อภิสัมพันธสารในงานเขียนภาษาอังกฤษเชิงธุรกิจของนักศึกษาไทยที่ใช้ภาษาอังกฤษเป็นภาษาต่างประเทศ
METADISCOURSE IN BUSINESS ENGLISH WRITING OF THAI EFL UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

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บทคัดย่อ

งานวิจัยชิ้นนี้เป็นการวิเคราะห์สัมพันธสาร โดยมีจุดประสงค์เพื่อวิเคราะห์การใช้อภิสัมพันธสารในงาน เขียนภาษาอังกฤษเชิงธุรกิจของนักศึกษาชาวไทยที่ใช้ภาษาอังกฤษเป็นภาษาต่างประเทศ ข้อมูลคืองานเขียนที่ได้จาก การเขียนแผนธุรกิจ จำนวน 21 ชิ้น จากนักศึกษาสาขาภาษาอังกฤษธุรกิจ 35 คน ในงานเขียนประกอบไปด้วย 2,248 รายการ ที่ได้จากประโยค วลี หัวข้อ และกราฟข้อมูล ซึ่งรวมเป็นจำนวนทั้งหมด 18,975 คำ ข้อมูลทั้งหมด วิเคราะห์โดยใช้โมเดลการวิเคราะห์อภิสัมพันธสารโดยไฮแลนด์ ซึ่งแบ่งออกเป็นสองหมวดหมู่คือ หมวดหมู่ตัวบ่งชี้ ภาษาเชิงปฏิสัมพันธ์ และหมวดหมู่การใช้ภาษาเชิงปฏิสัมพันธ์ มีการนำความถี่และอัตราร้อยละมาใช้สำรวจจำนวนและ แปลความหมายอภิสัมพันธสารในแต่ละหมวดหมู่ ผลการวิจัยพบว่ามีการใช้ตัวบ่งชี้ภาษาเชิงปฏิสัมพันธ์มากกว่า การใช้ภาษาเชิงปฏิสัมพันธ์ สำหรับหมวดหมู่ตัวบ่งชี้ภาษาเชิงปฏิสัมพันธ์พบ Transitions มากที่สุด ตามด้วย Code Glosses, Frame Markers, Endophoric Markers และ Evidentials ตามลำดับ สำหรับหมวดหมู่การใช้ภาษาเชิง ปฏิสัมพันธ์พบ Engagement Markers มากที่สุด ตามด้วย Self-mentions, Hedges, Boosters และ Attitude Markers ตามลำดับ อย่างไรก็ตามเมื่อพิจารณาการใช้อภิสัมพันธสารกับข้อมูลทั้ง 18,975 คำ พบว่ามีการใช้อภิสัมพันธสาร เป็นจำนวนน้อยมาก ซึ่งในหมวดหมู่ตัวบ่งชี้ภาษาเชิงปฏิสัมพันธ์ใช้ร้อยละ 7 ส่วนหมวดหมู่การใช้ภาษาเชิงปฏิสัมพันธ์ พบการใช้เพียงร้อยละ 5 เท่านั้น ดังนั้น จากผลการศึกษาจึงสะท้อนให้เห็นว่าอภิสัมพันธสารเป็นสิ่งที่ควรได้รับ ความสนใจมากขึ้นในชั้นเรียนภาษาอังกฤษเป็นภาษาต่างประเทศของนักศึกษาชาวไทย

คำสำคัญ: อภิสัมพันธสาร, การเขียนภาษาอังกฤษเชิงธุรกิจ, ภาษาอังกฤษเป็นภาษาต่างประเทศ, การวิเคราะห์ สัมพันธสาร

