended.

What happens if something goes wrong?

In the unlikely case of concern or complaint, you can contact Prof Ros Mitchell, the Chair of the Faculty Ethics Committee, Tel: 02380592231, email: rfm3@soton.ac.uk. She is an independent party and is not involved in the research

Where can I get more information?

If you would like more information, please contact Chittima Sangiamchit, IPhD student, Tel: (074) 11928938, Email: cs6g10@soton.ac.uk.

Appendix E Risk assessment

UNIVERSITY OF Southampton
Faculty of Humanities

RISK ASSESSMENT FORM

To be completed in accordance with the attached guidelines

Activity:
IPhD research on 'English as a Lingua Franca for Online Intercultural Communication among Thai International Students in the UK'

This study involves four approaches for data collection, consisting of questionnaire, observation, interviews and group discussion.

Locations:
The study will take place at the University of Southampton by collecting the data from Thai international students as the English users. They will come from various disciplines of different Faculties of the university.

Potential risks:
There are no any risks, besides those that occur in everyday life (e.g. fatigue, anxiety, etc.), which may occur during the data collection in case the participants get tired for some reasons.

Who might be exposed/affected?
Each participant might be exposed to this potential risks.

How will these risks be minimised?
They can take a break at any time.

Risk evaluation: **Low / Medium / High**

Can the risk be further reduced? **Yes / No**

Further controls required:

Date by which further controls will be implemented:

Are the controls satisfactory: **Yes / No**

Date for reassessment:

Completed by:	**Chittima Sangiamchit**	**Chittima**	**24/10/2012**
	Name	signature	date
Supervisor/manager: If applicable	**Dr Will Baker**	**Will Baker**	**24/10/2012**
	Name	signature	date
Reviewed by:			
	Name	signature	date

Appendix F Research protocol

FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

OUTLINE OF PROPOSED RESEARCH WITH HUMAN PARTICIPANTS, TO BE SUBMITTED via ERGO FOR ETHICAL COMMITTEE APPROVAL

STUDENTS PLEASE NOTE: You will need to discuss this form with your Supervisor. In particular, you should ask him/her to advise you about all relevant ethical guidelines relating to your area of research, which you must read and understand.

ALL RESEARCHERS PLEASE NOTE: You must not begin your study until Faculty of Humanities ethical approval and Research Governance Office approval have been obtained through the ERGO system. Failure to comply with this policy could constitute a disciplinary breach.

1. **Name(s):** Chittima Sangiamchit

2. Start date: 08/11/2012 End date: 31/12/2015

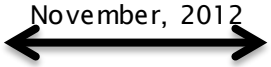
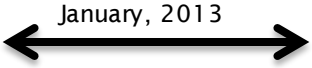
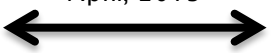
3. **Supervisor (student research only):**
   Professor Jennifer Jenkins and Dr Will Baker

4. **How may you be contacted (e-mail and/or phone number)?**
   Email: cs6g10@soton.ac.uk

5. **Into which category does your research fall? Delete or add as appropriate.**
   IPhD research

6	**Title of project** English as a Lingua Franca for Online Intercultural Communication among Thai International Students in the UK

7	**Briefly describe the rationale for carrying out this project, and the specific aims and research questions** As the Internet has played a significant role in communication among people across the globe, it is interesting to study the way people use English, as the main mean of online communication, with others from different first languages for performing transactions and interaction outside the physical social spaces. There are basically four main objectives of the study, consisting of (1) to investigate the way in which Thai international students use English to represent their culture(s) through online communication on either social networking websites or messaging services (2) to consider the benefit of online communication with people from different languages (3) to investigate a perception of Thai international students towards their language use online and (4) to explore pedagogical implications of online communication for English language learning in Thailand. The research questions of the study therefore include 1.a) In what way do Thai international students in the UK represent their culture (s) through their English online communication? b)How do culture (s) influence or not Thai international students' online communication in English? 2. What do Thai international students in the UK learn about intercultural communicative competence (ICC) from their English online communication? 3. What are perceptions of Thai international students in the UK toward their English for their online intercultural communication? (English norm references, for example) 4. How English communicated online contributes their face-to-face intercultural communication in their opinion?
8	**What is the overall design of the study?** This study will start on November 8, 2012 and end on December 31, 2015. It will begin with the pilot study of the questionnaire and interviews in order to identify what should be included, excluded, concerned topics and revise to ensure quality questionnaire and interview questions. The researcher will also observe English use for online communication of the participants with people from different first languages together with the pilot study and the fieldwork in order to investigate the way in which participants use English for their online communication. The fieldwork will be conducted afterwards, including questionnaire, interview, and group discussion. All data will be

	finally analysed using mix methodologies of both qualitative and quantitative methods together with adopted ethnographical approaches.
9	**What research procedures will be used?** Participants of the study are required to do the questionnaire, and/ or interview and group discussion. They will be also asked if they allow the researcher to observe their English use for online communication with people from different countries. The data collection of this study will take about six months. The timeline of these procedures for the data collection is exhibited in the next page. Pilot study (Questionnaire and Interviews) November, 2012  Observation of English use for online communication November, 2012 – April, 2013 Fieldwork: Questionnaire January, 2013  Fieldwork: Interviews January – March, 2013 Fieldwork: Group discussion April, 2013 
10	**Who are the participants?** The main participants of the study will be Thai international students from different faculties of the University of Southampton. They are chosen because they have experience and/or high possibility to use English for communicating with people from different first languages both online and face-to-face. Since this study also involves the interviews and group

	discussion, this group of participants, therefore, have high potential accessibility.
11	**How will you obtain the consent of participants, and (if appropriate) that of their parents or guardians?** The participants will give their consents via both online questionnaire (iSurvey) and hard copies. To be clear, the participants need to read the statement regarding the data collection via the questionnaire and tick (check) the box to indicate their consents before they start the survey. For the interview and group discussion, they will be given a hard copy of the participant information sheets and consent forms. In observing online conversation, the researcher will state clearly in the consent form if they allow the researcher to observe their English use online. The researcher will not ask the consent from their interlocutors at this stage because if the researcher enables to read the conversation between the participants and their interlocutors online, that means their interlocutors have set the privacy on the online mediums that they allow others who are not their friends seeing their conversation and/or interactivity. This is very common to online communication via Facebook, Twitter, for example. When the researcher selects an example of online conversation between the participants and their interlocutors from different countries, however, the consent forms will be then given to their interlocutors in order to get their allowances in using their online conversation for the study's data analysis. In the case of a personal messaging chat via messaging services, the researcher will not observe their conversation in order to avoid uncomfortableness and the change of language use. Rather, the participants will be asked to send an example of their online conversation to the researcher. And their interlocutors will be also asked to sign the consent form before the participants send the researcher the example of their conversation.
12	**Is there any reason to believe participants may not be able to give full informed consent? If yes, what steps do you propose to take to safeguard their interests?** No
13	**Detail any possible discomfort, inconvenience or other adverse effects**

	the participants may experience arising from the study, and how this will be dealt with. There are couple points for possible discomfort, inconvenience, etc. including (1) The participants may feel tired because of some reasons occurring in their everyday lives. So, the researcher will allow them to break if this case happens. (2) The participants may want to keep their names secretly. The researcher will therefore reassure them that their data will be kept confidently.
14	**How will it be made clear to participants that they may withdraw consent to participate at any time without penalty?** The participants will be explained that their participation in the study is voluntary, so they can withdraw at any time without their legal rights being affected.
15	**How will information obtained from or about participants be protected?** All information obtained from or about participants will be stored on a password protected computer and iSurvey system. Only the researcher, therefore, enables to access the whole information
16	**If this research involves work with children, has a CRB check been carried out?** Yes **No**
17	**Outline any other information you feel may be relevant to this submission.** -

Appendix G Thai version of the questionnaire

การสำรวจการใช้ภาษาอังกฤษเพื่อการสื่อสารระหว่างวัฒนธรรมทางออนไลน์ของนักศึกษาชาวไทยในสหราชอาณาจักร

ข้าพเจ้า จิตติมา เสงี่ยมจิตร์ นักศึกษาหลักสูตร PhD ณ University of Southampton ใคร่ขอความกรุณาท่านสละเวลาตอบแบบสอบถามเกี่ยวกับการใช้ภาษาอังกฤษเพื่อการสื่อสารออนไลน์กับชาวต่างชาติ การสำรวจครั้งนี้เป็นส่วนหนึ่งของการศึกษาระดับปริญญาเอก โดยมีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อศึกษาลักษณะการใช้ภาษาอังกฤษของนักศึกษาชาวไทยในสหราชอาณาจักร ในฐานะที่เป็นผู้ใช้ภาษาอังกฤษ ในเครือข่ายสังคมออนไลน์หรือการส่งข้อความออนไลน์ นอกจากนี้ยังศึกษาความคิดเห็นของท่านที่มีต่อวัฒนธรรมและการใช้ภาษาอังกฤษออนไลน์ ผู้วิจัยจะเก็บรักษาคำตอบของท่านไว้เป็นความลับ ถึงแม้ท่านจะต้องระบุชื่อของท่านในแบบสอบถาม ทั้งนี้เพื่อเชื่อมโยงคำตอบของท่านในแบบสอบถามฉบับนี้กับกระบวนการเก็บข้อมูลอื่นๆ ได้แก่ การสัมภาษณ์และการอภิปรายกลุ่ม ข้อมูลที่เก็บรวบรวมจะนำไปใช้เพื่อวัตถุประสงค์ในการศึกษาครั้งนี้เท่านั้นและไม่เปิดเผยต่อสาธารณชน ข้อมูลที่เก็บรวบรวมได้ทั้งหมดจะได้รับการเก็บรักษาไว้ในคอมพิวเตอร์ที่มีระบบการป้องกันด้วยรหัสผ่านและระบบ iSurvey เฉพาะนักวิจัยเท่านั้นที่สามารถเข้าถึงข้อมูลทั้งหมด การตอบแบบสอบถามครั้งนี้ใช้เวลาประมาณ 10 นาที คำตอบของท่านมีประโยชน์สำหรับการศึกษาครั้งนี้เป็นอย่างมาก จึงใคร่ขอความกรุณาท่านตอบแบบสอบถามด้วยความจริงใจเพื่อความสำเร็จของการศึกษาในครั้งนี้ ขอบพระคุณอย่างสูงที่กรุณาสละเวลาของท่านในการตอบแบบสอบถาม

Section 1. ข้อมูลประวัติส่วนบุคคล

คำแนะนำ: กรุณาตอบคำถามต่อไปนี้โดยเลือกคำตอบที่เหมาะสมที่สุด

Question 1.1

ชื่อ

Question 1.2

เพศ

- ชาย
- หญิง

Question 1.3

อายุ

- น้อยกว่า 20 ปี
- 20-29 ปี
- 30-39 ปี
- 40 ปีขึ้นไป

Question 1.4

ระดับการศึกษาที่กำลังศึกษาอยู่ในปัจจุบัน

- ปริญญาตรี
- ปริญญาโท
- ปริญญาเอก
- อื่นๆ

Question 1.4b

โปรดระบุระดับการศึกษาที่กำลังศึกษาอยู่ของท่าน

Question 1.5

คณะและหลักสูตรที่ท่านกำลังศึกษาอยู่ในปัจจุบัน

Question 1.6

ปีการศึกษาปัจจุบัน

- ปีที่ 1
- ปีที่ 2
- ปีที่ 3
- ปีที่ 4
- ปีที่ 5

Question 1.7

ท่านศึกษาอยู่ในสหราชอาณาจักรมานานเท่าไหร่

- น้อยกว่า 1 ปี
- 1 -2 ปี
- 2 - 3 ปี
- 3 - 4 ปี
- 4 - 5 ปี
- มากกว่า 5 ปี

Question 1.8

ท่านสามารถพูดภาษาอื่นนอกเหนือจากภาษาไทยและภาษาอังกฤษได้หรือไม่ หากได้ กรุณาระบุภาษาและระดับความสามารถของท่านในการพูดภาษานั้นๆ เช่น "ดีมาก" "ดี" "ปานกลาง" หรือ "แย่"

Question 1.9

ท่านเคยสอบวัดระดับความรู้ภาษาอังกฤษใดต่อไปนี้ กรุณาระบุคะแนนในช่องว่าง

IELTS	
TOEFL	
TOEIC	
อื่น ๆ (กรุณาระบุชื่อข้อสอบและระดับคะแนนของท่าน)	

Question 1.10

ระยะเวลาเรียนภาษาอังกฤษตั้งแต่อดีตถึงปัจจุบัน

- น้อยกว่า 5 ปี
- 5-10 ปี
- 11-15 ปี
- 16-20 ปี
- 20 ปีขึ้นไป

Question 1.11

ท่านเคยเรียนพิเศษภาษาอังกฤษเพิ่มเติมนอกเหนือจากการเรียนที่โรงเรียนหรือมหาวิทยาลัยหรือไม่

