The Perceptions of Thai EFL Students towards English Linguistic Imperialism in Facebook Context

Wapee Kong-in

Abstract

This research aimed to investigate Thai EFL students' perception towards English linguistic imperialism in the context of Facebook network. Language exposure on social network was the variable to be analyzed. Questionnaire was used to collect data from 142 participants majoring in English. The findings showed intrinsic argument, according to linguistic imperialism theory, correlated with language exposure significantly ($r = -.178$, $p = .035$). It was also dependent on degrees of English use frequency. In-depth interview uncovered eleven reasons to support Thai EFL students' mutual communication in English on Facebook i.e. restriction of conversation group, prestige, cliché, special occasion, practicing English skills, affective conveyance, sharing resource, conveniences, modernity and exceptionality, familiar phatic function, and solidarity.

Keywords: perceptions, English linguistic imperialism, Facebook

บทคัดย่อ

การวิจัยครั้งนี้มีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อศึกษาการรับรู้จักรวรรดินิยมทางภาษาอังกฤษของนักศึกษาไทยที่เรียนภาษาอังกฤษในฐานะภาษาต่างประเทศในบริบทของ Facebook โดยพิจารณาตัวแปรในด้านประสบการณ์ในการใช้ภาษา เก็บข้อมูลจากนักศึกษาสาขาวิชาภาษาอังกฤษ จำนวน 142 คน ผลการวิจัยพบว่าประเด็นปัจจัยภายใน (Intrinsic Argument) ตามทฤษฎีจักรวรรดินิยมทางภาษา มีความสัมพันธ์กับประสบการณ์ทางภาษาอย่างมีนัยสำคัญทางสถิติ ($r = -.178$, $p = .035$) ทั้งนี้ ขึ้นอยู่กับระดับความถี่ในการใช้ภาษาอังกฤษ ผลจากการสัมภาษณ์เชิงลึกพบว่าเหตุผลในการใช้ภาษาอังกฤษในบริบทเครือข่ายทางสังคมประกอบด้วย 11 ข้อ ได้แก่ (1) การจำกัดวงสนทนา (2) เกียรติภูมิ (3) คำติดปาก (4) โอกาสพิเศษ (5) การฝึกฝนภาษาอังกฤษ (6) การสื่อความหมายเชิงทัศนคติ/อารมณ์เฉพาะ (7) การแบ่งปันทรัพยากร (8) ความสะดวก (9) ความทันสมัยและความเฉพาะตัว (10) การสื่อสัมพันธภาพทางสังคมที่คุ้นชิน และ (11) ความเป็นปึกแผ่นเดียวกัน

คำสำคัญ: การรับรู้ จักรวรรดินิยมทางภาษาอังกฤษ Facebook

1. Introduction

Social networks (SNWs), or social networks sites (SNSs) are broadly defined as an Internet-based application on Web 2.0 (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010) which allow people connect one another worldwide either as friends or strangers who are added in their social

network system (Boyd and Ellison, 2008). With their multifunctional features ranging from downloading documents and media files up to socialization on the web in terms of posting status and comments, in particular sharing individual profiles and information (Constantinides and Fountain, 2007; Mooney, 2009), the users can find the differences from what they experience in Web 1.0 where they are totally passive visitors who rather expect the downloadable objects. Regarding the users' perspectives, Das and Sahoo (2011) supported opinion expression, feeling of independency, and self-esteem as the other factors to explain why millions of people join these networks. Among a myriad of networks, Facebook, a social media website firstly introduced to the public by Mark Zuckerburg in 2004, has ranked as the most popular one in top five social networks with approximately 1.4 billion users across the world, and only 10% of them are the users under age of ten (Statisticbrain, 2014). Relatively, what reported by Socialbakers (2014) – top ten biggest Facebook cities, is not markedly different from that of the first reference. The website compares Facebook as a city the capital of which is Bangkok, Thailand. It is claimed that there are 14.6 million Facebook users who are mostly aged between 25 and 34 in such a country and this makes it become the 16th biggest Facebook country.

