AN ANALYSIS OF THE USE OF ENGLISH WITH POLITICAL CORRECTNESS: A CASE STUDY OF GRADUATE STUDENTS IN THAILAND

BY

MR. NAPAT PHUMSIRI

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF ARTS IN CAREER ENGLISH FOR
INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATION
LANGUAGE INSTITUTE
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ACADEMIC YEAR 2016
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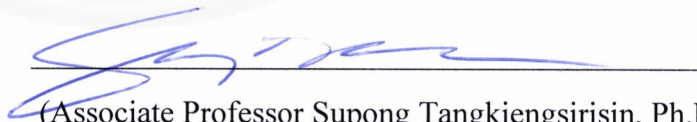the degree of Master of Arts in Career English for International Communication

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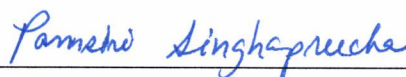(Assistant Professor Ketvalee Porkaew, Ph.D.)

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Thesis Title	AN ANALYSIS OF THE USE OF ENGLISH WITH POLITICAL CORRECTNESS: A CASE STUDY OF GRADUATE STUDENTS IN THAILAND
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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to examine the use of English with political correctness of master's degree students in a university in Bangkok, Thailand and to identify their attitudes and opinions towards the use of English with political correctness.
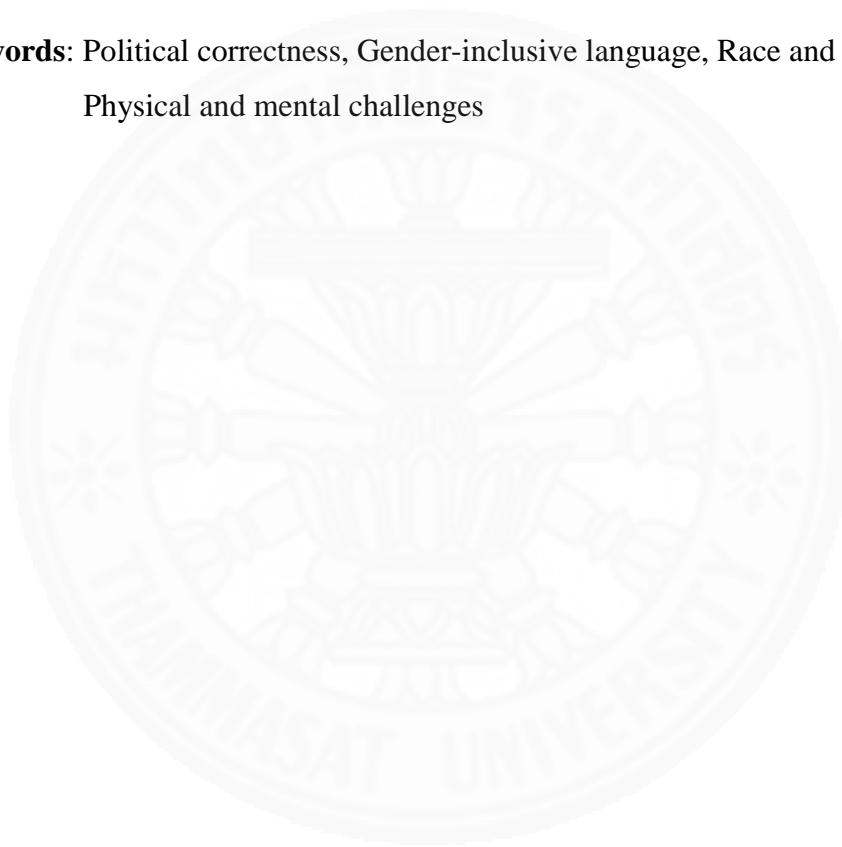
The subjects of this study were 100 master's degree students from a university in Bangkok, Thailand from different backgrounds who had been exposed to English language for a significant period of time. They were asked to complete a questionnaire consisting of a test on the use of politically correct English vocabulary and terms and a survey of their opinions and attitudes towards the use of English with political correctness. Moreover, five of the respondents were interviewed in order to gain deeper information about their attitudes.