- เคย
- ไม่เคย

Question 1.11b

หากเคย นานเท่าไหร่

Question 1.12

ท่านเคยเรียนต่างประเทศก่อนมาเรียนที่สหราชอาณาจักรหรือไม่

- เคย
- ไม่เคย

Question 1.12b

หากเคย โปรดระบุสาขา ประเทศและระยะเวลาที่ท่านเรียน

Question 1.13

ท่านเคยไปหรืออาศัยในประเทศอื่นนอกเหนือจากประเทศไทยหรือสหราชอาณาจักรหรือไม่

- เคย
- ไม่เคย

Question 1.13b

หากเคย โปรดระบุประเทศ สาเหตุ และระยะเวลาที่ฟานักอยู่ในประเทศนั้นๆ

Question 1.14

เพราะเหตุใดท่านถึงเลือกศึกษาต่อณ สหราชอาณาจักร

- ระดับการศึกษาที่มีคุณภาพสูง
- มีชื่อเสียงโด่งดังระดับโลกในฐานะที่เป็นผู้นำงานวิจัยในสาขาที่คุณเรียน
- เป็นต้นกำเนิดของภาษาอังกฤษ
- เป็นแหล่งประวัติศาสตร์และวัฒนธรรม
- ได้รับคำแนะนำจากสถานที่ทำงานและ/หรือเพื่อน
- อื่นๆ

Question 1.15

หากท่านเลือก "อื่นๆ" ในคำถามข้อที่แล้ว กรุณาระบุเหตุผล

Question 1.16

ท่านใช้ภาษาอังกฤษเพื่อสื่อสารซึ่งหน้ากับผู้**ใช้**ภาษาอังกฤษเป็นภาษาแม่บ่อยแค่ไหน

- ไม่เคย
- แทบจะไม่เคย
- 2-3 ครั้งต่อปี
- 2-3 ครั้งต่อเดือน
- 2-3 ครั้งต่อสัปดาห์
- ทุกวัน

Question 1.17

ท่านใช้ภาษาอังกฤษเพื่อสื่อสารซึ่งหน้ากับผู้ที่**ไม่ได้ใช้**ภาษาอังกฤษเป็นภาษาแม่บ่อยแค่ไหน

- ไม่เคย
- แทบจะไม่เคย
- 2-3 ครั้งต่อปี
- 2-3 ครั้งต่อเดือน
- 2-3 ครั้งต่อสัปดาห์
- ทุกวัน

Section 2. ความคิดเห็นด้านวัฒนธรรมและการใช้ภาษาอังกฤษเพื่อการสื่อสารออนไลน์กับชาวต่างชาติ

คำแนะนำ: กรุณาตอบคำถามต่อไปนี้โดยเลือกคำตอบที่เหมาะสมที่สุด

Question 2.1

ท่านสื่อสารออนไลน์กับชาวต่างชาติโดยส่วนใหญ่ทางช่องทางใด

- Facebook
- Twitter
- Skype
- MSN
- WhatsApp
- Instagram
- อื่นๆ

Question 2.1b

โปรดระบุ

Question 2.2

โดยส่วนใหญ่แล้วท่านใช้อุปกรณ์อิเล็กทรอนิกส์ใดสื่อสารออนไลน์กับชาวต่างชาติ

- คอมพิวเตอร์ตั้งโต๊ะ
- โน้ตบุ๊ก
- โทรศัพท์มือถือ
- แท็บเล็ต อาทิเช่น IPad, Microsoft Surface Tablet, Sumsung Galaxy Tab และ อื่นๆ
- อื่นๆ

Question 2.2b

โปรดระบุ

Question 2.3

จากคำถามข้อที่แล้ว เพราะเหตุใดท่านจึงใช้อุปกรณ์อิเล็กทรอนิกส์นั้นๆ เพื่อสื่อสารออนไลน์กับชาวต่างชาติ

Question 2.4

ท่านมักใช้ภาษาอังกฤษเพื่อสื่อสารออนไลน์กับใคร

- เพื่อน
- เพื่อนร่วมงาน
- เพื่อนของเพื่อน
- คนแปลกหน้า
- อื่นๆ

Question 2.4b

โปรดระบุ

Question 2.5

ท่านสื่อสารภาษาอังกฤษออนไลน์กับผู้ที่**ใช้**ภาษาอังกฤษเป็นภาษาแม่บ่อยแค่ไหน

- ไม่เคย
- แทบจะไม่
- 2-3 ครั้งต่อปี
- 2-3 ครั้งต่อเดือน
- 2-3 ครั้งต่อสัปดาห์
- ทุกวัน

Question 2.6

ท่านสื่อสารภาษาอังกฤษออนไลน์กับผู้ที่**ไม่ได้ใช้**ภาษาอังกฤษเป็นภาษาแม่บ่อยแค่ไหน

- ไม่เคย
- แทบจะไม่
- 2-3 ครั้งต่อปี
- 2-3 ครั้งต่อเดือน
- 2-3 ครั้งต่อสัปดาห์
- ทุกวัน

Question 2.7

ชาวต่างชาติที่ท่านสื่อสารด้วยออนไลน์ส่วนใหญ่มาจากประเทศอะไร

Question 2.8

อะไรคือวัตถุประสงค์ในการสื่อสารออนไลน์ของท่านกับชาวต่างชาติ (โปรดเรียงลำดับความสำคัญ โดยระบุ 4 = 'สำคัญมาก', 3 = 'สำคัญ', 2 'สำคัญน้อย', 1 = 'ไม่สำคัญ' และ 0 = 'ไม่ใช่วัตถุประสงค์เหล่านี้'

เพื่อปรับปรุงข่าวสารและกิจกรรม	○	○	○	○	○
เพื่อแบ่งปันประสบการณ์ของท่านและ/หรือความคิดกับผู้อื่น	○	○	○	○	○
เพื่อหาเพื่อนใหม่ที่เป็นชาวต่างชาติ	○	○	○	○	○
เพื่อติดต่อกับเพื่อนต่างชาติ	○	○	○	○	○
เพื่อเรียนรู้วัฒนธรรมต่างประเทศ	○	○	○	○	○
เพื่อฝึกฝนภาษาอังกฤษ	○	○	○	○	○

Question 2.9

จากคำถามข้อที่แล้ว ท่านมีเหตุผลอื่น ในการสื่อสารออนไลน์ของท่านกับชาวต่างชาติหรือไม่ หากมี โปรดระบุ

Question 2.10

ท่านนำเสนอวัฒนธรรมของท่านอย่างไรเมื่อสื่อสารออนไลน์กับชาวต่างชาติ (สามารถเลือกตอบได้มากกว่า 1 ข้อ)

- [ ] โพสต์ภาพถ่ายทางวัฒนธรรมของท่าน อาทิเช่น สถาปัตยกรรม อาหาร เครื่องดื่ม เสื้อผ้า เทศกาล เป็นต้น
- [ ] แลกเปลี่ยนข้อมูลทางวัฒนธรรม อาทิเช่น ประเพณี ความเชื่อ ศาสนา ทีวีซีรีส์ ภาพยนตร์ เพลง เป็นต้น
- [ ] การใช้ภาษาอังกฤษเป็นวิถีไทย อาทิเช่น ลงท้ายด้วย "ครับ" สำหรับผู้ชายและ "ค่ะ" สำหรับผู้หญิง เป็นต้น
- [ ] อื่นๆ

Question 2.11

หากท่านเลือก "อื่นๆ" ในคำถามข้อที่แล้ว กรุณาระบุ

Question 2.12

กรุณาให้คะแนนเพื่อแสดงความคิดเห็นของท่านต่อข้อความต่อไปนี้ โดยระบุ 4 = 'เห็นด้วยอย่างยิ่ง', 3 = 'เห็นด้วย', 2 = 'ไม่เห็นด้วย', 1 = 'ไม่เห็นด้วยอย่างยิ่ง' และ 0 = 'ไม่ทราบ' ไม่มีคำตอบใดถูกหรือผิดเพราะแต่ละท่านมีความคิดเห็นแตกต่างกัน ดังนั้นโปรดให้คำตอบตามความรู้สึกที่แท้จริงของท่าน

ฉันชอบสื่อสารกับชาวต่างชาติผ่านทางออนไลน์	○	○	○	○	○

ฉันเต็มใจที่จะค้นพบข้อมูลทั้งที่คุ้นเคยและไม่คุ้นเคยในวัฒนธรรมอื่นจากการสื่อสารออนไลน์	○	○	○	○	○
ฉันคิดว่ามันเป็นสิ่งสำคัญที่จะนำเสนอวัฒนธรรมของตัวเองเมื่อสื่อสารออนไลน์กับชาวต่างชาติ	○	○	○	○	○
ฉันคิดว่ามันเป็นสิ่งสำคัญที่จะต้องเข้าใจวัฒนธรรมของชาวต่างชาติเพื่อให้สามารถสื่อสารออนไลน์เป็นภาษาอังกฤษกับพวกเขาได้	○	○	○	○	○
ฉันสามารถใช้ประสบการณ์ของฉันจากการสื่อสารออนไลน์กับชาวต่างชาติเพื่อการสื่อสารออนไลน์ครั้งต่อไปได้	○	○	○	○	○
ฉันสามารถใช้ประสบการณ์ของฉันจากการสื่อสารออนไลน์เพื่อการสื่อสารแบบซึ่งหน้ากับคนที่มาจากวัฒนธรรมที่แตกต่างกันได้	○	○	○	○	○
ฉันคิดว่าภาษาอังกฤษเป็นภาษาที่สำคัญที่สุดของการสื่อสารออนไลน์กับชาวต่างชาติ	○	○	○	○	○
ฉันคิดว่าภาษาอังกฤษที่ใช้สำหรับการสื่อสารออนไลน์แตกต่างจากภาษาอังกฤษที่ใช้สำหรับการสื่อสารแบบซึ่งหน้า	○	○	○	○	○
ฉันคิดว่ามันเป็นไปไม่ได้ที่จะสื่อสารกับชาวต่างชาติโดยไม่ใช้ภาษาอังกฤษที่ถูกต้องตามหลักไวยากรณ์	○	○	○	○	○
ฉันค้นพบการใช้คำศัพท์ภาษาอังกฤษใหม่ ๆ ที่ไม่ได้ปรากฏในพจนานุกรมภาษาอังกฤษเป็นประจำจากการสื่อสารออนไลน์	○	○	○	○	○

Thank you for taking this questionnaire.

Appendix H English version of the questionnaire

An Investigation of English Language Use for Online Intercultural Communication among Thai International Students in the UK

My name is Chittima Sangiamchit, IPhD student at the University of Southampton. I would like to ask you to help me by answering all questions in this questionnaire concerning the use of English language for online communication with people from different countries. This survey is conducted as a part of my PhD studies. It aims to investigate the way Thai international students in the UK as the English language users use English language on either social networking sites or messaging services. Your thinking of culture(s) and the use of English online are also under the investigation. Your answers to all questions will be treated with the strictest confidence although you are required to provide your name for associating your answers to this questionnaire with those of other procedures of data collection (interview and group discussion). The information collected will only be used for the purpose of this study and not be made public. All information collected will be stored on a password protected computer and the iSurvey system. Only the researcher will enable to access the whole information. This questionnaire should take about 10 minutes. Your answers are very valuable to this study, so please provide your answer sincerely to all questions in order to guarantee the success of the investigation. Thank you very much for your help.

Section 1. Personal Background Information

Description: Please answer the following questions by providing answers and selecting alternative (s) which appear MOST applicable to you.

Question 1.1

Name

Question 1.2

Sex

- ○ Male
- ○ Female

Question 1.3

Age

- ○ Less than 20
- ○ 20-29
- ○ 30-39
- ○ 40 or more

Question 1.4

Current degree of study

- Undergraduate
- Master's
- PhD
- Others

Question 1.4b

Please specify your current studying degree

Question 1.5

Your faculty and discipline

Question 1.6

Current year of study

- 1st year
- 2nd year
- 3rd year
- 4th year
- 5th year

Question 1.7

Length of time spent studying in the UK

- Less than 1 year
- 1 - 2 years
- 2 - 3 years
- 3 - 4 years
- 4 - 5 years
- 5 years

Question 1.8

Do you speak other languages rather than Thai and English? If so, please name what language(s) and your competent level such as 'excellent', 'good', 'satisfactory', and 'poor' for that language(s).

Question 1.9

Which English language proficiency test (s) have you ever taken? Please specify the result (s) in the boxes provided.

IELTS	
TOEFL	
TOEIC	
Others (and score)	

Question 1.10

Length of time spent learning English language

- Less than 5 years
- 5-10 years
- 11-15 years
- 16-20 years
- More than 20 years

Question 1.11

Have you ever studied extra English language course(s) outside the schools or universities?

- YES
- NO

Question 1.11b

If YES, how long?

Question 1.12

Have you ever studied abroad before doing a degree in the UK?

- YES
- NO

Question 1.12b

If YES, what you have studied, which countries and how long.

Question 1.13

Have you ever visited or lived in other countries?

- YES
- NO

Question 1.13b

If YES, which countries, why and how long?

Question 1.14

Why did you pursue higher education in the UK? (You can tick MORE THAN ONE answers)

- High quality of education
- The worldwide reputation of UK researchers as leaders in their field of study
- The birthplace and home of the English language
- A rich history and culture
- Recommendations from workplace and/or friends
- Others

Question 1.15

If you tick 'Others' in the previous question, please specify what it is.