Social network trend has been flowing to Thailand for a period of time. It is adopted as a channel of connecting people, and particularly for educational purposes – applying this technology to learning development of the students' language skills (Suthiwartnarueput and Wasanasomsithi, 2012). Beyond these kinds of advantages, communication in English in social network of Thai EFL students might be considered very commonplace such as chatting with foreigners except a noticeable phenomenon of using English mutually amongst Thai peers. According to Kachru's three concentric circles, Thailand can be counted as a country in an expanding circle where English is generally used as a foreign language (Crystal, 2003a, p. 60). Apart from the context of international communication or related professions requiring English proficiency, most of Thai people have no need obviously to use English for survival. However, Kachru (2005) commented that the rules of English in domain of academic, trades, and especially science and technology are the main roots of the quasi-Western-colonized state of the countries in the expanding circles. Also, Thinley (2002) found that the surrounding language use had the strongest effect on English as language choice of the majority of Thai undergraduates. Many researches recently claimed that language exposure was one of the

factors affecting L2 learning (Huang, 2010; Gilakjani, 2012; Gubaily, 2012; Yang, 2012; Astuti, 2013). Apparently, the frequency, or amount of time to use language does not only give the prediction of language learning achievement, but it also outlines the language use of EFL learners.

The communicative situation on Facebook of a group of Thai EFL students in Bangkok is quite interesting. They tend to use English to contact one another increasingly. This provides English language an opportunity to play an important role in Thai way of cyberspace interactive life compared to the other context where English is unavoidable e.g. a conversation between foreign passengers and airline staff at the international airport. Most of linguists know the nature of this kind of language influence as linguistic imperialism – an example of linguicism described by Phillipson (1992), but a bit in the direction of language dominance and assertion rather than perfection aspect as elaborated in the section of literature review. Hence, the issue of correlation between such a linguistic phenomenon and using English in social network like Facebook deserves to be investigated taking language exposure into consideration.

2. Research questions

As cited in previous section about the effect of lingual environment on Facebook users' attitude towards using English with their Thai peer group, this research was conducted to prove whether language exposure correlated with Thai EFL students' perception towards English linguistic imperialism in Facebook context. Furthermore, it explored what reasons were pushing them to use English to contact one another on Facebook instead of the Thai language.

3. Literature review

3.1 English Linguistic Imperialism

Seemingly, that linguistic imperialism has its derivation from linguicism is a widely accepted concept when mentioning the language dominance. As a result, English can be likely recognized as a preferable language under this theory to a great extent. Phillipson (*ibid*.: 47) defined linguistic imperialism as "…the dominance of English is asserted and maintained by the establishment and continuous reconstitution of structural and cultural

inequalities between English and other languages." while linguicism, according to Skutnabb-Kangas (1988), refers to an ideal language patterns the influence of which trigger marginalization of minority by means of dividing power and resources i.e. devices (material) and knowledge, or skills (immaterial) using the aforementioned ideology as a benchmark. At least, English must gain its spotlight in one way of national structures. Galtung (1980) delineated six types of imperialism: economic imperialism, political imperialism, military imperialism, communicative imperialism, cultural imperialism, and social imperialism. The superiority of English as seen in the current fact worldwide sheds it light most distinctively on developing countries' policy. Pennycook (1995) argued for English that it acted as a gatekeeper in education, including many other developmental components e.g. employment, business transaction, and social mobility prior to decreasing the identity of other nationalized languages. Based on the integration of these linguistic thoughts, it is social approval and necessity in daily life which English is the superior language in the countries, where English is used as a foreign language like Thailand, not westernization or colonialism (Methitham, 2009).