The findings revealed that master's degree students in a university in Bangkok, Thailand are able to use certain politically correct words and terms correctly. However, the correctness depends on the familiarity of the respondents regardless of the categories of politically correct language. Likewise, respondents have positive attitudes toward the use of politically correct language and they considered this type of language as a formal and respectful language. Accordingly, their opinions showed that English with political correctness should be implemented in workplaces and certain fields. They also agreed with the importance of politically correct language and suggested that the limitations of English with political

correctness are that it is unclear and there is no institution or academic initiative to standardize the use of English with political correctness, which is sometimes overused.

The findings could be used as essential information to develop the use of English with political correctness in society, objectify politically correct language, and promote the importance of politically correct language, which is viewed as formal and respectful language that can reduce conflicts in international communications.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

In some countries where English is the official language, namely, Canada, Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States, there seems to be an increasing trend toward politically correct language (Marques, 2009) and this tends to become more crucial as the world, where English is considered as a global language, is more globalized and linked than it has ever been. Moreover, politically correct language has become common, not only in the use of English language but also in English language teaching and in the workplace. As a result, people who want to be able to function in English-speaking academic and business settings have to be aware of political correctness (PC) in language use (Tsehelska, 2006).

According to Cambridge Dictionary, the term *political correctness*, usually abbreviated as PC, refers to an idea that someone who is politically correct believes that language and actions that could be offensive to others, especially those relating to sex and race, should be avoided. Ely, Meyerson, and Davidson (2006) define political correctness as a situation "where unspoken canons of propriety govern behavior in cross-cultural interactions—that is, interactions among people of different races, genders, religions, and other potentially charged social identity groups". Consequently, this term, political correctness, has recently been widely discussed as it has a significant impact on people's perceptions and also the dynamics of the language.

As a result, the use of English with political correctness tends to help people to avoid offensiveness in multicultural communication. Moreover, the use of English with political correctness will also raise people's awareness and gradually change the attitudes towards rights and equality in the society, matters that are becoming crucial concerns in an international society.

Politically correct language is an important element that promotes effective and proper use of English. Moreover, the knowledge of political correctness will also be useful for international communication, as it will increase understanding among

people from different cultures and backgrounds. Consequently, this study was conducted to analyze the current situation and predict tendencies regarding the use of politically correct language to increase the effectiveness of English use and knowledge of political correctness among different groups of people in the globalized era.

1.2 Research Questions

      1.2.1   How many politically correct words and terms can students use correctly?

      1.2.2   What are students' attitudes towards the use of English with political correctness?

1.3 Objectives of Study

The objectives of this study are as follows:

      1.3.1   To study how many politically correct words and terms students can use correctly.

      1.3.2   To examine the attitudes of students in a university in Bangkok, Thailand towards the use of English with political correctness.

1.4   Definition of Terms

      Political Correctness is a term used to describe language or behavior that provides the least offense with regard to some sensitive issues; for example, racism, sexism, and discrimination (Lin, 2010). In this study, **political correctness** is language that has evolved together with social speech codes and political ideas that are inclusive, egalitarian and aim to reduce conflicts related to the aforementioned sensitive issues.

      Gender is a term that describes characteristics of people, which include biological sex, e.g., being male, female or transgender, sex-based social structures or gender identity. In this study, gender is a term that is linguistically used to refer to vocabularies and the use of language that describe individuals, groups of people and careers in inclusive and exclusive forms.

      Race and Ethnicity in this study will refer to the classification of humans into groups based on physical traits, ancestry, genetics or social relations, or the

relations between them (Anemone, 2011), such as African, American Indian, Asian, Taiwanese, etc.

Mentally challenged is the politically correct term to define people whose behavioral or mental patterns are different that may cause suffering or poor ability to function in daily life. In this study, mentally challenged will refer to intellectual disability in a person.

Physically Challenged is the politically correct term to refer to a person's limitations in physical functioning, mobility, dexterity or stamina. Other physical disabilities include impairments that limit other aspects of daily life. In this study, physically challenged will refer to disabled, optically challenged person, differently sized person, and vertically challenged person.

Students in this study are graduate students enrolled in a master's degree program in a university in Bangkok, Thailand.

Attitudes in this study are opinions or feelings about the use of English with political correctness.

