การวิเคราะห์งานเขียนเรื่องบุคคลต้นแบบของผู้เรียนภาษาอังกฤษเป็นภาษาต่างประเทศในระดับอุดมศึกษา
An Analysis of Role Models in Thai EFL Undergraduate Students' Writing

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บทคัดย่อ

การมีบุคคลต้นแบบมีประโยชน์ในหลาย ๆ ด้าน เช่น ช่วยให้เราสังเกตและเลียนแบบพฤติกรรมที่ต้องการทำตาม ช่วยให้แนวปฏิบัติที่จะช่วยเอื้อให้เราบรรลุเป้าหมายหรือประสบความสำเร็จได้เร็วขึ้นและในบางครั้งก็ช่วยให้เราหลีกเลี่ยงในสิ่งที่ไม่ควรทำซึ่งอาจนำไปสู่ความล้มเหลวหรือผลลัพธ์ที่ไม่น่าพึงประสงค์ แน่นอนว่าบุคคลต้นแบบมีอิทธิพลทางทัศนคติ ค่านิยม และพฤติกรรมของวัยรุ่นไม่ทางใดก็ทางหนึ่ง นอกจากนี้ลักษณะนิสัยของบุคคลต้นแบบยังช่วยส่งเสริมให้วัยรุ่นต้องการทำความดีและมีน้ำใจต่อผู้อื่น ดังนั้นการมีบุคคลต้นแบบจึงเป็นสิ่งสำคัญสำหรับนักศึกษา อย่างไรก็ตามงานวิจัยเรื่องบุคคลต้นแบบของวัยรุ่นไทย โดยเฉพาะนักศึกษาผู้ที่กำลังจะก้าวไปสู่การทำงานยังมีค่อนข้างน้อยอยู่ ดังนั้นเพื่อให้เข้าใจเรื่องบุคคลต้นแบบในสภาพปัจจุบันงานวิจัยชิ้นนี้จึงมีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อสำรวจประเภทของบุคคลต้นแบบที่ผู้เรียนคนไทยที่เรียนภาษาอังกฤษเป็นภาษาต่างประเทศถือเป็นแบบอย่าง พร้อมทั้งวิเคราะห์หาเหตุผลของความชื่นชมนั้นผ่านงานเขียนบันทึกของนักศึกษาจำนวนทั้งหมด 66 ชิ้น จากนักศึกษาสามกลุ่ม ซึ่งประกอบไปด้วย กลุ่มที่ 1 จำนวน 25 คน (เอกภาษา

อังกฤษ) กลุ่มที่ 2 จำนวน 22 คน (โทภาษาอังกฤษ) และกลุ่มที่ 3 จำนวน 19 คน
(เอกอื่นที่ไม่ใช่สายภาษา) ผู้วิจัยได้ใช้เทคนิคการวิเคราะห์เนื้อหา (Content Analysis)
ในการวิเคราะห์งานเขียนของผู้เรียนสามกลุ่มในงานวิจัยชิ้นนี้ ผลการวิจัยพบว่า ในภาพ
รวมนักศึกษาไทยมีความหลากหลายในการเลือกบุคคลต้นแบบและมักจะเลือกบุคคล
ต้นแบบที่รู้จัก (51.5%, *n* = 34) มากกว่าบุคคลอื่นที่รู้จักผ่านสื่อ (48.5%, *n* = 32)
แต่ประเภทของบุคคลต้นแบบที่ถูกกล่าวถึงมากที่สุด คือ บุคคลสาธารณะ (36.4%)
บิดามารดา (30.2%) และคนรู้จักอื่น ๆ (21.2%) ตามลำดับ และพบว่า เหตุผลในการ
เลือกบุคคลต้นแบบส่วนใหญ่ คือมีความเป็นมนุษย์เอื้ออารี (26.3%) บุคลิกที่มีความ
มุ่งมั่นทุ่มเท (22.9%) และการประสบความสำเร็จในบทบาทนั้น ๆ (19.4%) นอกเหนือจาก
การมุ่งหาบุคคลต้นแบบของนักศึกษาเป็นอันดับแรกแล้ว ผลการวิจัยนี้อาจมีประโยชน์
ในแง่เชิงนโยบายในการสร้างคุณลักษณะที่พึงประสงค์ให้กับบุคคลในองค์กรโดยการ
มีตัวอย่างบุคคลต้นแบบให้เรียนรู้และปฏิบัติตามเพื่อว่า จะได้ช่วยให้กลุ่มบุคคลนั้น ๆ
บรรลุวัตถุประสงค์ได้ง่ายหรือเร็วขึ้นอีกทั้งงานวิจัยชิ้นนี้อาจเป็นประโยชน์สำหรับ
การสอนเขียนภาษาอังกฤษเป็นภาษาต่างประเทศในแง่การเปิดโอกาสให้ผู้เรียนที่ได้
ฝึกเขียนบันทึกเพื่อเพิ่มความคล่องในการเขียนและส่งเสริมการค้นพบตนเองไป
พร้อม ๆ กัน