Question 1.16

How often do you use English language for communicating with people who USE English as their first language face-to-face?

- Never
- Rarely
- A few times a year
- A few times a month
- A few times a week
- Every day

Question 1.17

How often do you use English language for communicating with people who DO NOT use English as their first language face-to-face?

- Never
- Rarely
- A few times a year
- A few times a month
- A few times a week
- Every day

Section 2. Your thinking of Culture (s) and the Use of English for Online Communication with People from Different Countries

Description: Please answer the following questions by selecting alternative (s) which appears MOST applicable to you.

Question 2.1

How do you mostly communicate online with people from other countries?

- Facebook
- Twitter
- Skype
- MSN
- WhatsApp
- Instagram
- Others

Question 2.1b

If so, what?

Question 2.2

Which electronic tool do you mostly use for communicating online with people from other countries?

- Personal computer(PC)
- Laptop
- Mobile phone
- Tablets (for examples, IPad, Microsoft Surface Tablet, Sumsung Galaxy Tab, etc.)
- Others

Question 2.2b

If so, what?

Question 2.3

According to previous question, why do you mostly use the selected electronic tool for communicating online with people from other countries?

Question 2.4

Who do you often speak English to online?

- Friends
- Colleagues
- Friends of your friends
- Strangers
- Others

Question 2.4b

If so, who?

Question 2.5

How often do you use English for communicating online with people who USE English as their first language?

- Never
- Rarely
- A few times a year
- A few times a month
- A few times a week
- Every day

Question 2.6

How often do you use English for communicating online with people who DO NOT use English as their first language?

- Never
- Rarely
- A few times a year
- A few times a month

- A few times a week
- Every day

Question 2.7

Which countries do the people who you mostly communicate with online come from?

Question 2.8

What are purposes of your online communication with people from different countries? (Please specify 4 = very important', 3 = 'important', 2 = 'less important', 1 = 'not important' and 0 = 'I don't do these'

To keep up to date with news and activities	○	○	○	○	○
To share experiences and/or ideas with others	○	○	○	○	○
To make new international friends	○	○	○	○	○
To keep in touch with international friends	○	○	○	○	○
To learn international cultures	○	○	○	○	○
To practice English language	○	○	○	○	○

Question 2.9

According to previous question, do you have other reasons to communicate online with people from different countries? If so, please specify.

Question 2.10

How do you present your culture (s) when you communicate online with people from different countries? (You can tick MORE THAN ONE answers)

- ☐ Posting your cultural photos about architecture, food, drink, clothes, festivals, for examples
- ☐ Sharing cultural information, such as your custom, beliefs, religion(s), TV series, films, music, etc.
- ☐ Using English language as Thai ways, for examples, having a final sound \'krab\' for men and \'ka\' for women
- ☐ Others

Question 2.11

If you tick 'Others' in the previous question, please specify what it is.

Question 2.12

Please rate how much do you agree with the following statements, with 4 = 'Strongly Agree', 3 = 'Agree', 2 = 'Disagree', 1 = 'Strongly Disagree' and 0 = 'Don't know'. There are no right or wrong answers because many people have different opinions. So, please provide the answers based on your true feeling.

I like to communicate with people from other countries through the Internet.	○	○	○	○	○
I have a willingness to discover information of both familiar and unfamiliar situations in other cultures from online communication.	○	○	○	○	○
I think it is important to present my own culture(s) when communicating online with people from other countries.	○	○	○	○	○
I think it is important to understand cultures of people from other countries in order to enable to communicate with them in English online.	○	○	○	○	○

I can apply my experiences from online communication with people from other countries to other online communication in the future.	○	○	○	○	○
I can apply my experiences from online communication to face-to-face communication with people from different cultures.	○	○	○	○	○
I think English is the most important language for online communication with people from different countries.	○	○	○	○	○
I think English used for online communication is different from face-to-face.	○	○	○	○	○
I think it is impossible to communicate with people from other countries without grammatically correct English.	○	○	○	○	○
I find that new/created English words, which are not appear in English dictionaries, are regularly used for online communication.	○	○	○	○	○

Thank you for taking this questionnaire.

Appendix I Main interview questions

1. What kinds of English do you use (for online and face-to-face communication)?

2. What kinds of English do you prefer?

3. When you communicate online, do you think that differences between nationalities are important or do you think other things are more important?

4. Do you think that online communication helps you to learn new beliefs, values and new kinds of behaviors from international people?

5. Do you think that online communication is an important mode which helps you to learn international culture(s)? Can you compare this with face-to-face communication?

6. Do you prefer to communicate in English with international people online or face-to-face? Why?

7. Do you have any problems/ difficulties with online communication? (e.g. conveying intended meanings, finding a proper word or phrase, etc.)

8. How do you cope with those problems/ difficulties? (e.g. using communicative strategies: repetition, asking for clarification, explanation, etc.)

9. Do you think it would be useful to have another language which is used as a medium language and is as important as English for online communication?

Appendix J Guidelines for group discussion

1. Share your experiences in online intercultural communication, for example
   1.1. What are the nationalities of the people that you communicate with online?
   1.2. In what ways do you find yourself being different from your usual self when you communicate online with speakers whose first language is English and those whose first language is not English?
2. Describe your perceptions of the use of English language for online intercultural communication, for example
   2.1. How do you feel about the English language use of your international friends?
   2.2. How do you feel about your own English language use?
   2.3. How would you describe your feelings about using English for online intercultural communication?
   2.4. What kinds of English should be used for online intercultural communication today?
   2.5. How does your online intercultural communication experience affect your perceptions of English for intercultural communication in today's world?
   2.6. Have you made any changes in yourself as a user of English as a result of your experience in online intercultural communication?
3. Express the benefits or problems of online intercultural communication, for example
   3.1. What do you learn from communicating online with your international friends?
   3.2. Do the characteristics of social networking sites (anonymity, absence of visual cues, etc.) facilitate intercultural communication and reduce distance and misunderstandings, or do they cause a great difference between cultures?
   3.3. Do social networking sites promote intercultural communication or not?
   3.4. Does a reduction in social context cues such as lack of facial expressions, gestures, voice intonations, appearance cause problems for mutual understanding and intelligibility in intercultural communication?
   3.5. Do you have any difficulties in communicating online with international friends?
   3.6. Do you find your international friends have difficulties with conveying their meanings in English? (what is the difficulty and how do your friends

deal with such difficulties? What strategies do you use to achieve understanding?)

3.7. According to your online international communication experience, what are the strengths and weaknesses of this communicative mode?

Appendix K Coded data from the first round of interviews

Coding	A	Bee	Dew	Namwan	Man	Ken	Kae	North	Mai	Pu	Yean	Jo	Pink	April	Aero
Cultural representation and cultural construction															
Posting photos	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Exchanging ideas												✓			
ICC															
Apply experiences/ knowledge from previous online communication to other online communication in the future	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Open minded about other cultures	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Coding	A	Bee	Dew	Namwan	Man	Ken	Kae	North	Mai	Pu	Yean	Jo	Pink	April	Aero
Develop understanding about other cultures	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Intercultural learning	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Perceptions of the use of English for online intercultural communication															
The use of English is different online and face-to-face					✓				✓	✓		✓			✓
Used British English online	✓						✓							✓	✓
Used American English online		✓									✓				
Used English in their own style			✓	✓		✓		✓				✓	✓		
Preferred British English	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Coding	A	Bee	Dew	Namwan	Man	Ken	Kae	North	Mai	Pu	Yean	Jo	Pink	April	Aero
Nation and language				✓		✓	✓								
Multimodal features	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Mixed Thai and English	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Appendix L Transcription convention

(.) Brief pausing in the talk of less than two-tenths of a second

= Latching between utterances

[Onset overlap

] Ended overlap

: Lengthened sounds

:: Exceptionally long sounds

- Word fragments

@ Laughter

they they, All repetitions of words and phrases (including self- interruptions for example and false starts) are transcribed.

Appendix M Example 1, the first round of interviews with Ken

M.1 Thai version

ผู้เข้าร่วมการสัมภาษณ์ K = Ken, C = Chittima (ผู้วิจัย)

1 C: โอเค เริ่มสัมภาษณ์กันเลยนะคะ อุ้มจะเริ่มถามคำถามในแบบสอบถามก่อน ดูจากคำตอบของพี่ K ในแบบสอบถาม แล้วก็จะตาม
2 ด้วยคำถามหลักๆของ interview รบกวนพี่ K ช่วยเล่าประสบการณ์การเรียนภาษาอังกฤษให้ฟังหน่อยได้มั้ยคะ
3 K: อืม ผมเริ่มเรียนภาษาอังกฤษตั้งแต่ประถมเลย ก็อย่างที่รู้กันอะนะว่าเด็กไทยเริ่มเรียนภาษาอังกฤษตั้งแต่เด็ก อย่างทุกวันนี้ก็เริ่ม
4 เรียนภาษาอังกฤษกันตั้งแต่ประมาณ 4 ขวบเนอะ ก็ภาษาอังกฤษเป็นวิชาหลักชั้นประถมแล้วก็มัธยม ผมเรียนสัปดาห์ละครั้ง แล้วก็
5 ตอนเรียนมหาลัยก็เรียนเฉพาะปี 1 ปี 2 เด็กวิศวะไงอย่างที่รู้ ภาษาอังกฤษก็เป็นวิชาพื้นฐานสำหรับเด็กปี 1 และปี 2 หลังจากนั้น
6 ผมก็ไม่ได้เรียนภาษาอังกฤษอีกเลย จนกระทั่งก่อนมาเรียนต่อป. เอก ผมก็ไปติว IELTS เพื่อที่จะเตรียมตัวสอบ IELTS แล้วก็มา
7 เรียนอีกทีนึงคือ pre-sessional course คือคะแนน IELTS ผมต่ำกว่าคะแนนที่คณะเค้าต้องการ
8 C: แล้วพี่ K เคยเรียนพิเศษภาษาอังกฤษบ้างมั้ยคะ สมัยชั้นประถม มัธยม คืออย่างที่กรุงเทพก็มีสถาบันสอนภาษาเยอะนะ
9 K: อืม ก็เคยเรียนที่ Siam Centre นะ ตอนสมัยอยู่มัธยม แต่ผมเรียนจาก วีดีโอ เพราะว่าสถาบันติวเนี้ยมีหลายสาขาทั่ว
10 กรุงเทพ อาจารย์เค้าก็เลยอัดวิดีโอไว้เพื่อสอนตามสาขาต่างๆ @ @ @
11 C: แล้วพี่เขมคิดว่ามีประโยชน์มั้ยคะ เรียนภาษาอังกฤษจากวิดีโอ
12 K: ก็มีนะ คือก็ได้เรื่องของแกรมม่า แล้วก็คำศัพท์ แต่ว่าผมไม่เคยได้ใช้ภาษาระหว่างเรียนเลย แล้วยิ่งพอมาอยู่ที่นี่ ก็รู้ว่าไอ้ที่เรียน
13 มาอะ เอาใช้จริงไม่ได้เท่าไหร่
14 C: พี่ K อยู่นี่มา 2 ถึง 3 ปีแล้วใช่มั้ยคะ จากแบบสอมถาม
15 K: ใช่ครับ
16 C: แล้ว พี่ K คิดว่าภาษาอังกฤษที่เรียนกับที่ใช้จริงในชิวิตประจำวันต่างกันยังไงคะ
17 K: โอะ จริงๆแล้วผมคิดว่าแกรมม่ามันไม่จะเป็นในการทำความเข้าใจซึ่งกันและกันนะ
18 C: อันนี้คือสำหรับสื่อสารกับเจ้าของภาษาหรือว่าคนที่ไม่ใช่เจ้าของภาษาคะ
19 K: ก็ทั้งสองอย่างอะครับคือผมสามารถสื่อสารได้สำเร็จโดยที่ไม่จำเป็นต้องใช้ให้ถูก grammar
20 C: แล้วประสบการณ์การใช้ภาษาอังกฤษออนไลน์ ของพี่ K เป็นไงบ้างคะ
21 K: ก็ผมก็มักจะคุยกับเพื่อนต่างชาติ 2 – 3 ครั้งต่อสัปดาห์
22 C: เป็นเพื่อน native หรือ non-native คะ
23 K: ส่วนใหญ่แล้วก็ non-native นะ ผมคุยกับเพื่อน native 2 – 3 ครั้งต่อเดือน
24 C: จากแบบสอบถาม พี่ K บอกว่าการใช้ภาษาอังกฤษออนไลน์และ ต่อหน้า ต่างกัน ต่างกันยังไงคะ ช่วยอธิบายหน่อย
25 K: ก็อย่างเคสคนไทย ผมว่าเค้าใช้คาราโอเกะกัน คือผสมกันระหว่างภาษาอังกฤษกับไทย แต่อย่างภาษาอังกฤษที่ใช้กันกับคน