1.5   Significance of the Study

This study seeks to raise awareness of the importance of the use of English language with political correctness, as nowadays, people from different backgrounds are having more interactions. In the case of Thailand, the country is a significant part of the international community. As a result, English is considered as a 'must learn' language for Thai students. However, few people are aware of politically correct language, and therefore problems or conflicts might occur during communication.

This research study examined the use of English vocabulary and terms that the students in a university in Bangkok, Thailand choose to use. Meanwhile, awareness and attitudes towards the use of English language with political correctness of students in a university in Bangkok, Thailand, a group of people from different backgrounds who were studying in master's degree program in the field of English language, were analyzed.

This study is expected to present new findings that could bridge the previous research's gaps, as there has been little research on political correctness in the use of language. Likewise, quantitative research about the use of language with political

correctness should be conducted to find whether the findings can be tangibly implemented in real situations.

Moreover, this study is one of few studies that analyzes the topic of political correctness in a linguistic aspect with a large sample. Previous research on the use of language with political correctness was difficult to generalize due to small sample sizes. These prior studies were also conducted in regions where English is the official language. Lastly, this study is the first study that analyzes the use of English with political correctness in Thailand.

CHAPTER 2
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The review of literature has three main areas with previous related studies and a summary: (1) Historical overview of political correctness, (2) speech codes and identity (3) sexist language and gender inclusive language, (4) previous related studies, and (5) summary.

2.1 Historical Overview of Political Correctness

The terms *political correctness*, *politically correct* or *PC* had not been commonly used until the end of the 1970s. According to Wilson (1995), in 1973 in the United States, the term *politically correct* was first mentioned in the U.S Supreme Court when the justice James Wilson stated that

"The states, rather than the People, for whose sakes the States exist, are frequently the objects which attract and arrest our principal attention... Sentiments and expressions of this inaccurate kind prevail in our common, even in our convivial, language. Is a toast asked? 'The United States', instead of the 'People of the United States', is the toast given. This is not politically correct."

However, it is an arduous task to trace the origin of the meaning of 'political correctness' as this term has evolved along with the changes of political ideologies. For instance, in the late 1940s, the phrase "politically correct" was used in political debates between socialists and members of the communist party in the United States. According to Kohl (1992), the term *politically correct* was used disparagingly in order to refer to people loyal to the Communist Party. Likewise, it was also used by socialists against communists, and was meant to distinguish socialists who believed in egalitarian moral ideas from dogmatic communists who advocated and defended party positions regardless of their moral substance (Kohl, 1992).

This term might have come from the writings of the former Chinese leader of the Communist Party, namely, Mao Zhedong. Perry (1992) mentions that Mao tried to

evaluate the terms 'correct' and 'incorrect' in aspects related to free speech, contention and mutual criticism in order to control his regime. Meanwhile, the effects of Maoism and his famous 'little red book' figured in the ideology of the 'New Left' in America. Bambara (1970) states in an essay 'The Black Woman: An Anthology' that "a man cannot be politically correct and a male chauvinist, too".

As a result, it can be seen that the term PC has different interpretations based on people's ideologies e.g., communism, Maoism. Moreover, it has also reached the point where it was used sarcastically. For example, Berman (2011) explains that the term PC was an approving phrase in the Leninist Left that eventually evolved into an ironic phrase among 'wised-up leftists' to 'denote someone whose line-toeing fervor was too much to bear' (Berman, 2011) Also, in the feminist movement, Willis (1992) states that in the early eighties, feminists used the term 'political correctness' to refer sarcastically to the efforts of the anti-pornography movement.

Another version of the use of PC under the leftist movement came from American universities. Hall (1994) began his essay about the term PC as follows:

Political correctness actually began as an in-joke on the left: radical students on American campuses acting out an ironic replay of the Bad Old Days BS (Before the Sixties) when every revolutionary groupuscule had a party line about everything. They would address some glaring examples of sexist or racist behavior by their fellow students in imitation of the tone of voice of the Red Guards or Cultural Revolution Commissar: "Not very 'politically correct', Comrade!"