คำสำคัญ: การเขียนบันทึก, บุคคลต้นแบบ, การเรียนภาษาอังกฤษเป็นภาษา
ต่างประเทศนักศึกษา

Abstract

Having role models can benefit us in numerous ways, i.e. allowing us to observe and emulate the behavior of others we wish to acquire; providing us with significant guidelines on what we should do or follow in order to help us to achieve goals or to succeed in life more quickly; and on occasion, helping us avoid inappropriate behavior which may lead to failure or bad consequences. To a certain extent, role models can influence adolescents' attitudes, values, and behavior. The characters of role models can even have a great impact on young people, encouraging them to do good deeds worldwide and be kind to other people. Thus, it is important for university students to have role models. However, the exploration of role models among Thai adolescents, especially Thai undergraduate students who are going to step into the world of work, has received relatively scant attention. In order to understand the current situation with regard to having a role model among Thai undergraduate students, which could possibly lead to appropriately preparing them for their future careers, this present study aims to fill this gap by exploring the role models of Thai EFL undergraduate students and the reasons for the role model selections through 66 journal entries by students from three independent groups: 25 from Group 1 (English majors), 22 from Group 2 (English minors), and 19 from Group 3 (other non-language majors). Quantitative methods of content analysis were performed in this study. Overall, the empirical findings from this study clearly revealed that role models expressed in Thai EFL undergraduate students' journals varied and tended to be those students knew personally (51.5%, $n = 34$) more than those from the media (48.5%, $n = 32$); however, the most admired role models were actually media figures (36.4%), followed by parents (30.2%) and others known personally (21.2%), respectively. In addition, the most frequent reasons for role model selection were humanity (26.3%), strong

personality (22.9%), and professional success (19.4%), respectively.Apart from the primary focus of role model selection addressed in students' journals, this study may have also yielded some important implications for a policy on constructing particular desirable characteristics of target people in the community by providing them with role models to follow, which may help individuals achieve expected goals easily or more quickly. Furthermore, this study might benefit EFL writing instruction in terms of incorporating journal writing in L2 writing classes to increase students' writing fluency and encourage self-discovery

Keywords: journal writing, role model, EFL, undergraduate

Introduction

        This research paper was initiated in the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) context, where the English language is not the official language and students are not often exposed to it outside the classroom. Consequently, it became apparent that EFL student writers employ their English writing skills only for academic or professional purposes, and, quite often, some may not have to write in English outside the classroom (Richards, 2015; Weigle, 2013). In this study, data were drawn from real written texts composed by Thai EFL undergraduate students enrolled in the paragraph writing courses of a large university located in the northeast of Thailand, in 2018. These student writers were required to write 12 entries of a weekly journal throughout the semester. Journal writing was used as well as writing assignments in the writing class to provide sufficient opportunities for EFL students to practice English writing skills.

        Journal writing is deemed expressive writing due to the way that the writers have freedom to explore their thoughts and feelings freely in that piece of writing. The expressivist camp views written work as discovery in a creative manner (Elbow, 1998; Hyland, 2009). Expressivism echoes the belief that expressive writing helps encourage the writer to project a voice which is original, unique and interesting. In fact, journal writing may serve as a path of self-discovery for many writers (Elbow, 1998; Johns, 1997; Pfeiffer & Sivasubramaniam, 2016), while it can be another successful tool to help the writers enhance their writing skills, for both L1 or L2 writers (Kirby & Crovitz, 2013; Kosaka, 2016). Moreover, journal writing also encourages students to engage in their own writing and can positively promote students' writing fluency (Ferris, 2012; Johns, 1997). According to the account of Kosaka (2016), an author who was an L2 student writer kept writing journals and found that she could enhance her English writing skills – composing lengthier entries with more

accuracy and detail – and increasingly enjoyed writing in English and producing many more types of writing.