ต่างชาติต่างภาษา อันนี้ก็ใช้ภาษาอังกฤษเป็นลื่อกลางในการสื่อสาร

C: แล้วภาษาอังกฤษที่ใช้ออนไลน์ต่างกับที่ใช้ต่อหน้ายังไงคะ

K: คือจริง ๆแล้วสำหรับผมก็ไม่ต่างนะ ออนไลน์กับต่อหน้าเนี่ย คือก็เหมือนว่าพูดยังไงเราก็อยากจะพิมพ์ไปอย่างนั้นคับ แต่ว่าสำหรับเด็กวัยรุ่นอย่างเงี้ย เค้าอาจจะมีต่างกันบ้าง เช่น ใช้คำย่อ 4U อย่างเงี้ย แต่สิ่งนึงที่ผมสังเกตได้คือการใช้ภาษาอังกฤษออนไลน์ทำให้ผมระวังเรื่องการใช้การใช้คำคือคำย่อ เช่น ผมจะใช้ 'hahaha' แทนที่จำใช้ '555' เพราะว่าเพื่อนต่างชาติผมไม่รู้ว่าคนไทยเรียกเลขห้าว่า 'five' เพราะฉะนั้น '555' แทนเสียงหัวเราะที่คนไทยใช้

C: พี่ K คิดว่าการสื่อสารออนไลน์ช่วยให้เรียนรู้ความเชื่อ ค่านิยมและพฤติกรรมใหม่ๆของเพื่อนชาวต่างชาติมั๊ยคะ

K: ครับ มีผลแน่นอน มันทำให้เราเปิดโลกทัศน์มากขึ้น เรารู้ว่า ไงคับ คนประเทศเค้าคิดยังไง คน ๆประเทศนี้เค้ามีความคิดยังไง แต่มันก็ต้องอยู่ที่ว่า เราสังเกตเค้าด้วยหรือเปล่า

C: พี่ K ช่วยยกตัวอย่างให้ฟังหน่อยได้มั๊ยคะ ว่าเรียนรู้อะไรบ้าง

K:อืม ก็อย่างหัวข้อการสนทนานะผมว่า ส่วนใหญ่เพื่อนชาวต่างชาติผมจะถามเกียวกับวัฒนธรรมไทย เช่น คนไทยนี่กินหมูรึเปล่า

C: แสดงว่าคนที่ถามเป็นอิสลาม

คือเค้าเหมือน เหมือนประเทศวัฒนธรรมการกิน อันนี้ยกตัวอย่างนะครับ เค้าจะมีอะไรของเค้าที่มันเป็นเมนอะ อย่างเช่น กินปลา กินเนื้อ แล้วเค้าก็จะถามว่ากินหมูรึเปล่า ตอนแรกเราก็จะงง ๆ ทำไมถามว่าเรากินหมูรึเปล่า แต่ว่าพอได้คุยออนไลน์มาก ๆเข้าก็รู้ว่าคนแต่ละประเทศเค้าก็จะกินอาหารต่าง ๆกัน

C: แล้วคนถามเค้ามาจากประเทศอะไรคะ

K: ฝรั่งเศสก็มี พวกแบบกรีกก็มี อย่างเพื่อนช่าวไซปรัสเค้าจะถามลักษณะเนี้ย ประเภท ยูกินปลารึเปล่า ไอ้สำหรับเรามันก็คือ เราก็กินทุกอย่าง แต่เค้ามันไม่ใช่ไง

C: พี่ K คิดว่าการสื่อสารออนไลน์เป็นช่องทางสำคัญที่ช่วยให้เราเรียนรู้วัฒนธรรมต่างชาติมั๊ยคะ ช่วยเปรียบเทียบกับการสื่อสารต่อหน้าหน่อยได้มั๊ย

K: ผมคิดว่าการสื่อสารออนไลน์สำคัญสำหรับการสื่อสารของเราในทุกวันนี้ เพราะว่ามันช่วยให้เราเข้าถึงข้อมูลทางวัฒนธรรมต่าง ๆ แล้วเราก็สามารถดูพวกรูปถ่าย วิดีโอแล้วก็ทำความเข้าใจวัฒนธรรมต่าง ๆได้ ถึงเราไม่ได้สื่อสารต่อหน้าเพราะปกติเราจะนัดพบกันเวลามีงาน เช่น มีประชุม มีสัมมนา อะไรอย่างเงี้ย เราก็จะไม่มีเวลามาคุยเรื่องวัฒนธรรมอะไรกัน

C: แล้วพี่ K คิดว่าสำคัญมั๊ยที่จะต้องเรียนรู้วัฒนธรรม ในแง่ของการสื่อสารออนไลน์นะคะ

K: จริง ๆแล้วรู้สึกว่าสำคัญนะคับ เราคือไม่จำเป็นต้องรู้ทั้งหมดอะคับ แต่ว่ารู้บ้างบางส่วน คืออย่างน้อยเราก็เพิ่ม หัวข้อการสนทนา มันเหมือนกับเป็นไกด์ไลน์ถูกมั๊ยคับ

C: ค่ะ

K: เราไม่สามารถไปถาม อย่างคำพูดที่เราพูดกับคนไทยด้วยกัน มันอาจจะฟังสุภาพในภาษาไทย แต่กับคนประเทศอื่นอาจจะไม่ใช่ =

C: =ค่ะ

K: อย่างเพื่อนเกาหลีผมก็บอกเหมือนกัน ก็บอกว่าเอะมีปัญหาเรื่องนี้ คือเค้า เค้าบอกว่าอยู่ประเทศเค้า พูดภาษาประเทศเค้าเนี่ย มันดูสุภาพมากเลยนะ แต่พอเค้ามาพูดเป็นอังกฤษเนี่ย มันทำให้ดูเค้าเป็นคนแบบก้าวร้าว เค้าบอกเค้า เค้าหนักใจกับตรงนี้มาก

C: เช่นอะไรอะ เค้าบอกมั๊ยคะ

K: อืม แบบเค้าถาม "ทำไมวะ" อะไรอย่างเนี้ย (.) อย่างยกตัวอย่างเช่น บอก ๆไม่ถูก ผมจำบทสนทนาไม่ได้ (.) เค้าจะพูดประมาณ

59 อย่างเนี้ยว่า อย่าง ๆวันนั้นคุยกันเรื่องแต่งงาน อะไรอย่างเนี้ย เค้าก็แซวมาว่า เนี่ยประเทศเค้าเนี่ย ผมก็บอกว่าผม ผมอะหมั้นแล้ว ยัง

60 ไม่ได้แต่งงาน เค้าก็บอกว่า เนี่ยประเทศเค้าเนี่ย หมั้นเนี่ยมันไม่เกี่ยวอะไรกันเลย อะไรประมาณเนี้ย คือแบบ (.)

61 C: เข้าใจค่ะ =

62 K: = อะไรประมาณนั้น ครับ

63 C: ค่ะ

64 K:คือผมว่ามันก็มี ช่องว่างระหว่างวัฒนธรรมอะ ถ้าเรารู้ว่าเราจะคุยอะไรกับเค้าก็น่าจะดี

65 C: แล้วทีนี้พี่ K สามารถนำความรู้ สิ่งที่เรียนรู้จากการสื่อสารออนไลน์ไปใช้กับการสื่อสารซึ่งหน้าได้มั้ยคะ

66 K: ได้ (.) แต่ยังไงอะครับ อืม สำหรับเนี่ยผมว่าสื่อสารออนไลน์กับต่อหน้าเนี่ย บางทีออนไลน์สำหรับผมเนี่ย มันมีข้อดีกว่า คือเราพิมพ์

67 ไม่ต้องเผชิญหน้า แล้วเรามีเวลาคิด เรามีเวลาแก้ได้ แต่อย่างเผชิญหน้าอย่างเนี้ย เราจะต้องตอบตอนนั้นอะ บางทีเราคิดไม่ทัน

68 C: แก้นี่คือแก้ในแง่ของภาษาหรือในแง่ของคำพูด

69 K: ก็ทั้งสองอย่าง แต่แก้ในแง่ของความหมายมากกว่า เช่นว่าคิดจะด่ามัน แต่ไม่เอาดีกว่า เพราะไม่แน่ใจว่าเค้าจะโกรธเรารึเปล่า อะไร

70 อย่างเนี้ย แต่สำหรับเพื่อนคนไทยนี่คือ เราด่ามัน มันก็ด่าเรากลับ ประมาณนี้ ผมไม่ค่อยแน่ใจกับเพื่อนชาวต่างชาติ อีกอย่างนึง คือผม

71 สามารถแก้ข้อความให้อ่านแล้วเข้าใจมากขึ้น

72 C: แล้วพี่ K ชอบสื่อสารกับเพื่อนต่างชาติทางไหนมากกว่าคะ ออนไลน์หรือต่อหน้า

73 K: อืม จริง ๆแล้วชอบทั้งสองนะ ผมสามารถเอาสิ่งที่เรียนรู้จากทั้งออนไลน์แล้วก็ต่อหน้ามาปรับใช้ด้วยกันได้ แต่ถ้าเลือก ก็เลือก

74 ออนไลน์นะ เพราะว่ามันถูกต้องมากกว่า

75 C: อันนี้ขึ้นอยู่กับวัตถุประสงค์มนการสื่อสารด้วยมั้ยคะ

76 K: ก็ด้วยนะ แต่ผมชอบออนไลน์มากกว่า เพราะบางทีคนก็ไม่เข้าใจว่าผมพูดอะไร @@@

77 C: @@@

78 K: อีกอย่าง ผมรู้สึกว่า (.) หรืออาจจะเป็นเฉพาะผม ไม่รู้นะ ผมไม่มีโครงสร้างในการเรียบเรียงเรื่องราว เพราะฉะนั้นเวลาเพื่อนให้

79 อธิบายงานวิจัย ผมต้องการขั้นตอนในการอธิบาย แล้วออนไลน์เนี่ยทำให้ผมมีเวลาคิดและสื่อสารข้อความหรือข้อมูลในคู่สนทนาผมได้

80 แต่ว่ามันไม่ใช

81 C: มันไม่ใช่เรื่องของภาษาอย่างเดียวนะตรงนี้ อุ้มว่า

82 K: ใช่ มันเป็นเรื่องของความคิดด้วย ผมต้องใช้เวลาคิดตอบคำถาม

83 C: พี่ K สื่อสารทางไหนมากกว่า ออนไลน์หรือต่อหน้า

84 K: ก็พอ ๆกันนะ สปกติจะใช้ภาษาอังกฤษทั้งออนไลน์และต่อหน้า

85 C: แล้วคู่สนทนาเป็นใครอะคะ

86 K: ก็เป็นเพื่อนกันนี้แหละครับ

87 C: พี่ K มีปัญหาอะไรมั้ยคะ ในการสื่อสารออนไลน์

88 K: ก็ไม่มีนะครับ เวลาสื่อสารกับเพื่อนต่างชาติก็จะพูดตรง ๆ เลี่ยงใช้สำนวน เพราะผมไม่มั่นในความหมาย

89 C: แล้ว พี่ K คิดว่ามันจำเป็นมั้ยคะที่ต้องใช้สำนวนกับเพื่อนต่างชาติ

90 K: ไม่นะผมว่า สำนวนเนี่ยยิ่งทำให้เกิดความเข้าใจผิดถ้าเราไม่รู้ความหมายมันจริง ๆแล้วก็ใช้ผิด ๆ

91 C: สรุปว่า พี่ K ไม่มีปัญหาอะไรในการสื่อสารออนไลน์กับเพื่อนชาวต่างชาตินะคะ

92 K: คือก็มีบ้างแหละ

93 C: แล้ว พี่ K แก้ปัญหายังไงคะ

94 K: ก็อธิบายไปเรื่อยๆจนกว่าเพื่อนจะเข้าใจ

95 C: เพื่อนมีขอให้อธิบายเพิ่มมั้ยคะ

96 K: ก็มีนะ ก็มี เช่น เค้าก็จะถามคำถามเพิ่มหรือไม่ก็ถามว่าคุณหมายความว่าอย่างนี้ใช่มั้ย

97 C: แล้ว พี่ K สื่อสารภาษาอังกฤษ ลักษณะ ประเภท ภาษาอังกฤษประเภทไหนที่ในการสื่อสารออนไลน์แล้วก็ต่อหน้า

98 K: จริงๆ ไม่แน่ใจ ไม่แน่ใจว่าเป็น British รึเปล่า แต่ว่าพยายามจะตามแบบ British เพราะว่าเราอยู่ที่นี่ อืม ทีนี้เราก็จะเริ่ม

99 เอาบทสนทนาไปค้นหาว่ามันมีอยู่จริงมั้ย @@@

100 C: ใน Google หรอคะ

101 K: ใช่ครับ อันนี้ก็ซุป ก็แนะนำมา โดยเฉพาะในการเขียน

102 C: พี่ K เช็คบทสนทนาหรือประโยคในการเขียนมั้ย

103 K: ทั้งสองอย่าง ถ้าสำหรับงานเขียน ก็จะเช็คในเว็บไซค์ co.uk ถ้าสำหรับการพูด ก็จะเช็คบทสนทนาทีหลัง ผมต้องการสื่อสาร

104 แบบ British English

105 C: ค่ะ

106 C: พี่ K คิดว่า ในอนาคตมันจะเป็นไปได้มั้ยที่จะมีภาษาอื่นที่ไม่ใช่ภาษาอังกฤษเป็นภาษากลางในการสื่อสารออนไลน์

107 K: ผมว่าแทบจะเป็นไปไม่ได้ เพราะเราติดใช้ภาษาอังกฤษกันไปแล้ว เราห้ามเทรนนี้ไม่ได้หรอก ภาษาอังกฤษไม่ได้เป็นภาษากลาง

108 เฉพาะของอินเตอร์เน็ต แต่ของโลกด้วย ถึงใครจะเคย claim บอกว่าภาษาจีนจะเป็นภาษาที่สองของโลกแทนภาษาอังกฤษ ผมว่า