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ABSTRACT

This study is a discourse analysis that attempts to investigate the use of metadiscourse in the English business writings of Thai EFL undergraduates. Data is the written text of 21 business plans of 35 Thai EFL students from business English program. The writing contains 2,248 items from sentences, phrases, topics, and graphs and a total of 18,975 words were gathered from the entire statement. They were analyzed by applying Hyland's metadiscourse model which divided functions into interactive resources and interactional resources. Frequency and percentage were also used to explore the occurrence of metadiscourse and applied as a tool in interpreting data. The results reveal that interactive resources were used more frequently than interactional resources. For interactive resources, it was found that transitions were applied most often, followed by code glosses, frame markers, endophoric markers, and evidentials. For interactional resources, it was found that engagement markers were applied most often, followed by self-mentions, hedges, boosters, and attitude markers. However, when considering the use of metadiscourse with a total of 18,975 words, it was found that metadiscourse was applied on a small scale in which interactive resources were applied 7 percent and interactional resources were applied only 5 percent. Consequently, the results of the study indeed reflect that metadiscourse needs to be more concerned in Thai EFL classrooms.

KEYWORDS: Metadiscourse, English Business Writing, EFL Students, Discourse Analysis

Introduction

In the 21st century with the digital era, although English takes a major role as a tool for both professional and academic purposes, learning English in Thailand is an EFL context where English is primarily used in the classroom and, in most occasions, is not applied in daily life activities. This factor consequently influences a large number of Thai students learning English difficultly, especially in writing skills as it has shown in various EFL context research about developing learners' writing expertise (Fujioka, 2001; Chaisiri, 2010; Wongwichai and Tachom, 2020; Pongsukvajchakul, 2021). That is because when English is not used as the official language in Thailand, the need or opportunity to use it for the purpose of writing is even more limited or less than listening and speaking, and thereby writing skills are one of the challenging skills for Thai learners. As Wongwichai and Tachom (2020) state that international companies in Thailand have been increasing, and students at the university level must prepare themselves to be successful candidates in applying for a job. Good knowledge of business writing must be required. Khruawan, Khaourai, Sangthakeong, and Chanpermpoonpaul (2021) also insisted that it is essential to improve students' business writing skills since the predictable time of written communication in each company is 30%, accordingly to be successful in professional work could rely on it.

Since Thai EFL students always encounter limitations in English communication and writing skills occupy a prominent place in their job opportunities, facilitators inevitably provide suitable tools for purpose of designing business-related courses. Meanwhile, many scholars affirm that metadiscourse is a beneficial linguistic device for writing. Hyland (2005) claimed that it is a crucial feature of communication for the reason that writers can evaluate audiences' interpretation and their response to the specific text as well as can construct their argument effectively. The scholar also clarifies that metadiscourse is a self-reflective linguistics expression referring to improving the writing ability of writers in dealing with the imagined audiences of that specific piece of writing. Crismore and Farnsworth (1990) noted that metadiscourse can guide audiences throughout a certain text by assisting them better understand the text including the author's point of view. Crismore, Markkanen, and Steffensen (1993) stated that metadiscourse is the linguistic material that performs in both spoken and written text to achieve linguistic functions, it assists audiences shape, interpreting, and assessing the particular information. Cheng and Steffensen (1996) stated that metadiscourse is closely related to writing quality. They believed that metadiscourse creates that text more cooperative toward audiences and reinforces the ideational, interpersonal, and textual meaning of the writings. Hyland (1998) refers to metadiscourse, based on a view of writing as a social communication between writers and audiences, as a feature of the text that forms discourse, grasping audiences to pay attention and also expressing the writer's viewpoint and their communicative meaning. Moreover, Hyland (2017) stated that metadiscourse is an extensive and useful technical term in the area of discourse analysis and language teaching study and the term become the leading study in academic writing since there are hundreds of articles and postgraduate theses which applied metadiscourse in their studies each year.