Undoubtedly, journal writing has increasingly become an alternative tool in both L1 and L2 writing instruction (Johns, 1997). Ferris (2012) suggests that writing teachers should provide two types of writing tasks: formal and informal tasks. Journal writing is an alternative to informal writing assignments which can develop fluency. Such assignments do not instill fear in the students due to their lack of evaluation (Ferris, 2012). Moreover, teachers should provide opportunities for students to write on a wide range of topics, both personal and nonpersonal (Weigle, 2013).

Kirby and Crovitz (2013) suggest a wide range of practices that teachers can use in journal assignments. For example, some teachers may ask students to write a page a day or an entry a week. Some may expect students to compose a ten-minute journal entry at the beginning of the class, whereas some teachers may allow students to explore their ideas and write at home. Thus, in this study, student journalswere collected weekly, and were not scored in terms of linguistic accuracy but completeness and punctuality. Student writers could sometimes choose their own topics of interest, but sometimes they were asked to write in response to the topic the teachers had assigned in order that they could examine current phenomena and be encouraged to explore social issues more. The starting point of this research study was here in the writing classes in the EFL context. The writing samples were drawn from journal entries responding to the question, "Who is your role model?"

Role Models

Role models are central to this present study because there is a substantial body of research on role models related to a variety of issues, such as professional development (Gibson, 2003; Ivaldi, 2013; McWilliams, 2007), public figures as role models (Ilić, Blažanin, & Mojović, 2017), influenced behavior (Johnson, Buckingham, Morris, & Suzuki, Weiner, Hershberg, . . . Lerner, 2016), and health care (Jopp, Jung, Damarin, Mirpuri, & Spini, 2017). However, scant attention has been paid to the identification of role models among Thai adolescents, especially Thai undergraduate students who are going to step into the world of work or onto a career path in the very near future. In order to understand the current situation with regard to having a role model among Thai undergraduate students, which could possibly lead to appropriately preparing them for their future careers, this present study aims to fill this gap by exploring the role models of Thai EFL undergraduate students and the reasons for the role model selections through their journal entries. Reflections on role models help reveal how these undergraduate writers form their identities and clarify what characteristics of role models they admire.

Having a role model is crucially important in many contexts, e.g. educational and occupational contexts (Jopp et al., 2017). Role models are commonly perceived as exemplary persons whose behavior can be emulated by others; moreover, how role models look and how well they carry out their duties also have a positive impact (Sollerhed, 2008). Role models have a positive impact on academic motivation and performance, career selection, and health care (Jopp et.al., 2017). Role models are often construed as adults who adolescents look up to and wish to be like; therefore, role models can influence adolescents' attitudes, values, and behavior (Hurd, Wittrup, & Zimmerman, 2018). The research asserts that the characters of role models can have a great

impact on young people, encouraging them to do good deeds worldwide and be kind to other people(Johnson et al., 2016). Young people can look up to these role models as examples of how to behave and treat other people.

The use of the term *role model* varies in the literature as well as in everyday life. This is because the term is loosely defined and thus used in different ways. In fact, there has been no consensus on the definition of *role model* (Hurd et al., 2018) because it has been defined in various different ways. For example, some researchers have substituted *mentor* for *role model* in certain contexts, and vice versa. (Hurd et al., 2018). For example, role models refer to people who exemplify the type of success that is achievable, and often also exhibit a pattern of behavior that is required to reach this level of success (Lockwood, 2006).

With regard to role model selection, people often have multiple role models instead of only selecting a perfect model (Jopp et al., 2017). Gibson (2004)supports this point by stating that individuals seem to combine various attributes to create the ideal self. Obviously, this is in line with the notion of identity in whichindividuals do not only have one identity but multiple identities (Verhoeven, Poorthuis, & Volman, 2019). From the perspective of social learning theory, role models can positively help others acquire morality and observe other types of behavior (Brown, & Treviño, 2014). Previous research on role models was performed by Ilić, Blažanin, and Mojović (2017), who explored public figures as role models of Serbian adolescents. In this study,1404 students from both primary and secondary schools in five Serbian towns were provided with a questionnaire which was aimed at classifying adolescents' idols, revealing reasons for idol admiration, and testing the relationship between idol preference and the adolescents' sociodemographic features. The findings highlighted the fact that public figures from show business had become the

most popular, and one new category (entrepreneurs) together with a subcategory (YouTubers and bloggers) had emerged in the new classification of role models. In addition, the adolescents deemed the professional success of public figures the most valued characteristic. Another study on role models was conducted by Johnson et al. (2016); they analyzed whom young people selected as role models, reasons for choosing them, and how young people related to their CRMs.