(Hall, 1994: 164-165)

The political correctness term entered public awareness again in 1987, when professor Thernstorm was giving a lecture on 'the peopling of America' with 'racially insensitive' statements. Those statements left some students, especially black students, so uncomfortable that they complained about this issue. Finally, this issue became popular when an open letter about the warning of racial harassment, written by the dean of the college, was published (Annette, 1994) Three years later, a column in *The New York Times* claimed that the term PC was "being heard more and more in

debates over what should be taught at the universities" (Bernstein, 1990) Also, there were even initials "P.C.P." to refer to a politically correct person (Bernstein, 1990)

One year later, *The New York Times* published a follow-up article mentioning the popularity of this term in a way that it began to 'gain currency at the start of the academic year last fall, has spread in recent months and has become the focus of an angry national debate, mainly on campuses, but also in the larger arenas of American life' (McFadden, 1991)

In contemporary usage, politically correct language has been used widely alongside the issue of media bias in the United States and in the United Kingdom (Lea, 2010). Media bias and politically incorrect language could lead to an unforeseen tragedy. There was a case in Kaduna, Northern Nigeria, in 2002 when a newspaper writer made a remark about the Prophet Mohammed and the beauty queens of the Miss World Beauty Pageant that was to be held in the country. More than 250 people were killed and churches were destroyed in this conflict. Later in 2006, conflict erupted again in Borneo because of a cartoon of the Prophet Mohammed in a newspaper, with over 50 people killed and 30 churches burnt (Pinta and Yakubu, 2014).

As a result, the media has to be very careful about politically correct language as people from different cultural backgrounds are more connected than ever as well as more sensitive. An example is the tragedy of *Charlie Hebdo*, the French satirical weekly newspaper, when Muslim gunmen killed 12 people and injured 11 others. The gunmen identified themselves as belonging to the Islamist terrorist group Al-Qaeda's branch in Yemen, which took responsibility for the attack. Several related attacks followed in the Île-de-France region, where a further five were killed and eleven wounded.

Pinta and Yakubu (2014) also highlight the implications of political correctness in the education field, asserting that political correctness is a useful area of consideration when using English language, particularly in second language situations, because both social and cultural contexts of language are taken into consideration (Pinta and Yakubu, 2014) In the view of Zabotkina (1989), political correctness is an essential and interesting area of study in English as a Second

Language (ESL) or English as Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms. This is because it shows that different speech leads to different reactions as it can persuade, incite, complain, condemn, and disapprove. Also, language is used for communication and creating social linkages so it must be used communicatively. They also emphasize the importance of the knowledge of political correctness due to the fact that people who must communicate with one another have differences, which could be religious, cultural, social, racial, gender or even ideological. As a result, they assert that using language to suit the appropriate culture and context is of great significance (Pinta and Yakubu, 2014).

2.2 Speech Codes and Identity Politics

According to Cameron (1995), a 'speech code' can be considered as a kind of linguistic guideline, which makes it 'a disciplinary offence to use certain expressions deemed racist, sexist, anti-Semitic and homophobic'. Likewise, Uelman (1992) defined speech codes as

'Any rule or regulation that limits, restricts, or bans speech beyond the strict legal limitations upon freedom of speech or press found in the legal definitions of harassment, slander, libel, and fighting words. Such codes are common in the workplace, in universities, and in private organizations that aims to prevent discriminatory harassment includes conduct (oral, written, graphic or physical) directed against any person or, group of persons because of their race, color, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, age, disability, or veteran's status and that has the purpose or reasonably foreseeable effect of creating an offensive, demeaning, intimidating, or hostile environment for that person or group of persons'

This term can refer to norms and regulations that do not clearly prohibit particular words or sentences. Speech codes are normally used for the purpose of suppressing hate speech or forms of social discourse thought to be disagreeable to the implementers. As a result, the utilization of many speech codes could be controversial in relation to the meaning and significance of some words and phrases, and about the legitimacy of those who decide which meaning is accurate. For example, speech