The term 'metadiscourse' refers to a discourse that involves not only the sharing information between participants, but also the use of personality and attitudes in both spoken and written language. By describing how people plan themselves in the discourse, metadiscourse also provides a paradigm for comprehending social
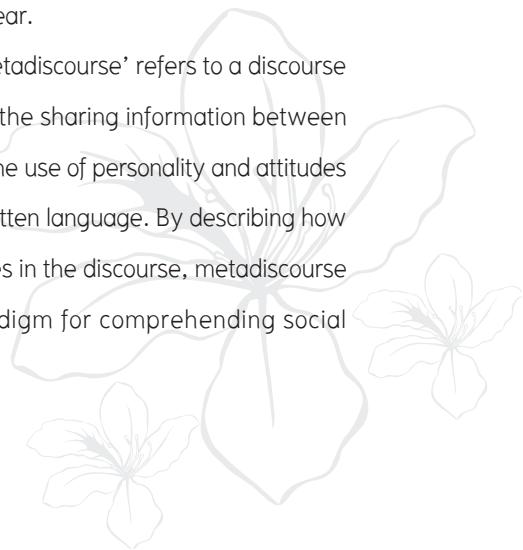
interaction (Hyland, 2005).

Formerly, Williams (1981) defined metadiscourse as 'writing about writing' and classifies written metadiscourse into three common forms; 1) hedges and emphatics; 2) sequencers and topicalizer; and 3) narrators and attributors. Crismore (1983) categorized written metadiscourse into two general groups: informational and attitudinal. The first group consists of goals, pre-plans, postplans, and topicalizers. The second group consists of saliency, emphatics, hedges, and evaluatives. Vande Kopple (1985) called metadiscourse 'discourse about discourse' or communication about communication and characterized it into seven types. The first four types are textual and the other three are interpersonal.

Subsequently, the classification of metadiscourse has been modified and proposed by Hyland and Tse (2004), and Hyland (2005), and the model is widely applied as the acknowledged source by numerous studies until now. Hyland reappraised the model of metadiscourse based on what Thompson (2001) called interactive resources and interactional resources where interactive resources are functional for guiding audiences throughout the text while interactional resources are functional for engaging audiences into the writer's perspective. The detail of the metadiscourse schema is shown in table 1 below.

Table 1 An Interpersonal model of metadiscourse

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

Source: Hyland, 2005

Although research on metadiscourse has usually been completed in many academic areas, this part will focus on the studies with ESL/EFL students and divide the discussion into (1) studies that investigate metadiscourse in written texts and (2) studies that report students' improvement after being trained with metadiscourse. Furthermore, most studies are categorized into the first gathering as follows;

Intaraprawat and Steffensen (1995) believed that propositional ideas and metadiscourse are the two main aspects of writing discourse. They investigate the use of metadiscourse by 12 ESL university students in written texts; four undergraduates and eight graduates. They were requested to write a persuasive

essay. The study compared the good and bad essay writings and the results of the study found that metadiscourse is frequently used in good essay writings in a high rank. From the findings, poor–ability writers did not aware of what they were writing, they did not shape their thoughts to audiences, and they applied metadiscourse in a limited way while good–ability writers conveyed various kinds of metadiscourse in their writings.

Hyland (2004) conducted a study with L2 writers to examine metadiscourse markers in the texts. 240 doctoral and master theses were examined to find the effectiveness of the markers in the texts and he conclusively concluded that the use of metadiscourse can make the text more reliable, consistent, and trustworthy.

Simin and Tavangar (2009) focused on knowledge and the use of metadiscourse in Iranian EFL writing. Ninety Iranian EFL students participated in the study and were divided into three groups based on their proficiency in the English language. Data were gathered from assignments and argumentative essays. The results show the positive effect on the use of metadiscourse as the more proficient learners are in the second language, the more they use metadiscourse devices.

Tajeddin and Alemi (2012) investigated interactional metadiscourse markers usage in 168 comments made by 28 engineering university students utilizing an educational forum presented in the course of general English. Their comments in the discussion period were analyzed to determine their use of five metadiscourse based on Hyland's (2004) interactional metadiscourse model. The result showed a high–frequency use of metadiscourse markers by EFL female learners more than males. However, there was a slight difference; in this sense, gender did not play an important role in the use of interactional metadiscourse markers. Although male and female

learners used all types of interactional metadiscourse, there was a variety of the way they used it.