The dominance degree of English status can be divided into three categories as Galtung (*ibid.*, p.62) and Phillipson (*ibid.*: 273) expounded similarly in terms of power and arguments: being-power or English-intrinsic argument, having-power or English extrinsic argument, and position-power or English functional argument. The first pair is defined as using English to reach nobility and dignity – what English 'is', the second one refers to the increase of material resources written or produced in English such as textbooks, dictionaries, teachers of English, etc., including somewhat immaterial like knowledge and skills needed for commanding medias or tools – what English 'has', and the last one places a premium on English for modernization and access to breakthrough technology – what English 'does'. Turning to Facebook of Thai EFL learners' context, so far no one can claim if these groups of users perceive the above arguments as a part of their language use on social networking. To what extent can their attitude regarding English status be found on basis of these arguments? The current research is consequently expected to discover the facts which help understand more about online interactive behaviors and Thai EFL perception towards English linguistic imperialism.

3.2 Language exposure and attitude

Learners' characteristics have mainly been discussed as internal supportive factors of language learning achievement (Merisou-Strom, 2007; De Bot et al., 2005). The extended theories and innovations are proposed and referentially adapted to many related works i.e. Lenneberg (1967) 's critical period hypothesis focusing the relation between target language success and puberty effect, and Attitude and Motivation Test Battery (AMTB) originated by Gardner (1985) for measuring the factors affecting motivation and attitude. For English language teaching (ELT), attitudes are also interesting to be a powerful variable contributing to L2 learners' accomplishment. The complicated relation between attitude and other factor such as exposure to the target language is also studied further (Davis et al.,1992; Ellis, 1994) and the results pinpointed the correspondence between the two variables. As Chomsky (1972) convinced acquisition was empirically controlled by learners' experiences and environmental factors. Ajileye (2007) concluded that language acquisition needed exposure, or practices for language use. Of all the mentioned SLA theories, psychological thought posited by Zajonc (1968) is the most applicable to the present study which is far from learning achievement factors. His pioneering study inspired the later investigations of correlation between exposure of incidental stimuli and its feedback, including attitudinal response like magazine contents (See McCullough and Ostrom, 1974), message repetition (See Cacioppo and Petty, 1979), and even experiences from Internet surfing. These researchers tried to explain how stimuli could access to human perception. Repeated exposure was reported to be contributory to liking and familiarity, and Fang et al. (2007) generated the concept of fluency experience, an ease of inferring information to promote metacognitions. The present study held this exposure-language attitude relationship as a foundation leading to the results to research questions.

4. Methods

4.1 Research design

This study adopted explanatory mixed-method design. After Creswell and Clark (2011), two phases of this kind of research design is necessary. The first one is for quantitative study and the second one is for qualitative study. The justification for employing explanatory research design is relying on in-depth understanding of the phenomenon.

Quantitative research process in the first session is implemented to meet research question 1 – the correlation between two variables: language exposure, or high-low frequency of English using on Facebook and Thai EFL students' perception towards English linguistic imperialism whilst qualitative research process is an additional part in order to strengthen the statistical findings as well as gaining facts to meet research question 2 – the reasons or signaling of English use on Facebook among Thai EFL users.

4.2 Data collection

4.2.1 Participants

The participants of this research were obtained through simple random sampling the unit of analysis of which included a total of 180 undergraduates, eighteen males and 124 females mostly aged from nineteen to twenty-two years, majoring in English language from two learners sections at Department of English Language of Faculty of Education, Bansomdejchaopraya Rajabhat University. The 142 students were obtained through purposive random sampling on the basis of Facebook account owning and regular posting status or comments on their timelines. The numbers of the participants were in accordance with the table of sample size for any given population, by Krejcie and Morgan (1970, p. 608), which indicated minimum 123 samples of 180 population.

4.2.2 Instruments

1) Questionnaire

Likert five-point rating scale questionnaires were designed to contain nineteen items for elicitation participants' attitudinal data. It began with participants' common data set which included the frequency in using English on Facebook divided into two categories: *high frequency* e.g. every day, week, three to four times a month, and *low frequency* e.g. occasional use, unpredictable use, N/A. Each question was devised in compliance with the three types of arguments as shown in table 1 below.