109 มันเป็นไปไม่ได้ เพราะภาษาจีนใช้กันเฉพราะคนจีน ผมไม่คิดว่ามันจะมาแทนที่ภาษาอังกฤษได้

110 C: ค่ะ เสร็จแล้วค่ะ ขอบคุณมากค่ะ

M.2 English version

Participants: K = Ken, C = Chittima

1 C: Ok, shall we start the interview? I will start asking you some follow-up
2 questions from your answers in the online questionnaire and then the main
3 questions for this interview. Could you please tell me about your language
4 learning experiences?
5 K: Well, I started learning English when I was in the primary school. You
6 know, children in Thailand starts learning English at a very young age, say
7 they start learning the language when they are about 4 years old today.
8 English was a core subject in my primary and secondary education, so I
9 needed to learn it like once a week. I had continued learning English in my
10 undergraduate but only during my first and second year. As you know, I
11 was an Engineering student, so English was a foundational course for only

the first two years students. Since then, I stopped learning English until just before my PhD. I was returned to learn English, IELTs, in order to prepare myself for the IELTs exam. I also took a pre-sessional course here because my IELTs was below than English requirements of my Faculty.
C: Have you ever took extra English language course after school? I know there are lots of English tutoring institutions in Bangkok.
K: Umm, I used to learn once at Siam Centre when I was in my secondary school. But I learnt from a video, you know the institution I learnt had many branches around Bangkok. So, the teacher recorded his teaching in the videos and these were used for English language teaching in his different branches @@@
C: Did you find this useful, I mean learning English from the video?
K: Kind of, I would say I learnt a lot about grammar and vocabularies. However, I didn't have chance to practice using English during the lesson. And I found what I had learnt isn't well functional in real practices from my experiences of living here.
C: You have stayed in the UK for 2 to 3 years, haven't you according to the questionnaire?
K: Yes, that's right.
C: How are the differences between what you learnt and experiences of using English in your daily life?
K: Oh, well I found that grammar is not as necessary as mutual understanding in communication.
C: Is it with native and non-native English users?
K: Both, native English users do not always use English with grammatical correct. And I could communicate successfully although I didn't use grammatically correct English @@
C: What's about your experience of using English online?
K: I often use English online with my international friends 2-3 time a week.
C: Are they native or non-native English speakers?
K: Mostly, non-native English speakers. I communicate with native English speakers 2-3 times a month.
C: From the questionnaire, you said English used online and face-to-face is different. Can you please explain how they are different?
K: In the case of Thai English users online, I think they use 'Karaoke' language. Actually, it mixes between English and Thai. For English use between Thais and people from different first languages, English is of

course used in communication.
C: So, how your English use online is different from face-to-face?
K: Actually, for me I don't think I use English differently between online and face-to-face. Well, I mean I type what I would like to say. But for teenagers, there are perhaps some differences, such as using too many abbreviations "4U". One thing I have noticed from my online experience, using English online makes me aware to select a proper word or abbreviation. For example, I always use 'hahaha' rather than '555' because my friends from different countries do not know that '555' is pronounced as 'hahaha' in Thai, not 'five five five' and it sounds similar to our laughing@.
C: Do you think that online communication helps you to learn new beliefs, values and new kinds of behaviors from international people?
K: I think online communication (.) opens up my minds in that I know how people from other countries construct their ideas about different things. It, however, depends if I notice them or not.
C: Can you please give me some example of what have you learnt?
K: Umm, about topics of conversation I think. Mostly my international friends ask me about Thai culture. For example, do Thais eat pork?
C: Are they Muslim?
K: Well, they are from countries where there are the main kind of food, for example, fish or meat. I firstly quite confused when I was asked this kind of question, but my experiences of online conversation make me learn that people from different countries often consume different kinds of food.
C: Where are your friends, who asked you this kind of questions, from?
K: Well, France and Greece. One of my Cypriot friend asked me if I eat fish. For me, I eat everything, but they are not the same.
C: Do you think that online communication is an important mode which helps you to learn international culture(s)? Can you compare this with face-to-face communication?
K: I think online communication is very important to our communication today because it allows us to access lots of information about different cultures. We can also look at the pictures or videos and make sense about these different cultures. We can't see this from face-to-face communication because we often meet for a particular purpose, such as a meeting and a seminar. We won't have time to talk about this in detail.
C: Do you think is it necessary to learn and know culture for online

communication?
K: I think it is actually important. Well, we don't need to know everything but some would be good. At least, cultural knowledge would add topics of our conversation. It is a guideline, isn't it?
C: Ok
K: We can't really communicate with people from different countries as same as our communication with Thai people. It might be polite in Thais' perspectives but is perhaps opposite with people from other countries=
C: =Yeah
K: My Korean friend has the same problem. He said his Korean communication is very polite, but it sounds aggressive when he communicate the same but in English. He is very worried about this.
C: Did he give you any example?
K: Well, something like "why?" or (.) I can't really remember the dialogue. (.) Ah, for example, we talked about marriage. I told him I have engaged and he said the engagement doesn't matter in his country. It's nothing important. Fiancé and fiancée are still independent, I feel like (.)
C: I see=
K: =something like that you know.
C: Yeah
K: I think there are some gaps between cultures. So, it would be better if we have some knowledge about different cultures.
C: Can you apply your experiences online to your face-to-face communication?
K: Well, yeah (.) umm for me online communication is better than face-to-face communication because we don't have the face-threatening. We type our conversation and have more time to edit our messages. But for face-to-face communication, we need to respond immediately. Sometimes, we have no ideas about the answers.
C: What do you mean by edited messages? Do you mean online communication allows you more time to edit grammar or meanings of the messages?
K: Both, but more on meaning of the messages. For example, I wanted to curse my friend online but I decided not to do it because I wasn't sure if he would feel angry with me or not. With my Thai friends, we can curse our close friends and they can curse us back. I wasn't too sure about my friends from other countries. Also, I can edit my messages to be more

123 understandable.
124 C: Do you prefer to communicate in English with international people
125 online or face-to-face? Why?
126 K: Umm, I like both really. I can apply my experiences from both online
127 and face-to-face to each other. I have learnt how to communicate face-to-
128 face and apply it online, and vice versa. But if I choose, I would love online
129 communication because it is more accurate.
130 C: Does it depend on purpose of communication?
131 K: Yeah, but I like online communication more because sometimes people
132 do not understand my talk @@@
133 C: @@@
134 K: Also, I feel that (.) perhaps it's only me that I don't have a structure in
135 communication. So, when my friends want me to explain any research
136 point, I need a step in an explanation and online communication allows me
137 time to think and pass messages or information to my interlocutors.
138 C: So, it's not only about the language?
139 K: Yeah, it's also about an idea too. I need time to think about the
140 questions.
141 C: Which mediums do you communicate more between online and face-to-
142 face?
143 K: Well, quite similar. I often use English both online and face-to-face.
144 C: Who are your interlocutors online?
145 K: They are from my face-to-face contacts.
146 C: Do you have any problems/difficulties with online communication?
147 K: Umm, not really. When I communicate with my international
148 interlocutors, we convey our communicative meanings directly and avoid
149 using idioms because we are not too sure about the meanings.
150 C: Do you think is it necessary to use idioms with your international
151 friends?
152 K: No, not at all. Idioms would cause some misunderstandings if we don't
153 really know the meanings and use them wrong.
154 C: So, don't you have any problem in online communication with your
155 international friends at all?
156 K: Well, there are sometimes.
157 C: How do you cope with those problems/difficulties?
158 K: I keep explaining and my friends try to make an understanding.
159 C: Do they ask you for more clarification?

K: Yeah, yeah they do. They will ask me more questions or ask if I mean like this, for example.

C: What kinds of English do you use for online and face-to-face communication?

K: Honestly, I'm not sure if I use British English, but I try to follow British English because we are here. Umm, I also search my dialogues if these exist @@@

C: In Google?

K: That's right. My supervisor also suggests me to do this, especially in my writing.

C: Do you check your dialogues and/or sentences in writing?

K: Both writing and speaking. If it is for writing, I often check in the websites of co.uk. For speaking, I check it later after my conversation. I want to follow British English.

C: Ok.

C: Umm, do you think will another language become a medium language and is as important as English for online communication in the future?

K: I don't think so, because we have addicted English. English is the mean of the Internet. We can't stop this trend. It is the mean of not only online communication, but also the world. Although some people might think Chinese will become the mean of global communication, I don't think so because English has been used around the world for decades while Chinese has been used among mostly Chinese, so I don't think it can replace English.

C: Ok, that's it. Thank you very much.

Appendix N Example 2, Extract from transcription of the focus group

N.1 Thai version

(นาทีที่ 02:47 ถึงนาทีที่ 25:00 จากบทถอดความทั้งหมด 50:00)

ผู้เข้าร่วมการสัมภาษณ์ K1 = Ken, K2 = Kae, J = Jo, N = North, A = A and C = Chittima (ผู้วิจัย)

C: (.) ข้อ 1 นะคะ ช่วยเล่าประสบการณ์การสื่อสารออนไลน์ให้ฟังหน่อยค่ะ เช่น คุยกันว่าเราสื่อสารออนไลน์กับเพื่อนชาติไหนบ้าง แล้วก็เราพบว่าตัวเองเวลาสื่อสารออนไลน์มีความแตกต่างในการใช้ภาษาเวลาสื่อสารกับเจ้าของภาษาและเวลาสื่อสารกับคนที่เป็น ไม่ใช่เจ้าของภาษารึป่าว

J: เอ่อ เริ่มที่ผมก่อนนะครับ (.) ผมพักอยู่หอมหาลัย นะครับ (.) ก็จะได้อยู่ร่วมกับนักศึกษาชาวต่างชาติอยู่แล้วปกติ ส่วนใหญ่ถ้าคุยออนไลน์กับเพื่อนชาวต่างชาติ ก็จะคุยกับเพื่อน (.) ชาวมาเลเซีย จีน อังกฤษ อเมริกา เอ่อ หลายประเทศอ่ะนะ (.) ส่วนใหญ่ก็เป็นเพื่อนในห้องด้วย ตุรกี แม็กซิโก ซาอุดิอาระเบีย คูเวต พวกนี้มาหมดเลย ส่วนใหญ่เรื่องที่เราคุยกัน (.) เอ่อ จะเป็นเรื่องการเรียนมากกว่า ติดต่อเรื่องเรียน มีเอ่อ เรื่อง assignment ต่าง ๆ เรื่องโปรเจค บางทีก็มีเรื่อง group discussion อะไรพวกนี้อ่ะครับ ส่วนใหญ่ก็จะคุยกัน แต่ถ้าเป็นเพื่อนที่เราสนิทกันมาก ๆ บางทีก็คุยกันเรื่องส่วนตัว บางทีก็คุยกันเรื่องปัญหา ก็คุยกันปะปนกันไป แต่ถ้าคุยกับเพื่อนที่มหาลัยที่เป็น classmate ก็ส่วนใหญ่แล้วจะเป็นเรื่องเรียนมากกว่า แต่ถ้าเป็นเพื่อนที่หอและเป็นเพื่อนที่สนิทกัน ก็อาจจะคุยกันเรื่องส่วนตัวได้ง่ายขึ้น อะไรอย่างเนี้ยนะครับ (.) รู้สึกว่าภาษาอังกฤษที่ใช้กับเค้าไม่ค่อยจะมีความแตกต่างกันเท่าไหร่ เพราะรู้สึกว่า คือเราไม่ค่อยสนใจว่า จะพิมพ์ถูกหรือพิมพ์ผิด (.) ประเด็นคือว่าให้สื่อสารกันแล้วเข้าใจ ให้เคลียร์ประเด็นเท่านั้นเอง ฉะนั้นภาษาอังกฤษรู้สึกว่าที่เราใช้ทางเน็ต ที่ผมคุยกับเพื่อน จะรู้สึกว่า จะสั้นกว่า จะพยายามใช้คำที่แบบว่าชัดและกะทัดรัดให้มากที่สุด เพื่อที่จะประหยัดเวลาการพิมพ์ อะไรอย่างงี้ เพราะว่าบางทีถ้าเกิดมานั่งเสียเวลาการพิมพ์ มันค่อนข้างที่จะเยอะอยู่ดังนั้นผมค่อนข้างที่จะหาลักษณะพวกถ้อยคำที่แบบว่าเอ่อ ไม่มีความหมายคลุมเคลือ พิมพ์ปั๊บ คืออีกฝ่ายคืออ่านชัดเจนเลย ว่าเราหมายถึงอะไร โดยส่วนใหญ่จะอยู่ที่บริบท จะไม่เน้นพวกไวยากรณ์ คือจะไม่เกี่ยว คือเอาเป็นอันว่าสื่อสารกันแล้ว เข้าใจว่า สุดท้ายทุกคนเข้าใจไปในทางเดียวกัน ว่ามันคืออะไร คุยกันเรื่องอะไร