Hong and Cao (2014) investigate young EFL learners from China, Spain, and Poland with descriptive and augmentative essays. The study applied both qualitative and quantitative studies. The analyses of the study found that there are significant differences among the three groups of EFL learners in using metadiscourse, especially in using boosters, attitude markers, self–mentions, and engagement markers. The results also found the difference between descriptive essays and argumentative essays in using hedges and self–mentions.

Alyousef (2015) studied metadiscourse markers usage in three multimodal management reports conducted by 10 international accounting undergraduate students. Hyland and Tse's model and Hyland's model were employed for the multimodal analysis of metadiscourse markers in business finance texts. His findings revealed a great frequency of interactive and interactional markers in the orthographic texts in comparison to implicit interactive markers shortage and a great frequency of implicit interactional markers in the tables and graphs.

In addition, the study which reported students' improvement after being instructed about metadiscourse was as follows;

Taghizadeh and Tajabadi (2013) examined metadiscourse and 32 male Iranian students majoring in Mechanical Engineering. The pretest and posttest of writing were applied as an instrument of the study. The results showed that the instruction on metadiscourse was efficient in assisting students' writing tests.

The prior research showed noteworthy shreds of evidence that metadiscourse plays a vital role in writing, especially persuasive and argumentative written text. Though research in metadiscourse

looks plentiful, the issue that is specifically related to business writing, especially with Thai EFL students seems inadequate. Therefore, we hope that the current study would be a part to enable further enhancement of EFL writing instruction, particularly in business writing communication courses.

Objectives of the Study

This study attempts to explore the use of metadiscourse both interactive resources and interactional resources in the business writings of Thai EFL undergraduates as follows:

1. To analyze the use of metadiscourse in business writings of Thai EFL undergraduate students.

2. To demonstrate the extent to which both interactional and interactive metadiscourse are used in business writings of Thai EFL undergraduate students

Methodology

Sample

This study is a discourse analysis in which the data is the written text of 21 business plans of Thai EFL students. The business plans were proposed by 35 Business English major students who enrolled in the English for Business Project Writing course at Rajamangala University of Technology Rattanakosin Bophit Phimuk Chakkrawat. Hence, the sample in the study is business plans which are written by students working in small groups organized by simple random sampling method. Each group proposed the business plan as a final project of the class. Here are the example compositions of the assignment which consist of three main parts as follows;

1) Introduction

In this part, students have to design their plan into three topics:

1.1) Executive Summary

1.2) Company Description

1.3) Products / Service Description

2) Value Proposition

In this part, students have to focus their plan on two topics;

2.1) Market Evaluation

2.2) Value Proposal

3) Business Model

In this part, students have to explain their plan to six topics;

3.1) Operations

3.2) Marketing

3.3) Sales Strategy

3.4) Growth Plan

3.5) Management and Staffing

3.6) Financial Summary

The plan contains 2,248 discourse items (sentences, phrases, topics, and graphs). The average length of each plan is eight pages. The total words of the entire statement were 18,975.

Research Instrument

The metadiscourse scheme by Hyland (2005) was applied in the study. There are two main categories of metadiscourse; interactive resources and interactional resources. The dimension of interactive resources concerns on writer's awareness and provides the way to form and create a text to respond to the particular audience and set out the argument to cooperatively build the writer's constructive interpretation. There are five sub-categories in this resource which are transitions, frame markers, endophoric markers, evidentials, and code glosses.

On the other hand, interactional resources concern the way writers conduct interaction by commenting on their communicative massage. The purpose of this resource is to clarify the writer's point of view and to involve readers by allowing them to respond to the unfolding text. There are five

sub-categories in this resource which are hedges, boosters, attitude markers, engagement markers, and self-mentions.