To conclude, the term *role model* can vary considerably according to the purpose of a particular study or a particular context. Having role models can benefit us in numerous ways. For example, we can observe and imitate the behavior of others, which can provide significant guidelines on what we should do or follow in order to help us to achieve goals or to succeed in life (Gergely, 2014). In turn, observing role models' behaviors also helps us avoid inappropriate behavior which may lead to failure or bad consequences (Gergely, 2014). Yet, as earlier mentioned, examination of role models in Thailand has received relatively sparse attention from researchers, educators, or even teachers. In particular, research on role models among Thai university students has been surprisingly limited. Generally, aspects of cultural identity such as tastes, inclinations, beliefs, or values of others may not be easily or "directly observable," but practices and texts of others can be observed (Joseph, 2013, p. 3). As a result, in this present study, the written texts in Thai EFL students' journals were closely examined in order to identify role models students admired, which helped disclose the undergraduates' reasons for role model selection in conjunction with the revelation of their beliefs, values, or any actualities of a social or cultural nature through their written journals.

Objectives of This Study

This study was designed to investigate (1) Thai undergraduate students' role models and (2) the reasons for the Thai undergraduate students' choices of role models. This study makes a first attempt to identify who could be a role model for Thai EFL undergraduate students and what attributes of the role models these students admire or wish to acquire.

Method

Quantitative methods of content analysis were used in this study so as to examine the role models of Thai EFL student writers expressed through their written journal entries. Content analysis has an advantage in that it allows the researcher to analyze written samples for the frequency or occurrence of specifics or events (Bordens & Abbott, 2014). Thus, the employment of content analysiswas helpful for the researcher to systematically assign the occurrences of reasons for role model selection and accurately analyze the data. Indeed, content analysis is a rich method which allowed the researcher to perform in-depth investigation. This study was performed in two steps. In the first step, the researcher identified the role models Thai EFL student writers admired through their written journal entries. In the second step, the researcher analyzed the reasons for role model selection by adapting the framework from the previous research of Ilić, Blažanin, and Mojović (2017) which classified role model selection into ten categories: (1) professional success, (2) physical appearance, (3) strong personality, (4) wealth, (5) humanity, (6) intelligence, (7) communicativeness, (8) desirable profession , (9) fame, and (10) social power. However, after the pilot study, the researcher found that one category might not be related to the reasons students had given in this study. The researcher, thus, decided to remove that category (9. desirable profession).

Besides, two more categories had emerged from the coding data – attitude *(has a good or positive attitude)*and maturity (*mature, calm*). Thus, there were 11 major categories of reasons for role model selection: (1) professional success, (2) physical appearance, (3) strong personality, (4) wealth, (5) humanity, (6) intelligence, (7) communicativeness, (8) fame, (*9)* social power, (10) attitude, and (11) maturity.

1. The Data Source

Here, the researcher specifically focused on the investigation of the role models of Thai EFL university students in journal entries. Thus, the research data were drawn from journal entries composed by three groups of Thai EFL student writers enrolled in a paragraph writing course of a large university located in the northeast of Thailand. The three groups of Thai undergraduate students provided 66 writing samples of journal entries: 25 journal entries from Group 1 (English majors), 22 from Group 2 (English minors), and 19 from Group 3 (other non-language majors). These three independent groups were purposively selected because the student writers were from different majors; as a result, they might hold different views on the same subject and might yield some interesting results.These writing samples were considered as authentic written texts since they occurred naturally and were found in a real EFL educational context at the university level in 2018.

2. Data Collection

In order to answer the two research questions related to the exploration of role models expressed by Thai EFL student writers in their journals, the researcher collected data derived from 66 journal entries which responded to the question, "Who is your role model?" The responses to this question resulted from real situations in daily life. These 66 writing samples of

journal entries were drawn from three independent groups of students enrolled in paragraph writing classes.

   3.   Data Analysis

      As mentioned in the previous section, quantitative methods of content analysis were conducted in this present study. In order to discover answers to the first research question ("Who is your role model?"), the researcher scrutinized the role models of Thai EFL undergraduates articulated through their written journal entries. In the first step, the researcher conducted a pilot study in order to check if the categories of role model suitably fit with the obtained research data. Therefore, the researcher initially adapted some of the ideas in coding role models from the work of Anderson, Huston, Schmitt, Linebarger, and Wright (2001) and Jopp et al., 2017), in which role models were classified into seven types: (1) parents, (2) others known personally, (3) media figures, (4) artists, (5) sport stars, (6) leaders/ politicians, and (7) businessmen. The researcher then attempted to carefully encode students' written texts into the assigned categories.