Arguments	Question No.
Intrinsic Argument	Q1 – Q8
Extrinsic Argument	Q 9 – Q13
Functional Arguments	Q 14 – Q19

Table1 Mapping of questionnaires and linguistic imperialism arguments

2) Interviews

To assist the researcher obtain in-depth data, twenty-one participants were randomly selected as interviewees for one round of a semi-structured interview schedule which was established raising the issue "*In what situations do you use English on Facebook with your Thai friends?*" and "*Why must it be English, not Thai language*?" The rationale of using semi-structured interview is that it is flexible and allows new ideas to be brought up during the interview as a result of what the interviewee says. As Flick (1998, p. 94) stated that "More or less open-ended questions are brought to the interview situation in the form of an interview guide". Besides, the flexible characteristic of this kind of interview can reduce the interviewees' anxiety and bring an effective cooperation (Bogdan and Biklen, 1998, p. 99).

4.2.3 Data Analysis

1) Quantitatively

Basically, MEAN and standard deviation was used to analyze data inferentially. Section 5.1 adopts the following criteria for data interpretation: 1.00-1.50 = strongly disagree; 1.51-2.50 = disagree; 2.51-3.50 = neutral; 3.51-4.50 = agree; 4.51-5.00 = strongly agree. The relation between language exposure and Thai EFL students' perception towards English linguistic imperialism in social network context was measured by Pearson's Correlation Coefficient analysis. MANOVA tests were applied to check the dependency of perception on frequency of English use ($p \leq .05$).

2) Qualitatively

After the interview data was transcribed, this pile of data was refined by coding technique (Corbin and Strauss, 2008) for content analysis. This approach was suitable to qualitative data analysis for its systematic process beginning with open coding – marking

the repetitive data into its own group, axial coding – arranging data matrix, or forming of themes and their related sub-categories, and selective coding– synthesizing the exactly hidden themes and sub-categories for writing grounded theory.

5. Results

5.1 The perception of Thai EFL students towards English linguistic imperialism

The rating of the participants for perceiving English status in three arguments on Facebook, is averagely shown in table 2 below.

Questions	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree		Total	Mean	S.D.	Interpretation
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%				
Intrinsic Argument														
1	14	9.86	47	33.10	64	45.07	11	7.75	6	4.23		3.37	0.71	Neutral
2	23	16.20	48	33.80	54	38.03	15	10.56	2	1.41		3.53	0.71	Agree
3	13	9.15	43	30.28	56	39.44	21	14.79	9	6.34		3.21	0.71	Neutral
4	46	32.39	40	28.17	46	32.39	7	4.93	3	2.11	142	3.84	0.71	Agree
5	2	1.41	20	14.08	65	45.77	43	30.28	12	8.45		2.70	0.71	Neutral
6	30	21.13	46	32.39	44	30.99	19	13.38	3	2.11		3.57	0.71	Agree
7	72	50.70	43	30.28	23	16.20	3	2.11	1	0.70		4.28	2.83	Agree
8	40	28.17	46	32.39	43	30.28	11	7.75	2	1.41		3.78	2.12	Agree
				Total								**3.54**	**1.15**	**Agree**
Extrinsic Argument														
9	40	28.17	57	40.14	38	26.76	6	4.23	1	0.70		3.91	1.41	Agree
10	15	10.56	25	17.61	59	41.55	33	23.24	10	7.04		3.01	1.41	Neutral
11	29	20.42	53	37.32	50	35.21	9	6.34	1	0.70	142	3.70	1.41	Agree
12	38	26.76	57	40.14	39	27.46	8	5.63	0	0.00		3.88	1.41	Agree
13	8	5.63	36	25.35	65	45.77	29	20.42	4	2.82		3.11	1.41	Neutral
				Total								**3.52**	**1.41**	**Agree**

Functional Argument

14	45	31.69	65	45.77	26	18.31	6	4.23	0	0.00		4.05	0.71	Agree
15	67	47.18	53	37.32	19	13.38	3	2.11	0	0.00		4.30	0.71	Agree
16	43	30.28	41	28.87	34	23.94	18	12.68	6	4.23	142	3.68	0.71	Agree
17	23	16.20	52	36.62	48	33.80	14	9.86	5	3.52		3.52	0.00	Agree
18	26	18.31	58	40.85	46	32.39	10	7.04	2	1.41		3.68	0.71	Agree
19	39	27.46	55	38.73	37	26.06	8	5.63	3	2.11		3.84	0.00	Agree
Total												**3.84**	**0.47**	**Agree**
TOTAL AVERAGE IN THREE ARGUMENTS												**3.63**	**1.00**	**Agree**