Accordingly, the table of metadiscourse analysis based on Hyland (2005) model was established and the data was collected in order to verify the accuracy of data analysis as follows;

Table 2 Example of table of metadiscourse analysis in business English writing of Thai EFL students

No	Statements	Category of metadiscourse									
		Interactive resources					Interactional resources				
		Transitions	Frame markers	Endophoric markers	Evidentials	Code glosses	Hedges	Boosters	Attitude markers	Engagement markers	Self-mentions
1.	The target customer is *quite* specific.	–	–	–	–	–	1	–	–	–	–
2.	*We also* sell via *our* online store.	–	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	2
3.	The budget is 20,190 THB.	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Total (%)										

For example statements in table 2, 'quite' in the first statement is hedges since it conveys the writer's reluctance to the present propositional expression. Moreover, 'we' and 'our' in the second statement are self-mentions because they show the degree of the writer's presence in terms of the first person pronoun and possessive adjective while 'also' is transitions since it adds a positive agreeing indication to the thought. Finally, there are no metadiscourse markers in the last statement.

Data Analysis

To interpret the data, frequency and percentage are applied to explore the occurrence of interactive and interactional metadiscourse and as the structure of the business plan is dissimilar from other types of texts together with discourse analysis is not emphasized only on a sentence-based level, but also every piece of writing would be collected as data. Subsequently, data would be gathered from different items as follows;

1. A completed sentence is a group of words that expresses an idea through a statement, question, or exclamation. It begins with a capital letter and finishes with a period, a question, or an exclamation mark. Here are some examples;

1) The target audience is teenagers, especially those who want a suitable atmosphere for photography.

2) We will be the only vegetarian fast-food shop in the market.

2. Phrases, with or without a period are gathered as data. Here are some examples;

1) Today's most popular health trends

2) Sold in a variety of formats.

3. Titles or topics are also considered as a part of the data. Here are some examples;

1) The cost of raw material and the cost of a machine

2) Daily material problem

Results of the study

The results of the study were provided into two parts according to the two primary objectives of the study: (1) to analyze the use of the metadiscourse in business writings of Thai EFL undergraduate students and (2) to demonstrate the extent to which both interactive and interactional metadiscourse were applied.

This section presented an analysis of the use of metadiscourse in response to the first objective as follows;

Interactive resources category refers to assisting audiences throughout the text. There are five subcategories which are transitions, frame markers, endophoric markers, evidentials, and code glosses.

Transitions are principally conjunctions and adverbial phrases which assist audiences to interpret the logical connection of writers between steps in an argument. They also show the semantic and pragmatic relationship in the text or discourse. Examples:

(1) As the business grows, the roasted duck will be advertised to the target audiences, _and_ brunch expansion to various locations in Bangkok _and_ other provinces.

(2) Walk-in customers _and_ online customers (_such as_ Facebook, line, and webpage).

Frame markers are referred to as text boundaries or element schematic text organization. They are used to sequence, label text stages, reveal discourse aims, and signify topic shifts. Examples:

(3) _The first_ strategy focuses on attracting novice internet users.

(4) _Lastly_, it is also suitable for customers of all ages and whose daily routine lives hurriedly.

Endophoric markers are referred to the other parts of the text and make supplementary material noticeable and offered the reader in claiming the writer's communication. Examples:

(5) See the market analysis and table _below_ for more specifics.

(6) _Example of_ packaging and modern appearance of the product.

Evidentials are presented with similar functions (of endophoric markers) by demonstrating the textual material initiated outside the present text. Examples:

(7) _THE BEST COLA COMPANY_ is a beverage retailer, manufacturer, and marketer of non-alcoholic beverage concentrates.

(8) Accountable for cleaning the restaurant facility _according to_ (their own) scheduled time.

Code glosses provided supplementary information by rewording in another way to certify the writer's intentional implications. Examples:

(9) New trend for teenagers; _that is_, less sugar consumption.