C: แล้วคนอื่นเป็นยังไงบ้างคะ

K2: ของ K2 ก็มีทั้ง native และก็ non-native แต่ว่าสิ่งที่เห็นได้ชัดระหว่าง เอ่อ ถ้าเป็นอเมริกัน กับ อังกฤษ เนี่ย อังกฤษจะพิมพ์เต็มประโยคเลย คือส่วนใหญ่จะไม่ย่อ ก็คือจะเป็น full grammar มาเลย แต่ถ้าอเมริกาจะใช้คำย่อเยอะ เช่น wonna gotta อะไรอย่างงี้อ่ะ จะเยอะ และก็จะใช้แสลงเยอะสำหรับอเมริกานะคะ ส่วนชาติอื่นก็จะปน ๆ ระหว่างอเมริกันกับอังกฤษ

J: =เหมือนกับว่า เราก็ไม่รู้ว่า ภาษาที่เราใช้ตอนนี้อ่ะ(.) เหมือนเวลาที่เราเรียนที่โรงเรียนอ่ะ (.) ที่มหาลัยบ้านเราอ่ะ เราไม่รู้ซ๊ะด้วยซ้ำว่าอาจารย์กำลังเค้า[สอน British หรือว่า American

K2: แต่] เราจะรู้แค่ว่า หนังสือนี่มาจากไหน

J: = ใช่ แล้วเราก็จะรู้แค่บางครั้ง (.) แบบว่า ถ้าเกิดอาจารย์ บอกว่า เห้ย คำนี้ ภาษาอังกฤษ British English ต้องแบบนี้นะ

25 American English ต้องแบบนี้นะ ก็จะรู้ประมาณนี้ แต่บางที พอเราถามอาจารย์ ว่ารูปแบบการสอนของอาจารย์เป็นแบบ
26 ไหนอ่ะ เค้ายังไม่รู้ตัวเองด้วยซ้ำเลย ว่าเค้าสอนแบบไหน อาจจะเป็น (.) ประสบการณ์ อาจจะเป็นส่วนนึง พอเราดูที่ policy ของบ้าน
27 เรา เค้าไม่ได้ดูว่า เค้าไม่ได้ดูว่า อาจารย์ต้องสอนแบบอังกฤษนะ อาจารย์ต้องสอนแบบอเมริกานะ แต่เค้าจะดูที่ content ของเนื้อหา
28 มากกว่า ว่าสอนเรื่องอะไร อาจารย์จะอังกฤษหรืออเมริกาเค้าไม่เกี่ยว
29 K2: =แล้วเหมือน non-native ใช่ไหมคะ ถ้าเพื่อนเป็น non-native พิมพ์มา ก็จะเป็นเหมือนในหนังสือที่เราเรียน (.)
30 เหมือน conversation หรือว่าประโยคอะไรจะประมาณนั้น แต่ถ้าเป็น native เค้าจะใช้ phrasal verb ซะเยอะ เรา
31 เรา ก็จะได้เรียนในส่วนของ phrasal verb จากคนอังกฤษ หรือว่า อเมริกา อะไรอย่างงี้
32 J: มันก็บ่งบอกถึงความเป็น native ของเค้าอ่ะนะ ความเป็น native ของเค้า ทำให้เค้าใช้ในภาษาได้ดีกว่า
33 K2: ก็เหมือนกับว่า local ก็คือ ส่วนใหญ่จะพูดสำนวน กับ phrasal verb แต่ถ้าเป็น non-native ก็จะตามหนังสือ
34 ตามอะไรอย่างเนี้ย
35 J: เพราะเห็นเพื่อนชาวต่างชาติที่มาจาก native พิมพ์เป็น phrasal verb หรือว่าคำศัพท์ยากๆเนี่ย ตัวเองรู้สึกไหมว่า เป็น
36 เพราะว่าเค้าเป็น native แล้วก็เราเป็น non-native เราก็เลยไม่ค่อยได้ใช้คำศัพท์ยากๆพวกนี้หรือปาว
37 K2: จริงๆแล้ว ตอนที่เราอยู่ เหมือนตอนที่เราอยู่ประเทศไทย เราก็จะเรียนแต่ในหนังสือ ซึ่งในหนังสือกับภาษาพูดจะไม่เหมือนกัน ก็
38 เหมือนกับภาษาไทย แต่พอเรามาอยู่ในสังคมที่เค้าใช้ภาษาในชีวิตประจำวัน เค้าก็จะใช้ภาษาพูดมากกว่าที่จะเป็นภาษาเขียน ในการ
39 สื่อสารอันนั้นจะเห็นได้ชัด
40 J: ใช่ภาษาเขียน ภาษาพูด ไม่เหมือนกัน
41 K2: อืม อย่างที่บอก ถ้าพิมพ์มากับคนอังกฤษ นี่เต็มประโยคมาเลย
42 N: ประสบการณ์ก็คล้ายๆ K2 เหมือนกันค่ะ คือมาเต็มรูปแบบ แต่คือ โดยส่วนใหญ่ใน class ก็จะเป็นจีน แล้วก็พวกตะวันออกกลาง
43 อย่าง ซาอุ ส่วนมากออนไลน์จะได้คุยกับเพื่อนจีนซะมากกว่า เพื่อน native มีนิดๆหน่อยๆ ไม่ค่อยเยอะ แล้วก็ภาษาที่เค้าใช้ ก็อย่าง
44 ที่ K2 บอก native ก็คือจะมาเต็ม แต่ว่าพวกจีนเค้าจะมี pattern ภาษาอังกฤษของเค้า ซึ่งบางครั้งเราอ่านเราก็ไม่รู้เรื่อง เราก็
45 จะพยายามย้ำอ่ะคะ ว่าอันนี้ที่ยูบอก มันอย่างงี้ใช่ไหม เออ เรา (.) ก็พยายาม (.) ใช้ให้ถูกต้องเวลาพิมพ์ออนไลน์ ก็ พอเราพิมพ์ปุ๊บเราเห็น
46 เราเห็น เราก็จะ อ้อ ! บางทีเรา ถ้าเกิดเราพูด เราไม่ได้พิมพ์ออนไลน์ เราก็จะรู้ อ๋อ .. เวลาเราพูด เราเคยพูดผิด มันก็เหมือนกับว่า เวลา
47 เห็น เวลาเราพิมพ์ออนไลน์เนี่ย เหมือนตรวจแกรมม่าตัวเอง แล้วก็จะเอาไปปรับเวลาเราพูดกับคนอื่นอย่างงี้อ่ะคะ
48 A: ของ A ก็เหมือนพี่ N (.) เวลาพิมพ์ออนไลน์ ก็จะพยายามเขียนให้ถูกต้อง เพื่อความเคยชิน เวลาพูด
49 C: แล้วพี่ K1 ล่ะคะ คิดยังไง
50 K1: เอาข้อ 1 ก่อนนะครับ ก็มีหลายชาติเหมือนกัน แม็กซิกัน อิตาเลียน ไซปรัส (.) ส่วนใหญ่เป็นยุโรป แล้วก็มีเอเชียเหมือนกัน ก็มี
51 เกาหลี ผมคิดว่าสไตล์การพูด สไตล์การใช้ภาษา พิมพ์ หรืออะไรก็ตาม มันจะคล้ายๆกัน
52 C: หมายถึงอะไรคะ
53 K1: ปกติเวลาผมพิมพ์ ก็คือ ไอที่พูดอ่ะ ผมก็จะพิมพ์ตามนั้น เพื่อนที่เป็นเอเชียเนี่ย สไตล์การพูดอะไรพวกนี้ มันก็คือวัฒนธรรมเอเชีย
54 ง้ย มันจะคล้ายๆกัน ส่วนคนที่เป็นยุโรป หรืออาจจะไม่ยุโรปก็ตาม ที่ใช่เป็น native English speaker เค้าก็จะมีสไตล์ของ
55 เค้า ก็แล้วแต่วัฒนธรรมของเค้า แต่คนพวกนี้ เมื่อไหร่ที่เค้าอยู่อังกฤษนาน สัก 7,8,10 ปี อะไรพวกนี้ เค้าก็จะเริ่มพูดคล้ายๆคน
56 อังกฤษ แล้วอย่างเพื่อนที่เป็นอิหร่านคนนึง อยู่มา 8 ถึง 9 ปีแล้ว คือวิธีการใช้มันก็เหมือนคนอังกฤษไปแล้ว
57 J: มันคุ้นเคยกับบริบทไปเลย อืม

K1: ผมว่าเวลาเป็นปัจจัยสำคัญแล้วก็ประสบการณ์ในการใช้ภาษา ผมกลับต่างกับที่ K2 กับพี่ N พูดมา เพราะเพื่อนผมใช้แต่ตัวย่อ

J: =เหมือนกัน คือ (.) ประเด็นใช้ตัวย่อ ผมว่าถ้าเกิดว่าเราสนิทกับเพื่อนคนนั้นเยอะ เราเข้าใจ background ของเค้าว่าเค้าเป็นยังไง คือการที่เค้าใช้ตัวย่ออาจจะบ่งบอกความที่เราสนิทกัน คือพอเราส่งปั๊บ คือเหมือนกับว่าเป็นสัญลักษณ์ว่าต่างคนต่างเข้าใจกัน ว่ามันคืออะไร

K1: แล้วบางทีกรูก็ไม่เข้าใจเมิง อย่าง before ก็ชอบพิมพ์ B แล้วก็เลข 4 คือพิมพ์แบบย่อหมด คือเราก็บางทีตามไม่ทัน

A: A ก็มี แต่ว่าคงชินไปแล้ว ไม่ได้สังเกตว่าเราใช้ตัวย่อหรือว่าตัวอะไร

J: เหมือนที่พี่ N บอกว่า คนจีนจะมี pattern ของเค้า อันนี้ เออใช่ เห็นด้วย

C: ยังไงคะ

J: เพราะว่าการเขียน pattern อะไรพวกนี้มันจะเป็นลักษณะการใช้เฉพาะกลุ่ม มันมีลักษณะว่ากลุ่มของคนจีนเค้าก็จะรู้ว่า สไตล์การเขียน pattern จีน สัญลักษณ์ที่เค้าจะใช้เป็นยังไง ซึ่งเค้าก็จะรู้เป็นภาษา pattern เฉพาะกลุ่ม ฉะนั้นถ้าเกิดว่าคนจีนไปใช้ pattern ตัวนี้ กับคนที่ไม่ใช่คนจีน ไอคนที่ไม่ใช่คนจีนก็จะไม่รู้เรื่อง แต่ว่าเค้าก็ใช้นะ แล้วเค้าค่อยอธิบายทีหลัง เพราะว่าเหมือนเค้าพิมพ์กับเรา เราไม่เข้าใจ pattern ของเค้า เราก็จะถามเค้าไปว่ามันคืออะไร แล้วเค้าก็จะอธิบายให้เราฟัง คือเหมือนที่ทำวิจัยมาตัวนึง เหมือนกับว่า pattern มันใช้ได้เฉพาะกลุ่ม มันไม่สามารถนำ pattern เฉพาะกลุ่ม ไปใช้กับ general ไม่ได้ มันต้องดูว่าคนที่สื่อสารกับเรา เค้าเข้าใจ pattern ของเราหรือปาว

C: แล้วทุกคนคิดว่า ภาษาอังกฤษที่ใช้ต่อหน้ากับออนไลน์มันเหมือนหรือต่างกันยังไงคะ เมื่อกี้เหมือนอย่างพี่ K1 บอกว่าสิ่งที่เราคิดว่าเราจะพูด ก็พิมพ์ไป ก็แสดงว่ามันก็คล้ายกัน

K1: ก็คล้ายกัน แต่เราคงมองว่าคล้ายกัน

C: แล้วสำหรับคนอื่นคิดยังไงคะ

K1: แต่เวลาพิมพ์เนี่ย มันมีเวลาคิด [ข้อความมากกว่า

J: ใช่ เห็นด้วย]

K1: เรามีแก้ด้วย เมื่อกี้พูดเหมือนด่ามัน เราก็ลบทิ้ง

J: แต่ว่าเวลาพูด face to face เราพูดผิดเราก็แก้ไขได้ ใช่มั๊ะ พูดผิดแก้ไขได้ อธิบายได้ดีกว่าด้วย ใช้ตัวอย่างคำศัพท์ได้ชัดเจนมากขึ้นด้วย สีหน้าท่าทางมันใช้ได้ แต่ว่าถ้าเราพิมพ์มันจะบ่งบอกหน้าตาไม่ได้เลยนะ