Table 2 The perception of Thai EFL students towards English linguistic imperialism in Facebook context

From table 2, most of participants 'agree' ($\overline{x}$ = 3.63) with the three English linguistic imperialism arguments in overview. Similarly, taking each argument into consideration, the participants 'agree' with all items. Functional argument is perceived mostly ($\overline{x}$ = 3.84) followed by extrinsic argument ($\overline{x}$ = 3.54), and intrinsic argument ($\overline{x}$ = 3.52). The relation between language exposure – frequency in using English on Facebook and English linguistic imperialism perception tested by Pearson's Correlation Coefficient is reported in table 3.

Argument	*r*	Sig.
Intrinsic	-.178	.035
Extrinsic	-.031	.713
Functional	-.054	.524

Table 3 The correlation between perception of Thai EFL students towards English linguistic imperialism arguments and language exposure

As shown in table 3, there is only one argument with which language exposure correlated i.e. intrinsic argument (*r* = -.178, *p* = .035) while the other two arguments, extrinsic argument (*r* = -.031, p = .713) and functional arguments (*r* = .054, p = .713), are out of control of English using frequency. Since language exposure in the context of this research is defined as a couple levels of interaction frequency i.e. high and low frequency, thus table 4 illustrates the arguments on frequency level.

Arguments	Language Exposure	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Intrinsic	High	3.61	.562	92
	Low	3.40	.534	50
	Total	3.54	.560	142
Extrinsic	High	3.54	.623	92
	Low	3.50	.651	50
	Total	3.52	.631	142
Functional	High	3.87	.661	92
	Low	3.80	.635	50
	Total	3.84	.651	142

Table 4 The perception of Thai EFL students towards English linguistic imperialism on basis of language exposure

According to table 4, ninety-two of 142 participants, or more than two-fourths, rated their English use frequency on Facebook at a high level. Related to table 2, the total mean value of each argument is derived from two levels of language use frequency prior to calculation of total mean. Compared to the pair of high-low English using frequency related to participants' perception towards extrinsic ($\overline{x}$ = 3.54/3.50) and functional arguments ($\overline{x}$ = 3.87/3.80), that of intrinsic argument reflects the difference in mean to some extent: high frequency ($\overline{x}$ = 3.61) and low frequency ($\overline{x}$ = 3.40). To testify the difference in perception towards English linguistic imperialism on basis of language exposure, multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) is implemented as shown in table 5.

Statistics	Value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.
Pillai's Trace	.037	1.778[a]	3.000	138.000	.154
Wilks' Lambda	.963	1.778[a]	3.000	138.000	.154
Hotelling's Trace	.039	1.778[a]	3.000	138.000	.154
Roy's Largest Root	.039	1.778[a]	3.000	138.000	.154

Table 5 Multivariate test results of difference in perception of Thai EFL students towards English linguistic imperialism on basis of language exposure

Table 5 shows that significances of all four statistics are found to be greater than .05 (*p* = .154) and indicted there are no differences in the perception towards English linguistic imperialism of the participants in three arguments after two levels of English language use frequency. Nonetheless, table 6 reveals one-way MANOVA results which detail exhaustively the relation between language exposure and arguments perception of each pair.

Source	Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Frequency	Intrinsic	1.392	1	1.392	4.556	.035
	Extrinsic	.054	1	.054	.136	.713
	Functional	.173	1	.173	.408	.524
Error	Intrinsic	42.777	140	.306		
	Extrinsic	56.014	140	.400		
	Functional	59.538	140	.425		
Total	Intrinsic	44.170	141			
	Extrinsic	56.068	141			
	Functional	59.711	141			

Table 6 Results from the tests of between-subjects effects

Table 6 indicates the results similarly to what shown in table 3. Intrinsic argument is still the only dependent variable which is variant on basis of language use frequency (p = .035). As for the other two arguments, they show the freedom of argument perception from language exposure influence. (p = .713 and p = .524).