(10) Whether, it is the main social media; _for instance_, Facebook, or Instagram.

Interactional resources category involves audiences in the interaction of the text by grasping the audience's attention to the writer's point of view. There are five subcategories which are hedges, boosters, attitude markers, self-mentions, and engagement markers.

Hedges are markers that show the writer's hesitancy in the decision to the current propositional text. Examples:

(11) The atmosphere _may_ not be suitable for the new generation.

(12) Selling at a low price will be able to attract many customers, therefore, our profit will be _possible_.

Boosters allow the writer's confidence and highlight the concentration of the propositional text. Examples:

(13) The cost of renting a place _always_ increases.

(14) The competition is cutting prices, most entrepreneurs think that this will bring customers to the shop, but _in fact_, cutting costs is not going to help reduce service quality.

Attitude markers reveal the writer's concerns which convey astonishment, requirement, understanding, and other stances to the certain text. Examples:

(15) Season is an _important_ factor for vegetable growth.

(16) 150 cups of coffee are _expected_ to be sold on a daily basis, representing 54,750 cups/year.

Engagement markers focus on keeping the audience's attention and involve them as discourse participants. Examples:

(17) _Do not_ match the quantity used in production.

(18) Entrepreneurs who are interested in doing business, _need to_ be people who like to learn all the time, whether they are looking for more books or studies.

Self-mentions indicate the level of writer presence in the text in terms of the occurrence of first-person pronouns and possessive adjectives. Examples:

(19) _We_ will hire people that are qualified, honest, customer-centric and ready to work and to help us build a profitable business.

(20) _We_ also sell via _our_ online store (delivery).

The following section was in response to the second objective to illustrate the proportion of interactive and interactional metadiscourse;

Table 3 Frequency of Occurrence of Interactive and Interactional Metadiscourse in Thai EFL Business Writings.

Type of Metadiscourse	Frequency	Percentage
Interactive resource	1,347	57.69
Interactional resource	988	42.31
Total	2,335	100

As shown in Table 3, 2,335 metadiscourse were found in Thai EFL writings, 1,347 instances were interactive resources, which equals 57.69 percent. 988 instances were interactional resources, which equals 42.31 percent.

Table 4 Frequency of Occurrence of Subcategories of Interactive Resource of Metadiscourse

Interactive Resource	Frequency	Percentage
Transition	697	51.74
Frame markers	197	14.63
Endophoric markers	28	2.08
Evidentials	20	1.48
Code glosses	408	30.07
Total	1,347	100

As shown in Table 4, 1,347 interactive resources were found in Thai EFL business writings, and transitions (such as _and, but, or thus_) were found in 697 instances or 51.74 percent. Code glosses (_as namely / e.g. / such as_) were in second place which was 408 instances, or 30.07 percent. Frame markers (for example; _finally or to conclude_) were found in 197 instances which equals 14.63 percent.

Endophoric markers (such as *noted above or see fig.*) were 28 instances or 2.08 percent. Evidentials (such as *according to / x stated that*) were rarely used with 20 instances or 1.48 percent.

Table 5 Frequency of Occurrence of Subcategories of Interactional Resource of Metadiscourse

Interactional resources	Frequency	Percentage
Hedges	129	13.06
Boosters	90	9.11
Attitude markers	53	5.36
Engagement markers	540	54.66
Self-mentions	176	17.81
Total	988	100

As shown in Table 5, 988 interactive resources were found in Thai EFL business writings, and engagement markers (such as *consider or note that*) were found in 540 instances or 54.66 percent. Self-mentions (*I/we/my/our*) were 176 instances, or 17.81 percent. Hedges (such as *might or perhaps*) were 129 instances or 13.06 percent. Boosters (as *in fact or definitely*) were found in 90 instances or 9.11 percent. Finally, attitude makers (as *I agree / surprisingly*) were 53 instances or 5.36 percent.