codes in the United States have a different history and context from those in the United Kingdom. In the United States, speech codes were introduced initially and mainly by American universities and campuses to penalize students who used racist, sexist, or homophobic 'hate speech' to insult other students (Friedman, 1995). In the United Kingdom, speech codes seem to be more moderate. For example, Cameron (1995) explains that 'non-sexist language guidelines' had merely a symbolic impact (Cameron, 1995: 133) and they caused considerable debate. According to Cameron, these linguistic rules were only introduced in order to enable people's writing in a university document to bring these codes to the attention of the perpetrator (Cameron, 1995: 133) Consequently, in order to have a clearer picture of speech codes in the United States, it should be recognized that the concept of linguistic regulations in American universities is not new. According to Wilson (1995), students "have been disciplined for their speech since colleges were first founded, and legitimate limits are frequently placed on words and individuals can be sued for libel and slander" Moreover, this was acknowledged by the American Supreme Court, which "accepted limits on free speech in cases of immediate harm, captive audiences, criminal threat, obscenity, immediate riot and time, place, and manner restrictions" (Wilson, 1995: 91).

However, as mentioned before, speech codes can also be controversial. An interesting case study is the University of Pennsylvania "Water Buffalo" case. In the University of Pennsylvania case, a freshman was expelled from the university because he called African-American sorority members who were making loud noises and disturbing his sleep during the night "water buffalo" (the charged student claimed not to intend discrimination, as the individual in question spoke the modern Hebrew language, and the term "water buffalo", or "behema", in modern Hebrew, is slang for a rude or an insulting person; moreover, water buffalo are native to Asia rather than Africa). Some saw the statement as racist while others simply saw it as a general insult. Questions were raised about how far was too far when interpreting and punishing statements like the one in question. The college eventually dropped the charges amid national criticism (Downs, 1993; Kors & Silverglate, 1998).

As discussed earlier, it is difficult to differentiate between words which function as 'harmful acts' and 'trivial word's, but which do not affect reality in a harmful way. However, according to Lakoff (2012), he points out that

'We must recognize that in fact words are not the same as actions. Most people given the choice between a vile epithet and a punch in the nose would opt for the former [...] If language is world-changing, the way it works is different from that of direct action, and less accessible to legal investigation'

(Lakoff, 2000: 107).

As a result, another important consideration within the speech code controversy is that language and legal investigation seems to be an essential part of the discussion about speech codes. Legal investigation bases its procedures on direct actions and language seems to work somehow differently from direct action (Lakoff, 2000).

The distinction between harmful and harmless speech is difficult to make, and American legal documents remain vague in their definitions of 'fighting words' (Wilson, 1995: 92-98), which could cause generalizations as the context of harmful language is not clearly defined. Mills (2003) discusses the possible harmful outcome of 'political correctness' in relation to generalizations referring to sexism and anti-sexism. She maintains that anti-sexist practices are 'local' and 'context-specific', and 'political correctness' is "a set of rules extrapolated by the media from these practices and generalized to absurdity" (Mills, 2003). Consequently, 'politically correct' language can cause feelings of pressure as PC makes people fear being judged according to generalized 'PC' practices. There is considerable pressure to use PC language.

Here, 'political correctness' is, according to Suhr (2008), constructed as a 'linguistic mission' that causes anxiety amongst those who use language in a supposedly 'neutral' way. 'Politically correct' linguistics refers to the promotion of inclusive, gendered as well as non-sexist language, for instance, an increasing awareness of potentially offensive language.

2.3 Sexist Language and Gender Inclusive Language

Sexist language includes "words, phrases, and expressions that unnecessarily differentiate between women and men or exclude, trivialize, or diminish either gender" (as cited in Na Pattalung, 2008, p. 4). Some terms are inherently sexist, such as "mankind" and "policeman." The terms ignore the female gender in categories that should include both men and women. Often, these terms are the hardest to avoid without making the writing sound stilted (Klein, 1993). The term "gender-inclusive" implies that both females and males are explicitly "included" by the language used. For example, "A teacher should help his students" could be understood as excluding females from being teachers.

There are several aspects of the trend toward gender-inclusive English. A study examined the use of a generic term, which implies that the word 'they' is used generally to refer to both females and males by avoiding using the gender-exclusive generic he; for example, "A doctor should keep his patients informed", to gender-inclusive form; "Doctors should keep their patients informed" or "A doctor should keep her or his patients informed" Also, the change from the use of the gender-exclusive generic 'man'. For example, "Man has lived on the planet for over a million years", to "Humans have lived on the planet for over a million years" (Ong, et al., 1996).