      In the next step, the researcher took a closer look at the categorized data, carefully reading and looking for reasons why the students had selected the role models in their journals,in order to answer to the second research question ("What are the reasons why students selected their role models?"). The researcher had to sort the statements from the writing samples regarding reasons for role model selection into nine categories, which had been adapted from the previous research of Ilić, Blažanin, and Mojović (2017). Performing content analysis in this study helped provide insights into how EFL student writers made their role model selection. The researcher specifically looked at the reasons student writers had addressed in their journals. However, as pre-viously stated, one category from the original framework which might not be

related to the reasons students had given in this study was removed, and two more categories– attitude *(has a good or positive attitude)*and maturity (*mature, calm*) were included. Thus, there were 11 major categories of reasons for role model selection in this study: (1) professional success, (2) physical appearance, (3) strong personality, (4) wealth, (5) humanity, (6) intelligence, (7) communicativeness, (8) fame, (*9)* social power, (10) attitude, and (11) maturity.

Results

In this study, emphasis was placed on surveying desirable role models and the characteristics that Thai undergraduate students looked for and admired. This section reveals the results of the content analysis of 66 writing samples of journal entries in response to the two main research questions in this study.

1. Research Question 1

Who are the role models for Thai EFL university students?

In order to discover the answers to Research Question 1, a total of 66 writing samples of students' journal entries from three groups: Group 1 (English majors, *n* = 25), Group 2 (English minors, *n* = 22), and Group 3 (other non-language majors, *n* = 19) were analyzed by adapting the coding schemes for role model types from the empirical research by Anderson et al. (2001) in conjunction with the framework from the study by Jopp et al. (2017). Therefore, in this study, all writing samples were coded and analyzed within the seven major categories of role model types: (1) parents, (2) others known personally, (3) media figures, (4) artists, (5) sport stars, (6) leaders/ politicians, and (7) businessmen. The first two major categories were those who students knew from their everyday lives or have physical contact with, i.e. parents, grandparents,

relatives, siblings, teachers, upper-classmates, and friends, while the major categories 3-7 were those from the media.In addition, there were subcategories in each category, as presented in Table 1. Interestingly, a new subcategory of English tutor emerged under the major category of (3) Media figures.
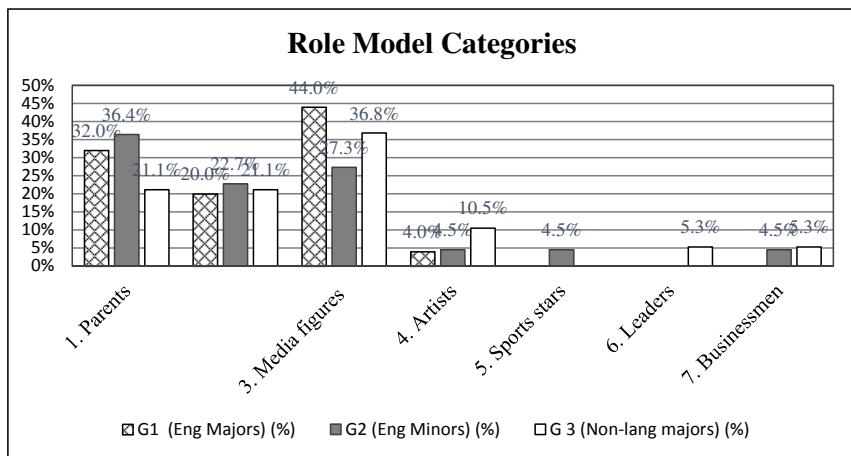

Figure 1 Frequency (Percentage)of Seven Types of Role Models (Total Sample: *N*= 66)

Overall, the empirical findings from this study in Figure 1 clearly illustrate that the most frequently chosen role model by students in both Group 1 and Group 3 was not parents (G1= 32%; G3 = 21.1%) but media figures (G1 = 44%; G3 = 36.8%). In sharp contrast, the most common role models selected by student writers in Group 2 were parents (36.4%), media figures (27.3%), and othersknown personally (22.7%), respectively. Surprisingly, it appears that sports stars and leaders received very little attention from the student writers in this study. Another interesting point drawn from the data is that one new

subcategory (English tutor) arose since the same English tutor (8%) was nominated by two student writers in Group 1, who are English majors, as illustrated in Table 1.