Nevertheless, the proportion of interactive and interactional metadiscourse compared to the total number of words (18,975) in Thai EFL writing showed in figure 1.


METADISCOURSE IN THAI EFL BUSINESS WRITING

Interactive resources 7%
Interactional resource 5%
Itims without metadiscourse 88%
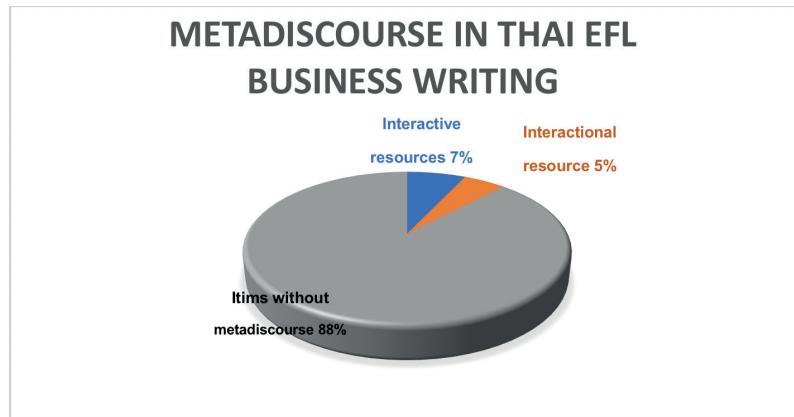
Figure 1 The proportion of metadiscourse in Thai EFL business writing

In accordance with the proportion of interactive and interactional metadiscourse compared to the total number of 18,975 words, it is overwhelmingly that the greatest majority of the written text of business writings are items without metadiscourse (more than 80 percent). Whilst, a small percentage of interactive and interactional metadiscourse are found in the text; that is to say, 7 percent and 5 percent were found respectively. For subcategories of interactive resources, transitions were found at 3.67 percent, frame markers at 1.04 percent, endophoric markers at 0.15 percent, evidential at 0.10 percent, and code glosses at 2.15%. For subcategories of interactional resources, hedges were found at 0.68 percent, boosters at 0.47 percent, attitude markers at 0.28 percent, engagement markers at 2.85 percent, and self-mentions at 0.93 percent.

Conclusion

The current study aims to (1) analyze the use of metadiscourse in business writings of Thai EFL undergraduate students and (2) demonstrate the extent to which both interactional and interactive metadiscourse are used in business writings of Thai EFL undergraduate students.

From the investigation of 18,975 words, it was found that interactive resources were frequently applied more than interactional resources. In terms of interactive resources, transitions were applied in the first rank, followed by code glosses, frame markers, endophoric markers, and evidentials. In terms of interactional resources, engagement markers were found in the first rank, followed by self–mentions, hedges, boosters, and attitude markers. In addition, metadiscourse was employed at 12 percent compared to the whole discourse in which interactive resources were applied at 7 percent and interactional resources were applied at 5 percent.

Discussion

Concerning the two key objectives of the study, metadiscourse was analyzed with Thai EFL business English writing to explore the frequency and percentage of interactive and interactional resources.

From the results of the study, of the two categories of metadiscourse, interactive resources were used more frequently than interactional resources. With the characteristics of the business plan that attempted to describe their products or services, the function of interactive resources that conventionally guides audiences through the text or make them comprehend the writer's intentions were preferred over interactional resources that functions to involve audiences in the text by notifying them to writer's point of views.

Under interactive resources, it was found that transitions were applied most often, followed by code glosses, frame markers, endophoric markers, and evidentials which were rarely applied in the discourse. Similar to the study of Hyland (1999 & 2004), transitions were frequently applied in written discourse. As transitions were mostly connectors and conjunctions, they are also effective devices in writing. Code glosses were used in the second place, it helped readers trace information implicitly. Frame markers were also found in the third rank, their functions indicated the text structure and ordered the content to make discourse clear to audiences. However, from the results, endophoric markers and evidentials were infrequently used, which may reflect that students did not prefer to mention information both inside or outside of their present text. It somehow reflects the information retrieval skills of students.