K1: =ก็ใส่ อีโมติคอน เข้าไปดิ

J: อืม คือถ้ามองถึงความต่างระหว่างการสื่อสารออนไลน์กับต่อหน้าอะ แต่คือเหมือนบางคนใส่อีโมติคอนเข้าไป ใช่มั๊ะ เวลาเราพิมพ์บ่งบอกถึงอารมณ์ แต่ว่ามันก็ไม่ได้บ่งบอกถึงอารมณ์จริงๆ บางคนใส่อิโมติคอนไปกำลัง sad แต่ตัวเองกำลัง happy คือมัน contrast กับสิ่งที่เกิดขึ้นจริง แต่ถ้าพูด face to face เนี่ย มันค่อนข้างที่จะชัดเจน ว่าคนนี้มี body language เป็นยังไง (.) คือปฏิกิริยาอารมณ์ สีหน้า ท่าทาง ของเค้าเนี่ย มันจะบ่งบอกน้ำเสียง อ่าใช่ น้ำเสียงก็สำคัญเพราะน้ำเสียงจะบ่งบอกถึงความรู้สึกของคู่สนทนาเรา (.) ว่าตอนนี้เค้าพอใจหรือไม่พอใจ แต่ว่าถ้าเราพิมพ์มันไม่ได้บ่งบอกว่าน้ำเสียงเป็นยังไง ฉะนั้นเราแทบที่จะเดาไม่ออกเลยว่า เค้าพิมพ์มาพอใจ แต่ว่าในใจเค้าพอใจหรือปาว มันจะบอกยาก ถูกมั๊ย

C: งั้นสิ่งที่กำลัง discuss อยู่ ลิ้งค์ไปยังข้อ 3 ข้ามไปคุยข้อ 3 ก่อนข้อ 2 ได้มั๊ยคะ อะไรคือข้อดีหรือปัญหาของการสื่อสารออนไลน์ ตามที่ J พูด ที่การสื่อสารออนไลน์ไม่สามารถแสดงความรู้สึกของผู้สนทนาได้ ไม่มีเสียงสูงต่ำ อันนี้คิดว่ามันเป็นข้อจำกัดในการสื่อสารต่างวัฒนธรรมไหมคะ

91 K2: เหมือนถ้าออนไลน์เราไม่แคร์มากไหมคะ เหมือนกับว่าความรู้สึกยังไง เพราะว่าส่วนใหญ่ภาษาที่เราต้องการสื่อแค่อยากให้เข้าใจ

92 J: =แต่ว่า มันก็ต้องดูว่าเราคุยกับใคร

93 K2: K2 คิดว่าการสื่อสารต่อหน้าอย่างงี้ มันเหมือนกับว่า มันต้องมีส่วนร่วม เหมือนอย่างนึง ถ้าเราพิมพ์ข้อความหรืออะไรด้วยความ

94 จำกัดหลายๆอย่าง ในเรื่องของจำนวนคำ หรือเรื่องของเวลา อะไรอย่างงี้ใช่ไหมคะ เราก็พยายามที่จะจับเอาใจความสำคัญ

95 J: ถ้ามองประเด็นที่เพื่อให้ต่างฝ่ายต่างสื่อสารกันให้เข้าใจ ผมมองว่าไม่ว่าจะเป็น face to face หรือว่า ออนไลน์ ผมก็ว่ามันน่าจะ

96 มีความสำคัญเท่ากัน เพราะว่า เมื่อใดที่สื่อสารกันผิด เอ่อ ผลที่ออกมาก็จะผิดตามไปด้วย ฉะนั้นไม่ว่าจะสื่อสารออนไลน์หรือว่าทางเฟสก็

97 ควรจะให้เคลียร์ จะใช้คำสั้นคำยาวแล้วแต่ จะอธิบายเพิ่มเติมหรือไม่ก็แล้วแต่ แต่ควรจะให้เคลียร์ว่าสุดท้ายแล้วทั้งสองฝ่ายมันเข้าใจ

98 เหมือนกัน

99 C: แล้วคนอื่นคิดยังไงคะ (.)คิดยังไงกับประเด็นนี้คะ

100 K1: ผมว่ามันไม่มีปัญหานะ ก็ใส่ยิ้มอะไรไปก็จบ

101 N: คือบางทีก็จะรู้สึกว่าพิมพ์หน่ะ คือเหมือนจะต้องคิดมากอีกนิดนึงอะ เพราะเค้าไม่รู้ว่าเราคิดไร คือ (.) พยายามจะให้เคลียร์ตัวเอง แล้ว

102 ก็พยายามให้เค้าเข้าใจถูก ไม่อยากให้เค้าอ่านแล้วรู้สึกว่าเข้าใจเราผิด เพราะว่าคำบางคำอะต้องคิดก่อน

103 J: เหมือนบางทีเรามีปัญหาเรื่องการใช้คำศัพท์รัยอย่างงี้ เรามีปัญหาเรื่องภาษา ภาษาเราไม่ดีอย่างงี้ คือบางทีสิ่งที่เราอยากจะถ่ายทอด

104 ออกไปกับสิ่งที่เราพิมพ์ออกไปเนี่ย มันคนละเรื่องกัน เอ่อ (.) บางทีเรานึกคำศัพท์ที่ตรงเป๊ะๆมาเลย ผมก็แก้ปัญหาโดยการอธิบายคำ (.)

105 แต่ผมว่าข้อดีของการคุย face-to-face คือ อืม คนมันไม่เหมือนกันใช่ไหมครับ คือ face to face มันไม่ดีสำหรับคนที่ไม่

106 กล้าที่จะแสดงออก ขี้อาย รัยอย่างงี้ ถ้าเค้าได้คุยทาง Facebook เค้าก็จะได้กล้าที่จะอธิบายความคิดเห็นและความรู้สึก ของเค้ามาก

107 ขึ้น เพราะว่าเค้าไม่ต้องไปยืนตรงนั้น ไม่ต้องไปแสดงสีหน้าท่าทางอะไรตรงนั้น อันนั้นจะเป็นข้อดีของการคุยออนไลน์มากกว่า

108 K1: อืม ถ้าอย่างการใช้ออนไลน์มีข้อดีอยู่อย่างนึง Google มันช่วยได้ 'Google' ช่วยได้@@@

109 C: ช่วย เช็คความหมายของการสื่อสารอะไรอย่างงี้หรอคะ

110 K1: อืม ไม่เชิงช่วยเช็ค ช่วยหลายๆอย่าง เช่น หาศัพท์ หาแหล่งอ้างอิง googling จากรูป อะไรอย่างเนี้ย

111 C: แล้วในแง่ของทางด้านภาษาอะคะ การคุยออนไลน์ช่วยในแง่ของการใช้ภาษาอังกฤษยังไง

112 K1: เพราะอย่างขนาดซุปผมเอง เค้าก็ยังบอกเลยว่า จะพูดหรือจะพิมพ์อะไรอย่างงี้ให้ลองเอา pharse ที่เราจะพูดหรือจะพิมพ์ใส่

113 เข้าไปใน google ดู ว่าดูดิ๊ ว่าในโลกนี้มันใช้กันหรือปาว ถ้าขึ้นมาประมาณแค่ 2 หน้า คงผิดแล้วล่ะ [@@@

114 J: ใช่ๆ] เคยทำนะ แบบว่าจะใช้ประโยคนี้ ใช้ยังไงวะ ก็พิมพ์ปั๊บ แล้วก๊อป ลงไปใน google เห้ยมันใช้กันนี่หว่า @@@

115 K1: ยิ่งสมมติถ้าเขียน (.) อันนี้อาจจะนอกเรื่อง (.) ในงานเขียน เขียน journal ก็ก๊อปปี้แปะใส่ Google แล้วก็ลองดูว่า มัน

116 เป็น .co.uk หรือปาว มันเป็นการคอนเฟิมว่าไอประโยคพวกนี้มันถูกใช้ในประเทศนี้ มันก็เป็นทริคที่เค้าให้มา

117 C: แล้วคิดว่าจากประสบการณ์ที่คุยออนไลน์กับเพื่อนต่างชาติ คิดว่าเพื่อนแต่ละชาติ แต่ละภาษา อย่างงี้ มีการใช้พวก อิโมติคอน อะไร

118 อย่างงี้ แตกต่างกันไหมคะ

119 J: ผมว่ามันขึ้นอยู่กับบุคลิกคน มันขึ้นอยู่กับ culture ของเค้า แต่มันจะมีmultiple กลาง ที่ทุกคนส่งปั๊บ ทุกคนเข้าใจ ไม่ว่าจะ

120 มาจากชาติไหน

121 K1: แต่มันจะมีบางอันที่เข้าใจผิดกัน อย่างเช่น พวกแลบลิ้น อะไรอย่างงี้อะ บางทีเราเหมือนเขิล ผมก็ใช้ P เพื่อโชว์ลิ้นและยิ้ แต่เพื่อน

122 บางคนไม่ได้เข้าใจแบบนั้น มันก็จะถามว่าไปหัวเราะมันทำไม เพราะหัวข้อการสนทนามันไม่ตลกนะอะไรอย่างงี้ (.) คือบางทีเนี่ยใน

123 วัฒนธรรมเรา ยิ้ม แสดงความรู้สึกหลายอย่าง เช่น แสดงความเป็นมิตร เฮฮา ขอบคุณ ขอโทษ แล้วก็ละอายใจ แต่เคาไม่ได้เข้าใจแบบ

นั้น=

J: อันนี้อาจจะต้องไปดูเรื่อง body language ของแต่ละประเทศ เพราว่าเหมือน body language ของแต่ละประเทศ เนี่ย ความหมายมันจะไม่เหมือนกัน เราทำแบบนี้ในประเทศเรา หมายความว่าแบบนี้ แต่ไม่ได้หมายความว่า เราทำแบบนี้ในประเทศคนอื่น จะมีความหมาย เหมือนประเทศเรา

K1: เหมือนคนไทยชอบหัวเราะ ... หัวเราะเวลาโดนว่า มันกลายเหมือนว่าเราไปหยาม[เค้า

J: อ่า ใช่ ใช่] มันจะไปดึงเรื่องวัฒนธรรมเข้ามาเกี่ยวข้อง

N: ก็โดนครูถามประจำอ่ะ คุณจะหัวเราะทำไมอ่ะ มันไม่ใช่เรื่องตลก @

K2: หัวเราะนี่คนไทยชอบพิมพ์ 555 ใช่ไหมคะ แล้วเพื่อนฝรั่งมันสนใจมาก โอ้ย อะไรเนี่ย เราตอบไป (.) เค้าก็ไม่รู้

C: เค้าไม่เคยใช้

K2: =ใช่ แล้วต่อไปแทนที่เค้าจะพิมพ์ 555 เค้าก็ hahaha และเค้าก็เอาของเราเนี่ยเอาไปใช้ด้วย เค้าว่ามันสั้นดี

C: อันนั้นที่ พี่ K1 บอก ชาติอะไรอะคะที่เคยเจอ

K1: ส่วนใหญ่จะเป็นกรีก ครับ ที่บอกว่าไม่ตลกอ่ะ

N: N คนไทยชอบยิ้มไปทุกเรื่อง @@

A: ของ A นี่ไม่เคยมีปัญหาเรื่องเข้าใจผิดแบบนี้

C: คิดว่าการคุยออนไลน์เนี่ย ช่วยให้เราเรียนรู้วัฒนธรรมต่างชาติมั๊ยคะ

K1: มันก็แน่นอนอ่ะครับ ภาษาอังกฤษเป็นภาษาสากล คุยกับใครรู้เรื่อง มันก็ได้เรียนรู้อยู่แล้ว แต่ในทางกลับกันมันกลายเป็นว่า เพื่อนมันจะมาถามวัฒนธรรมเรามากกว่า มันเป็นจุดเริ่มมากกว่า อาจจะโดยส่วนตัวนะครับ เราไม่ค่อยจะเริ่มถามมันหรอก อยู่แล้ว มันจะเริ่มมาแล้วยิ่งพอผ่านไปนาน ๆปุ๊บ เราก็เริ่มนิสัยสอดรู้สอนเห็น

K2: อย่างที่เห็นนะคะ ถ้าพวก native จะไม่ค่อยโพสต์รูป แต่ถ้าพวกเอเชียจะโพสต์รูปเยอะ

C: เอเชียนี่ชาติไหนบ้างคะ

K2: [คนไทยอ่ะ จะเยอะสุด

K1: โทษนะครับ] รูปอะไรอะ

K2: รูปทำกิจกรรมนู่นนี่อ่ะคะ ฝรั่งจะไม่ค่อยโพสต์รูปเลย แล้วก็จะไม่ Check-in แต่เพื่อน เหมือน อินโดนีเซีย ญี่ปุ่น ไทย รัยอย่างงี้ จะ check-in ตลอด เพราะเพื่อนอีกคนเค้าทำเรื่อง security บน facebook บน network research เค้าบอกว่า เค้าจะกลัว ว่ามันอันตราย แต่คนเอเชียไม่ค่อยจะสนใจ @

J: มันก็เคยมีข่าวนะ (.) ที่แบบว่า ผู้หญิงคนนี้เค้าสวย เค้าโพสต์ว่า เค้าอยู่ไหน ทำอะไร ทำกับใคร แล้วมีคนร้ายที่ติดตามเค้าทำอะไรที่ไม่ดีกับเค้า

K1: ต่างวัตถุประสงค์กัน คนไทย check-in เพราะว่า อยากบอกว่ากรูยังมีชีวิตอยู่ @@@ เพื่อนผมที่มาจากต่างวัฒนธรรมกันก็โพสต์รูป วีดีโอกันนะ

J: ก็จริงนะ คนไทยขาดเฟสบุ๊คไม่ได้ งานวิจัยออกมาแล้ว คนไทยส่วนใหญ่ตื่นขึ้นมาปั๊บเช็คมือถือทันที จริง ๆ มีงานวิจัยออกมาแล้ว