5.2 The purposes of communicating in English among Thai EFL students on Facebook

After coding data from interview transcription of twenty-one randomly obtained interviewees, eleven types of reasons to explain why Thai EFL students use English on Facebook were uncovered. They incorporated restriction of conversation group, prestige, cliché, special occasion, practicing English skill, affective conveyance, sharing resource, conveniences, modernity and exceptionality, familiar phatic function, and solidarity (See qualitative findings in Chapter 4 of the full research).

6. DISCUSSIONS

The findings from this study signal that Thai EFL students perceived English linguistic imperialism in functional argument mostly whereas the other two was at lower scale, but still reach 'agree' representation. What English 'does', in the context of present study, according to Phillipson (ibid.)'s linguistic imperialism is to connect people through information and communication technology (ICT). It seems that Thai EFL students have realized the status of English in this aspect for a long time since Web 2.0 technology provided them more choices of active communication. They used English, a dominant language on cyberspace, as a tool for intercommunication and modernization as supported by findings of section 5.2. Hoonchamlong (2003) pointed out the tendency of computer-mediated communication increased so markedly in the 21st century that electronic language, or NETSPEAK (Crystal, 2001) – a kind of combined form of language between speaking and writing, so-called "a written speech or spoken writing" (Jonsson, 1997) in preference of a powerful language as English, played an important role as a new medium to convey the Internet users' ideas based on typing rather than spoken writing or written speech. However, the enthusiasm to communicate in English and English training must be simultaneously promoted.

Also, English was used as a tool in code-mixing situation seen from the case of interviewees who intentionally used English for the specific purposes. In their timeline of posting, Thai language was not solely used to share their ideas and stories. The language use for updated statuses and comments were often mixed with English. Prestige was gained after the attitude of these interviewees. The outlook of educated person was brought by from using English in specific situations apart from Thai. This reflected the power of English code-mixing in guiding the perception of social status and education level (Gibbons, 1987; Yau, 1993; Luke, 1998) Similarly, English was

used as code-mixing aspect in the case of the other interviewees when someone was indirectly referred and the outsiders were excluded from the conversation (Grojeans, 1982).

Markedly, one of many factors – lack of availability of using English in the regular English class of Thai EFL students has an effect on decision to select such a language as a medium for communicating mutually on Facebook. This challenge remains quite far from the approach of taking trials and errors for practicing among non-native speakers (NNSs) since they never care for grammaticality or even whether what they produced was intelligible to the native ones or not (Interviewee No.12). Functionalization of English related to technology and modernity is a potential drive for EFL learners to practice. However, it also needs the proper implementation to reach the goal effectively. The ICT such as Facebook, as Wiriyachitra (2002, p. 4) stated, requires high proficiency in English, and it is a task for educators to complete inevitably (Patil, 2005). Then, it is a matter of extrinsic argument pertaining to what English has – teachers or trainers (materials) English knowledge and proficiency (immaterial).

As indicated in table 5, language exposure in terms of frequency of language use did not correlated significantly with Thai EFL students' perception towards English linguistic imperialism in all three arguments and as found in table 6, the intrinsic argument is the only domain which was perceived differently on basis of language exposure. Probably, this is a matter of necessity perception for what English 'has' rather than what English 'is' or how often they exposed themselves to English. Some interviewees seemed to use English because it was '*convenient*' for them to pick up the words and type them on the keyboard to communicate. It is likely another aspect of argument of what English *is* theoretically directed to nobility and prestige. Notwithstanding, this way of communication is mostly found in social network compared to face-to-face daily life interaction. English is not always dominant in daily confronting conversation among Thais because there are many other arch-rival Thai words for them to select as habitual feedback utterances depending on relationship with their interlocutors such as /ȳː/, /châi/ or /dâːi/ for unisex stylistics in the context of casualness and high intimacy, and /khráp/ for males or /khâ/ for females when the speakers are aware of necessary politeness or social hierarchy, etc. in Thai for "O.K". In chatting, short terms were what Thai EFL students in this research looked for and they could be formed in few minutes with English fonts basically available on the bilingual keyboards. Data from these interviewees signaled the challenging use of English on the Internet. What English 'has' for them here was not a native speaker added in their friend lists, but only the chance to communicate in English with one another without caring for possible mistakes or even developed errors. Beyond their intrinsic motivation and frequency of English use, what they really expected from chatting on Facebook was an opportunity to practice the language. An array of scholars convinced that the necessity of