The tendency of eradicating gender-exclusive English seems to have been most active in countries where English is the main language or in the Inner Circle countries: Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, and the United States. In some institutions in these countries, gender-inclusive language has become the standard to which all writing must conform.

In the research of Ong, Zhou & Jacobs (1996), the use of gender-exclusive generic "he" is considered to be a more gender-inclusive form, and there is a shift away from the use of gender-exclusive "man" to a more gender-inclusive form.

The results revealed that the context dependent nature of this particular language use is important. As a result, the decision to use gender-inclusive or gender-exclusive language must be based on the linguistic, socio-cultural knowledge and beliefs of the educator (Ong et al., 1996).

Another research showed that women were more concerned about sexist language than men. Women seem to evaluate it negatively and are likely to use more gender-inclusive methods to avoid sexist language. Also, older subjects were more attentive to gender-exclusive language than current college students (Rubin & Greenie, 1991). Moreover, when people use the generic masculine language instead of more gender-inclusive forms, they communicate gender stereotypes and sometimes exclude women from certain social roles (Sczesny, Moser & Woods, 2015).

Guyatt et al. (1997) examined the attitudes toward the use of gender-inclusive language among residency trainees at McMaster University, Hamilton, Ontario. Canada from July 1993 to June 1994. They found significant differences between resident trainees in their attitudes toward language use. Furthermore, attitudes of residents in different programs were different. The results revealed that, based on a 4-point scale, residents in the surgical program were more gender-exclusive than the mean score for psychiatry residents. In addition, gender has an effect on attitudes, with women more gender-inclusive and men more gender-exclusive.

The women in the surgical program were almost as gender-exclusive as the men, and the men in the psychiatry program were almost as gender-inclusive as the women. They suspected that there were two related explanations for this; first, women and men choose specialties in which the prevailing environment is consistent with their own attitudes; second, both women's and men's attitudes are influenced by their training environment (Guyatt et al., 1997) Consequently, the results revealed that the use of gender-exclusive language reflects or helps create an environment that is unwelcoming to women.

Moreover, in a survey, 105 medical students at Johns Hopkins University responded to a questionnaire before graduation to assess career choice, the influence of a number of conditions on choice of specialty, the perception of a specialty's attitudes toward their gender, and the students' experiences during clinical rotations. The result showed that female medical students perceive gender bias in surgical services, suggesting that an "old boys' club" attitude may still exist in surgery (Lillimore et. al, 1994)

The research of Ong, Zhou & Jacobs (1996) described a study of Asian educators of English as a Second Language and how they approached the gender-

inclusion change in English classes and curriculum materials. The change is outlined, focusing on the move from the use of the gender-exclusive generic "he" to more gender-inclusive forms, and the shift away from the use of the gender-exclusive "man" to a more gender-inclusive form. The subjects were 35 non-native speaking English language instructors from nine Asian countries attending a regional language center course; they had, on average, 12 years of experience as teachers, materials writers, and curriculum planners. They were asked to listen to a 45-minute presentation on gender-exclusion, answer a questionnaire, and then were interviewed.

The written language of several of the subjects was analyzed, and the participants were all asked for feedback on the subject and the study. The results revealed that the majority used gender-exclusive materials in their classes. Most reported that they would now use gender-inclusive materials, although some cited situational constraints, such as tradition or a lack of materials, as barriers for them to change to gender-inclusive. Also, the decision to use gender-inclusive or gender-exclusive language must be based on the linguistic and socio-cultural knowledge and beliefs of the educator.

The preference for gender-inclusive English found among participants in this study contrasts with the findings from lectures of the English Language Proficiency Unit of the National University of Singapore (Ferryman, 1995). In that study, the large majority of the 35 lecturers, approximately one-fifth of whom were Westerners, said that they would mark gender-inclusive English as wrong.