K2: แต่คนไทยเนี่ยใช้เฟสบุ๊คหลังประเทศอื่นหลายปีเหมือนกันนะ (.) ญี่ปุ่นแล้วก็ถึงจะมาไทย คือตอนนั้นอ่ะ ที่อยู่นิวซีแลนด์ ใช้เฟสบุ๊คแล้ว แต่เพื่อนยังไม่รู้จักว่าคืออะไร พอมันเข้ามาในไทย คนไทยก็ติด แต่จริง ๆแล้วอ่ะ ชาติอื่นที่เค้าใช้มา ๆ เค้าไม่ได้ใช้เหมือนวัฒนธรรมเราบ้าคลั่งเหมือนที่เราใช้

157 J: บ้านเราดวงอาทิตย์ขึ้น ก็ถ่ายรูปลง Facebook

158 C: จริงมั้ยคะทุกคน: จริง @@@

N.2 English version

(Minute 02:47 to 25:00 from 50:00 transcribed)

Participants: K1 = Ken, K2 = Kae, J = Jo, N = North, A = A and C = Chittima (researcher)

1 C: (.) Number 1, Share your experiences in online intercultural
2 communication, for example,
3 What are the nationalities of the people that you communicate with online?
4 In what ways do you find yourself being different from your usual self
5 when you communicate online with speakers whose first language is
6 English and those whose first language is not English?
7 J: Err, I can start first (.) I stayed at the university accommodation (.) with
8 umm international students. I communicate online with my international
9 friends (.) Malaysian, Chinese, British, American err so many different
10 countries. (.) Mostly with my classmates, such as Turkish, Mexican, Saudi
11 Arabians. We mostly talk about (.) err our study err assignments, projects.
12 We also talk about a group discussion sometimes. But for my online
13 communication with my very close friends, we sometimes talk about our
14 personal issues, problems, mix these together. But for with my classmates,
15 we we mostly talk about our study. But for with my friends at the
16 accommodation and we are very close, we feel more convenient to talk
17 about our personal issues. Something like that (.) I feel like using English
18 with my international friends is not different. Well, I don't care if I type right
19 or wrong (.) the point is our mutual understanding, to make the point
20 clear, that's it. Therefore, my English use online is rather short, concise
21 in order to save my typing time. I think I will waste my time if I type a
22 lot of information. I prefer to use very clear and concise statements.
23 My interlocutors can know and understand immediately my
24 communicative meanings. Mostly, I will focus on contents instead of
25 grammar. I want everyone understand in the same way about the
26 purposes and meanings of the communication.
27 C: What's about others?
28 K2: There are both native and non-native in my online conversation. It is

apparently noting that British always type full sentences while American use a lot of abbreviations, such as wanna, gotta and also slangs. People from other countries usually mix use between British and American English.
J: =It's a kind of we don't know that our English use (.) the same to what we learnt at the school (.) university in our home, we didn't even know that our teachers used British or American in their language [teaching
K2: But] we know that where our textbooks come from.
J: =Yeah yeah and we only know that (.) well if my teachers said hey this word can be written like this in British English or in American English. But sometimes when I asked my teachers if their teaching was British or American English, they didn't even know. It's probably because (.) the education policy in our country doesn't focus on British or American English. Instead, it focuses on contents.
K2: =And my non-native friends type their online conversation in a similar way to text books (.) But for native, they use a lot of phrasal verbs (.) I I can learn phrasal verbs from British or American.
J: It represents their native English identities. Their native English identities make them use English better.
K2: Like local people, they often use idioms and phrasal verbs. But for non-native, they use English like text books.
J: Is it because you feel phrasal verbs or some vocabularies are difficult to use and you don't want to use these because you are non-native?
K2: Actually, when I was in Thailand, I learnt English only in text books. In fact, English in text books and practices are different. It is the same thing to to Thai language. But when I'm living the society that English is used in daily life, I have found that people use speaking language more than written language in their communication.
J: Yes, written and speaking language are different.
K2: Well, like what I said British people often type in a full sentence.
N: I share quite similar experience to K2. They use a full complete sentence. My classmates are mostly Chinese and those from the Middle East, such as Saudi Arabia. So, I mostly communicate online with my Chinese friends. I have got only a few British friends and their language, like what K2 said, they often use a complete sentence. But Chinese, they have their pattern of using English which I don't understand sometimes. So I try to repeat is it what you mean. Err, I (.) try to (.) use English correct when I type it online. I can see ahh that's wrong. I can also recognize when I use English online

that I had used it wrong in my speaking. I mean I can check my English online and improve my face-to-face communication.
A: I agree with N (.) I try to type correctly when I communicate online in order to get use to with it and can apply it to my face-to-face communication.
C: What's about you K1?
K1: Let's see guideline 1, I communicate online with people from different countries. They are Mexican, Italian, Cypriot (.) mostly they are from Europe. I also chat online with my Asian friends. I think styles of speaking and using English online are similar.
C: What do you mean?
K1: Normally, I type what I want to say. It is similar to my speaking. My Asian friends share similar Asian conversation styles because it is Asian cultures. For European or non-European who are or are not native English speakers, they have their own styles. They have their own cultures. However, these people can speak similar to British people if they stay here for 7, 8 or 10 years. My Iranian friend, for example, he is here for 8 to 9 years and his English use is similar to British.
J: They get used to with the environment, umm.
K1: I think time is a relevant factor and also experience of the language use. I have different experiences from K2 and N because my international friends use a lot of abbreviations.
J: =Yeah I agree. Well (.) in terms of abbreviations, I think if we are very close to that interlocutors, we of course understand their background and we know the meanings of the abbreviations immediately. This is like a common signs between us.
K1: Sometime I don't understand them, for example, they type 'B4'. Every word is shortened and I cannot catch them up.
A: I have also found the use of abbreviations but I have got used to and don't even notice whether I use abbreviations or not.
J; It's like as N said Chinese had got their pattern in online communication. Err, I absolutely agree with it.
C: How?
J: Because writing, pattern these sorts of things are used in a particular group. It is, for example, Chinese people, they have their own writing pattern. They have their own signs. Only they who know these particular patterns. Therefore, when Chinese use these

patterns to anybody who are not Chinese, non-Chinese will not understand. Nevertheless, Chinese still use these patterns and later explain the meanings to their interlocutors. For example, they type their conversation, but I do not understand them, so I ask them a questions. They then explain the meanings to me. There is one research which reveals that a particular pattern can be used in a particular group, regarding to their language habits and/ or normal practices in communication. And these particular patterns cannot be applied to other communicative situations. We need to see if our interlocutors understand our patterns of communication.

C: Do you think English use online are the same or different as K1 mentioned earlier you type what you want to say in the same way to your speaking?

K1: I think they are similar.

C: What's about others?

K1: But online communication is more correct because we have time to think about our [messages.

J: Yeah yeah I agree]

K1: I also edit my message. For example, I delete my messages if I feel like I just blame my friends in the messages.

J: But we can also correct our talk in face-to-face communication. We can explain better and show our gestures. When we type; however, we can't express our feelings.

K1 =You can use emoticon.

J: Umm, I think this is a different point between online and face-to-face communication. You said that we can use emoticons, but I think these emotions can't express our true feelings sometimes. Some users add 'sad emoticon' in their online conversation but they are actually happy. This is contrast to the truth. But if we communicate face-to-face, we can see our interlocutors' feelings from their body languages. (.) Their gestures, emotions and voice can indicate the communicative meanings. Ahh, yeah the voice is important as it reveals the feelings of our interlocutors (.) if they are happy or not. We don't have a clue from text messages in online communication. It is difficult, isn't it?

C: Right, your point links to guideline number 3, can we skip to number 3 before your discussion on the guideline number 2. What are the benefits or problems of online intercultural communication? As what J is talking

about that online communication can't express feelings of the communicators. There is no voice err intonation. Do you think whether this is a limitation of online intercultural communication?
K2: I don't think we care about it, do we? I mean we don't care how our interlocutors feel about our conversation. We mainly aim to reach mutual understanding.
J: =But we need to see who we talk to.
K2: I think we need to participate in face-to-face communication. When we communicate online, however, there are some limitations in terms of time, word amount, something like that. So, we need to focus on only communicative meanings and purposes of our online communication.
J: If we consider mutual understanding, I think either face-to-face or online are both equally important because if we make mistake in our communication, it can cause misunderstanding. Therefore, we should make our communication as clear as we can, no matter using short or long sentences and explaining our communicative meanings in order to make mutual understanding.
C: What's about others (.) what do you think about this point?
K1: I don't think there are any problem. You just put a smiley emoticon and that's it.
N: Sometimes, I feel like I need to think how to communicate carefully because I don't know what is my interlocutors thinking. Well, (.) I mean I try to make my conversation clear and make my interlocutors understand me. I don't want them to misunderstand the conversations. I need to think about some words before I communicate.
J: Sometimes, I have some communicative problems, such as vocabulary or what I would like to express differ from what I type. Err (.), sometimes I cannot think of the exact words. I sort this kind of problem by explaining vocabularies (.) But I think one advantage of face-to-face communication is erm (.) different people have different preferences, right? Well, face-to-face is not good for a shy or unconfident person. But if they communicate on Facebook, they are more confident to express their ideas and feelings because they don't have a face-threatening. This is an advantage of online communication.
K1: Umm, I think another advantage of online communication is that 'Google' can help us @@@
C: Does it help you check your communicative meanings?

K1: Umm, not really. It can help me loads of things, for example checking vocabularies, searching references or googling by photos.
C: What does it help you in terms of language? How online communication support your use of English?
K1: Because my supervisor also suggests me to paste the phrase I want to use in Google and see if it is used in the world. If the information is popped up only two pages, that means it's wrong [@@@
J: Yeah, yeah] I have also ever done it. I was wondering how some words or phrases were used, so I copied these and pasted in Google and hey these worked @@@
K1: Particularly for my writing (.) sorry for being out of the topic of the discussion. (.) In my journal writing, I copied and pasted in Google. If the information is showed in the co.uk websites, it confirms me that these sentences are also used in this country. It's a trick I have been suggested.
C: From your experiences in online communication, are there any differences of using emoticons and/or abbreviation by people from different countries?
J: I think it depends on their personal characteristics and their cultures. But of course, there are also common emoticons which everyone knows.
K 1: But there are some emotions which can cause the misunderstanding. For example, the emoticon which shows our tongue, something like that, When I feel shy or embarrassed, I use P to show my tongue and smile. However, some of my friends do not understand my purposes of doing so. They ask me why I laugh at them because the topic of our conversation is not funny (.). Perhaps our cultures 'smile' conveys a range of meanings, including friendliness, amusement, thank you, apology and embarrassment, for instances. But they feel differently from me=
J: =I think we need to consider 'body language of each country. Body languages of each country have different meanings. We do these body languages in our country to show a particular meaning but it does not mean we can do the same with people from other countries. For them, these body languages might have different meanings from our countries.=
K1: =Thais like laughing, for examples, when they are blamed. It seems like we look down our [interlocutors.
J: Ah..yes yes] It involves cultures.
N: My tutors also always ask me why I laugh. It is not funny at all.@

K2: Laughing, Thais like typing '555' my 'farang' friends are so interested. When I told them (.) they have never heard about it before.
C: They never use it?=
K2: =yea, and after that they type '555' instead of 'hahaha' because they said it was short.
C: Which nationalities of your interlocutors, K1?
K1: They are from Greece, I mean those who said it wasn't funny.
N: I think Thais often smiling in any situation @@
A: For me, I have never experienced this kind of misunderstanding.
C: Do social network sites promote intercultural communication or not?
K1: Exactly, English is international language. If we can communicate and make mutual understanding, we can then learn. In contrast, my friends normally ask me about my cultures. This is the starting point. Personally, I do not normally start asking them, but later on I become being more curious and want to know about other cultures.
K2: As far as I see, native do not normally post photos, but Asia do it a lot.
C: Which Asian countries?
K2: Mostly [Thai
K1: Sorry], what kinds of photos?
K2: Photos of different activities. 'Farang' do not normally post photos and check-in. But my Indonesian, Japanese and Thai friends always check-in on Facebook all the time. One of my friend is conducting a research about the security on Facebook. He told me that it is dangerous of checking-in on Facebook but Asian people do not care about it@.
J: There was a news (.) a beautiful lady posted her current place, activity and person who was with her. And a bad person who followed her online made something bad with her.
K1: different purposes, I think. Thais check-in on Facebook because they want to tell others publicly that they are still alive @@@ People from other cultures from my online experiences, they also post photos, videos, etc.
J: That's true, Thai can't live without Facebook. This is shown in current research studies. Most Thai always check mobile phone at the first thing after they wake up (.) that's so true. There are research studies about it.
K2: But Thai people have started using Facebook after other countries for many years. (.) Japan and also Thai. At that time, I was in Newzeland and used Facebook already, but my friends in Thailand didn't know what was

it. When it came to Thailand, people are getting addicted to it. People in other countries don't use it as crazy as people in Thai culture.

J: For Thais, the sunrise is also taken a photo and posted on Facebook.

C: Is it true?

Everyone: Yes @@@

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