language use to reach some specific goals accounted for the motivation of L2 learning (Gardner and Lambert, 1972; Gardner, 1985; Ellis, *ibid*.). As confirmed by an interviewee, she was so committed to her field of study, including her future employment (cf. Fernández, 2005, p. 100) that she thought Facebook was a floor of practicing English conversation even with Thai friends. Also, the in-depth data helps understand the attitudinal use of English on Facebook. There were interviewees who tried to keep a smooth conversation with the identical use of the language instead of insisting to use Thai. This was not due to their own enthusiasm and personal interest. It was their determination to create symmetrical relationship by sharing mutual experiences (Brown and Gilman, 1960). The more they distributed and experienced the same things, the more they can cross the social dividers such as age, ethnicity, occupation, etc. Henceforth, what English 'does'– the channel of connecting people with English contributed to reduction of social differences of Facebook users.

Incidentally, the above results might reflect the danger of the current status of English as a global language as pointed by Crystal (2003b). Three interesting arguments related to the explanation the impacts of 'New Englishes' on the minority use of archetypal dialects (British and American English) are proposed – *linguistic power, linguistic complacency, and linguistic death*. The participants' perception revealed economical need (professional growth), background of other language learning insufficiency, and establishment of local identity during communication in the context of Facebook. Then, linguistic power is this case is supported by awareness of English for promising career while linguistic complacency. As for linguistic complacency, it is related to lack of interest in learning other language effectively because of unavailability of language experiences in the classroom. Finally, rather than mutual intelligibility, English is used by the participants ungrammatically based on their group influence. This is in line with the belief of linguistic death when one global language becomes superior to the others. However, Crystal (*ibid.*) suggests implicitly that teaching a global language at the early stage of language acquisition compared to bilingualism process is one possible solution to co-existence between intelligibility and cultural identity. The learners can adopt English as a global language for wider communication whereas English as a dialect for understanding and becoming a part of particular society.

7. Conclusion

This paper focused on the investigation of the relation between language exposure and perception of English linguistic imperialism on social network in three arguments: intrinsic argument, extrinsic argument, and functional argument. Furthermore, to understand the reasons to support why they used English on Facebook, a semi-structured interview was scheduled to elicit in-depth data. The statistical findings primarily revealed the freedom of perception towards English status from

language exposure. On the other hand, necessity in language use raised the most important role of English in terms of gateway to the world through Facebook communication (Functional argument) vis-à-vis what was shown from qualitative analysis: the reasons of convenience and practicing English skills apart from other nine purposes.

In conclusion, English might not be influential in face-to-face daily communication among Thai EFL students, particularly when out of the professional or international context. Still, the increase of using English has markedly grown on social network without cessation. Intrinsic perception is not the only factor behind linguistic behavioral of Thai EFL students. Persuasively, language necessity and seeking for opportunity to use language potentially promote the status of English.

8. Implication

The pedagogical advantage can be implied from the findings of this research. With the significant characteristics of easy access and attraction by multifunction, Thai EFL students begin to use Facebook as a forum of sharing everything ranging from personal anecdote to language practices unknowingly or not. It is suggested for educators or concerning parties, especially the native speakers to have interaction with them and monitor what they produce linguistically on social network. The responses or feedbacks will be greatly helpful to develop comprehensible input for the students. Any forms of coinage and errors are anticipated to be improved in line with the natural use in authentic communication.

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