Under interactional resources, it was found that engagement markers were applied most often, followed by self–mentions, hedges, boosters, and attitude markers which were rarely applied in the current discourse. Engagement markers were preferred mostly which indicated that these Thai EFL students preferred to build a relationship with their audiences. Self–mentions were in the second place, they referred to the degree of writer explicitly appears in the text. Concerning the results, engagement markers (you) and self–mentions (I) can reflect that writers favored constructing a connection with their audiences. Hedges were found in the third rank which reflects that writers preferred not to promise themselves to the text. Nonetheless, the results of the study were exceptionally inconsistent with Hyland (2005) that hedges were used mostly and self–mentions were rarely used in academic text. Boosters and attitude markers were in the fourth and latter ranks, respectively. Boosters were used to indicate the writer's confidence in the text and attitude markers were used to point out the writer's attitude regarding the certain text such

as astonishment, obligation, or understanding. Although the results showed that Thai EFL students preferred to build relationships with their audiences, it also indeed reflects that they did not prefer to express their certainty or attitude to the propositional text.

When considering the use of metadiscourse with a total of 18,975 words of the entire statement, it was found that metadiscourse was applied on a small scale. Interactive resources were applied 7 percent and interactional resources were applied only 5 percent while items without metadiscourse were 88 percent which was genuinely high. The finding can be correlated to the argument that metadiscourse resources were constructive devices for writing. As prior research shows the positive results of metadiscourse and effective writing, Intaraprawat and Steffensen (1995) found that good essay writing is related to the frequency of metadiscourse occurrence. Furthermore, Crismore, Markkanen, and Steffensen (1993) stated that it assists writers to facilitate the reader to comprehend and systematize text more effectively. Accordingly, the results of the study undeniably reflect that Thai EFL classrooms need to be more concerned about metadiscourse resources as indicated by Taghizadeh and Tajabadi (2013), teaching about metadiscourse would effectively enhance students' writing ability. To cognize and practice metadiscourse successfully, Hyland (2005) suggested that students must persistently experience differentiated real-world language which did not focus only on the formal writing discourse, but understand the use of context to transfer the meaning they intend.

To sum up, the current study is a discourse analysis that focuses on the use of metadiscourse functions to illustrate the phenomena of language use in the authentic text of Thai EFL students. Therefore, the student's English proficiency as part of an experimental study or action research is not directly investigated in the study.

However, the study attempts to show that metadiscourse is an essential writing device since it acknowledges audiences to gain a better comprehension of the writer's communication and their points of view. Subsequently, EFL students can benefit from learning about metadiscourse. In English writing class, teachers may both implicitly and explicitly introduce metadiscourse to students.

Besides, some features of interactive resources (such as transitions, frame markers, or code glosses) should be taught first since it is more understandable and most students are already familiar with them. Interactional resources seem more complicated than interactive resources since they concern on writer's standpoints and thoughts in writing interaction, hence; they can be introduced to more advanced students. Thus, the level of the English language background of students is one of the key factors that teachers should be concerned about in teaching metadiscourse to EFL students.

Recommendations

Recommendations for EFL Classroom

This research focuses on the importance of metadiscourse; nonetheless, the results of the study show the insignificant of metadiscourse implication among Thai undergraduate students. On the other hand, the results of the study would be beneficial for EFL teachers in designing business communication courses in order to enhance students' writing skills by employing interactive and interactional resources in their classroom.

Recommendations for further study

Comparable study may be investigated metadiscourse functions in other business discourse such as e-mail, business negotiation, or meetings.

Extensive study in an EFL classroom to examine metadiscourse functions for pedagogical purposes are also positively stimulating for researchers in the educational area. Further research should seek to identify students' difficulties in using metadiscourse and investigate the resources needed to be taught to improve students' writing ability in the classroom and real-world situations correspondingly.

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