Table 1 *Frequency (Percentage)of Specific Types of Role Models in Each Group*

Categories	Subcategories	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3
1. Parents	1.1 Mother	20.0	31.8	10.5
	1.2 Father	12.0	4.5	10.5
2. Others known personally	2.1 Grandmother/ Grandfather	4.0	4.5	5.3
		4.0	0.0	0.0
	2.2 Relative	4.0	4.5	5.3
	2.3 Sibling	0.0	9.1	10.5
	2.4 Teacher	8.0	0.0	0.0
	2.5 Upper-classmate	0.0	4.5	0.0
	2.6 Friend			
3. Media figures	3.1 Actor/ Actress (Thai)	8.0	4.5	15.8
	3.2 Actor/ Actress (Foreign)	12.0	4.5	5.3
	3.3 Singer (Thai)	8.0	4.5	0.0
	3.4 Singer (Foreign)	4.0	9.1	10.5
	3.5 TV host	4.0	0.0	5.3
	3.6 Movie character	0.0	4.5	0.0
	3.7 English tutor	8.0	0.0	0.0
4. Artists	4.1 Painter	4.0	0.0	0.0
	4.2 Author	0.0	4.5	5.3
	4.3 Manga creator	0.0	0.0	5.3
5. Sports stars	Football player	0.0	4.5	0.0
6. Leaders/ Politicians	Mahatma Gandhi	0.0	0.0	5.3
7. Businessmen	Business owner	0.0	4.5	5.3

Table 1 shows a comparison of role model choices identified in undergraduate writing samples from three groups. When taking a close look at the detailed data of role model types as presented in the above table, we clearly see that student writers made a variety of role model choices; role models were nominated in most subcategories except categories 5-7. However, mother was the most frequently chosen role model in both Groups 1 (20%) and 2 (31.8%), while Thai actor and actress was identified as the most frequently chosen role model in Group 3 (15.8%). The second-most frequently chosen role model type in Group 1 was foreign actor and actress (12%), whereas in Group 2 they were teacher (9.1%) and foreign singer (9.1%). Unlike in Groups 1 and 2, where a second-most frequently chosen role model was clearly defined, other role models selected by students in Group 3 were rather varied: mother, father, teacher, and foreign singer (10.5%). However, it is important to note that overall, although the role model choices tended to be those who the students knew personally (major Categories 1 and 2 = 51.5%, *n* = 34) rather than those from the media (major Categories 3-7 = 48.5%, *n* = 32), the difference between the two was still small. That is, role model choice really goes beyond the categories of parent and others known personally, depending on who the student writers are looking up to at the moment of writing this journal entry.

2. **Research Question 2**

What are the reasons for Thai EFL student writers' role model selection?

In order to find out the answers to Research Question 2, writing samples of all students in the three groups were carefully reread and analyzed by employing the coding schemes for reasons for role model selection adapted from the previous research of Ilić, Blažanin, and Mojović (2017). After adding two new categories of reasons for role model selection, all together, there were 11 major categories of reasons for role model selection: (1) professional

success, (2) physical appearance, (3) strong personality, (4) wealth, (5) humanity, (6) intelligence, (7) communicativeness, (8) fame, (*9*) social power, (10) attitude, and (11) maturity, as illustrated in Table 2.

Table 2 *Categories of Reasons for Role Model Selection of the Three Groups (Percentage)*

Categories of Reasons for Role Model Selection	Group 1 (%)	Group 2 (%)	Group 3 (%)	Examples of Students' Excerpts
1. Professional success (*successful, good at what they do, responsible*)	26.8	13.2	15.5	She gradually becomes *successful* from her next role. (G1_RM11)
2. Physical appearance (*beautiful, attractive, good-looking, gorgeous*)	4.2	5.4	1.8	I really like her because she is a little *cute* girl, a *smiley* person and also her face is like a *lovely* doll. (G1_RM21)

Categories of Reasons for Role Model Selection	Group 1 (%)	Group 2 (%)	Group 3 (%)	Examples of Students' Excerpts
3. Strong personality (*determined, hardworking, persevering, dedicated*)	22.6	29.5	15.5	My mother always *strong*. She is the *strongest* person I have every known. (G1_RM01)
4. Wealth (*earns a lot, rich*)	0.0	0.8	0.0	He was also philanthropist, he gave his money out about 350 millions to charities, foundation and university. (G2_RM43)
5. Humanity (*gives money to the poor, cares for others, respects others, generous*)	25.0	26.4	28.2	Finally, he was so thoughtful. He cared about his friends, and he would do anything to support them. (G2_RM45)
6. Intelligence (*clever, gifted, perspicacious, smart, creative*)	8.9	10.9	12.7	He is an *intelligent* guy. He can speak several different languages, such as French, Spanish, Ancient Greek and Italian. (G1_RM10)
7. Communicativeness (*funny, likeable, amusing, cheerful*)	4.8	3.9	4.5	She is smart, kind, *funny, lively* and *friendly*, that makes her so pretty. (G1_RM11)
8. Fame (*famous, everybody knows him/her*)	3.6	0.8	5.5	Generally, she has been *well-known* as Elle Fanning. (G1_RM02)
9. Social power (*influential, has power*)	0.6	0.0	2.7	A *powerful* one in my opinion. She always put her all of her heart in every works she have done. (G1_RM 07)
10. Attitude (*has a good or positive attitude*)	3.0	7.0	6.4	…. he is an optimistic person because he always thinks positive about the problems around him. (G2_RM40)
11. Maturity (*mature, calm*)	0.6	2.3	7.3	She's a calm person that makes me feel curious how she can put up with any problems around her. (G2_RM39)

Table 2 illustrates the 11 main categories for role model selection accompanied by examples of excerpts from the students' written products, and it also presents a comparison of the reasons given by the three groups. The most frequent reasons given for role model selection of each group were quite similar. To elaborate in more detail, Group 1 most frequently pointed out professional success (26.8%) as the reason for selecting a role model; Group 2 most frequently addressed both strong personality (29.5%); and Group 3 most frequently identified humanity (28.2%). In fact, the attributes of (5) humanity, (3) strong personality, and (1) professional success were also seen among the top three reasons why student writers had chosen a role model.

Discussion

1. Types of Role Model

Drawing from the empirical findings from this study in Table 1, it is clearly seen that that the choices of role models made by student writers were varied. However, there were some slight differences among the three groups in overall role model selection. That is, the most admired role models by students in both Groups 1 and 3 were media figures (G1 = 44%; G3 = 36.8%), while the most common role models selected by student writers in Group 2 were parents (36.4%).Obviously, the role model choices of Group 1 and 3 went beyond parents to media figures. This confirms the studies of Anderson et al. (2001) and Johnson et al. (2016). The first possible explanation for this phenomenon is that in this era, undergraduate students are exposed to mass media and social networks; as a result, this can certainly contribute to a student's choice of who to admire, both in a direct or indirect way (Hurd et. al., 2018). Furthermore, Anderson et al. (2001) assert that adolescents not only admire people in the media in terms of how they behave, how they look and how they live their lives,

but also compare themselves to those role models. Consequently, adolescents may hope to emulate and try to be more like the media role models they admire. In addition, based on observational learning and cultivation theories, it can be concluded that youths will regard the standards depicted by the media as indicative of wider global values, especially with regard to those in entertainment television who look physically attractive, or rich (Anderson, Huston, Schmitt, Linebarger, & Wright, 2001).

Furthermore, consistent with findings from previous research by Gergely (2014) and Wohlford, Lochman, and Barry (2004), the overall results of the role model selection made by students in this study revealed that students tended to choose those who they know from their everyday lives or have physical contact with, i.e. parents, grandparents, relatives, siblings, teachers, upper-classmates, and friends, more than those from the media. This finding from the present study affirms the work of Jopp et al.(2017) in that mothers were selected more often than fathers. However, apart from parents, many student writers chose other people who were important or had played a role in the students' positive development, such as grandparents, older sisters, upper-classmates, or friends. This finding is similar to that from the work of Johnson et al. (2016).

Furthermore, another two interesting points from this present study are worth addressing. First, two journals in Group 1 – English majors – identified an English tutor as their role model. That is because the role model selection is obviously linked to who students wished to be like or what desired quality students looked for in their selected role models. In this case, the student writers might have taken the stance of an English language learner while writing this journal, so language learner identity certainly comes into play. Below is an example of a student's excerpt:

"Since study English make me clear about my picture in the future, about what I am going to do for living, and English can make me get the job ….I try to study English in many different ways until I knew one of the very good program show about English learning. The show is called "English room" by lively tutor named Pee Louk Golf … he always encourage English learners not to be afraid of using English …. his show always energizes me to speak English fearlessly and believe more in myself … I desire to be like him" G1_RM03

Second, sport stars, leaders, and businessmen received rather little attention in this study. Perhaps, this is similar to the findings of Gergely (2014), who mentioned that individuals often choose a role model who is more authentic for them.

2. Reasons for Role Model Selection

On the basis of the current results, it can be seen that humanity, strong personality, and professional success are particularly important for the undergraduate students' role model selection. It is certain that when individuals look up to role models, those role models are often the ones who are hardworking, dedicated or successful in the aspects of life students wish to be involved in. For example, in this study, one student writer chose a football player for his/ her role model; however, s/he admired that football player for his perseverance. He had to deal with many challenges to become successful, but he never gave up on the goals he wanted to achieve. His examples of dedication and perseverance encouraged this student writer to be a fighter like his/ her admired football player. Here is the student's excerpt: ….

"…he always breaks the records. Because of training, Cristiano is a fighter.He never gives up no matter what people says, or thinks of him. He believes that your love makes me strong, your hate makes me unstoppable."(G2_RM42)

More importantly, humanity is one of the most frequently mentioned reasons in all three groups and is among the top three reasons. This reflects one of the basic needs (Maslow, 1970) of human beings. In general, we want love and affection. Therefore, in turn, we often admire those who are generous, not selfish, care about others, help others in need, or at least do something else for others. For example, based on the findings from this study, two wealthy businessmen were among the choices of role model in 66 journal entries (n = 2). The first one, a billionaire in United States of America, was chosen by a student writer in Group 2 (English minors), while the other one, one of the top 10 richest people in Thailand, was selected by a student writer in Group 3 (non-language major). Surprisingly, these two student writers clearly stated that they did not choose their model for his wealth but for his humanity, especially in giving social support. The student in Group 2 wrote, "*What I've admired him so much wasn't about money he made, he was also philanthropist, he gave his money out about 350 million to charities, foundation and university*" (G2_RM 43).

Conclusion

From the empirical findings from this study, it can be seen that a variety of role models were addressed in student writers' journals. That is because it is common that individuals have different desires, interests, and goals in life. In addition, individuals do not have only one identity but multifaceted ones. Indeed, individuals have multiple identities. The student writers in this study wrote in a wide range of identities: as a daughter/ son, as a sister/ brother, as a university student, as a lower-/ upper-classmate, as a language learner, as a Thai, or as an ordinary person. The student writers' identities depended on what role theyhad positioned themselves in while composing this journal

entry to respond the question, "Who is your role model?" If at the moment of producing the piece of writing, they viewed themselves as a daughter or brother, they might have chosen their parents as their role models. However, if they had positioned themselves as a language learner, they might have chosen someone who inspired them to improve their language skills as their role models.

Tremendous empirical research on role models confirms that having a role model hasa noticeable positive impact directly on individuals, such as inspiring short-term or long-term goal achievement, or academic or career success. As a consequence, the results from this study can be linked to constructing the preferred character traits or distinguished character of people in that particular community, e.g. in the faculty, university, or country, with the importance of promoting good role models. In other words, in order to help people in the community take ona particular identity faster, that community should provide both the process people are engaged in and the role models whose example people can follow.

In addition, we should promote local role models to our younger students or to groups with a common bond more often so that they can learn the ideas the role models are trying to convey and see the good examples they are trying to set. It is suggested that we should invite those role models to the community on occasions like festivals and events, or share the real stories of the role models (Gergely, 2014). Without promotion to the public or appearances in the media, these local/ good role models may not be knownby people in the community.Lastly, this paper suggests implications for the teaching of L2 writing, in that writing teachers should incorporate journal writing into their L2 writing classes since some EFL student writers may hardly write in English outside the classroom (Richards, 2015; Weigle, 2013). Journal writing not only

helps students engage in L2 writing but also invites students' self-discovery – constructing identity through the process of composing their journals. Journal writing provides students with ample opportunities to practice writing, to look into themselves, and build their identity at the same time. As a result, the researcher would like to put emphasis on journal writing assignments in L2 writing classrooms.

Limitations

Initially, this study was important in terms of making known which role models Thai EFL students tend to choose and which characteristics of those role models they wish to acquire. Exploration on role models among undergraduate students helps complete this important jigsaw. Yet, analyses of role models in this study were based on a rather small number of samples: 66 journal entries. Therefore, the results cannot be generalized. In order to achieve generalization, more writing samples should be collected and multiple sources – data triangulation – should be used. For example, the interview may be considered an adjunct to data collection for future research in order to confirm primary data and gain more insight. Furthermore, the researcher might examine if the students' age, gender or ethics, or other related factors, have any influence on the choice of role model or have a significant correlation to the role model selection.

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