2.4 Previous Related Studies

Andrews (1996) studied the popular opinions towards the naming of words that were involved in 'political correctness' and 'cultural sensitivity' based on semiotic and sociolinguistic theory. She focused on words about gender, race, disabilities, and ethnicity; for example, Asian vs. Oriental, Black vs. African American. The findings showed that naming is determined by concepts and word taboos, but interpreters imposed the meaning of a name. She also concluded that political correctness was caused by a powerful socio-cultural movement and reflected the dynamic interplay of linguistic signs within changing social contexts.

Banning (2004) analyzed the discourse of political correctness in classrooms designed to examine critical contemporary issues of popular culture and the public sphere. She "was concerned with the impact of social justice and public debate, and more broadly, with the question of what role rhetoric and writing courses could play in preparing students for civic engagement" (Banning, 2004: 192) The outcome indicated that studying political correctness could foster critical thinking abilities on social issues (Banning, 2004).

Lin (2010) extended both of the abovementioned studies and investigated the difference in the use of PC language between native speakers of English and non-native speakers. A total of 21 students, 14 native speakers of English and seven non-native speakers of English (all females) who studied in a U.S mid-western university were asked to complete a questionnaire consisting of 30 multiple choice questions and three open-ended questions. The first part consisted of various PC words in different topics: age, gender, race/ethnicity, physical/mental challenges, taboos, economic status, occupation, cars, prisoners, drunkenness, biological companions and class of airline service and the second part were questions that aimed to get opinions about the phenomenon of PC language. The results showed that native speakers of English, especially whites, have different attitudes toward PC compared with non-native speakers. It could be inferred that the white participants felt it was not necessary to use PC language. However, most participants believed that PC was not temporary but it would continue to develop.

Another research study examined political correctness in the normative aspect. Goncalo, Chatman, Duguid and Kennedy (2015) examined the effects of imposing a political correctness norm by setting clear expectations for how men and women should interact and by reducing interaction uncertainty and boosting creativity in mixed-sex groups. The results indicated that "the PC norm, which is often maligned as a threat to free speech, may play an important role in promoting gender parity at work by allowing demographically heterogeneous work groups to more freely exchange creative ideas" (Goncalo et al., 2015).

Marques (2009) proposed a SWOT analysis of the political correctness phenomenon.

Figure 3.1 SWOT Analysis of Marques' study

Figure 1
Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT)
Analysis of Political Correctness (PC) as a Phenomenon

Strengths:	Weaknesses:
▪ *Career:* The possibility of career advancement when responsibly applying PC in the workplace ▪ *National Marketing:* The enhancement of sales success when introducing one's product in a new market by incorporating PC in the language used for advertisements and other product translations.	▪ *National Marketing*: The increasing homogeneity in advertising massages, as a prevention tool for possible audiences being offended by audacious advertisements. ▪ *Hypocrisy:* Augmented over-sensitivity in all segments of society: politics, education, religion, gender- or sexually oriented, racially, and so forth.
Opportunities:	**Threats:**
▪ *Globalization:* Utilizing globalization as a means of cultures learning from one another: Overly sensitive societies should examine the unconstrained ways in which, till today, the majority of our global population lives. People in some societies still seem to understand the value of genuineness, candor, and the display of cultural symbols.	▪ *Deculturalization*: Too much adherence to groups and individuals who feel offended by historical and cultural displays can result in the complete elimination of these manifestations from an established culture, and the ultimate danger of entirely eradicating this culture.

From "How politically correct is political correctness? A SWOT analysis of this phenomenon," by Marques, J. F., 2009, *Business & Society*, *48*(2), p. 264.

The study analyzed whether political correctness can help people in the career advancement and create a good workplace environment. Political correctness is undoubtedly imperative in marketing, especially when one has to deal with cultural differences and aims for acceptance of a product. However, political correctness can lead to a high level of hypocrisy within a society in which people will no longer be able to freely express their own opinions but would rather refrain from stating the truth as they perceive it. Moreover, at the societal level, political correctness can lead to the preciousness of cultures and ultimately to 'deculturalization'. This implies that if political correctness were implemented in all areas, there would not be any authenticity left in the world

.

2.5 Summary

A few studies have examined the effects of the use of political correctness in various aspects. For instance, the findings of Goncalo et al., (2015) emphasized the importance of applying political correctness norms to the workplace regarding gender differences and creativity. However, the norms of political correctness are still difficult to define and it inevitably has to be involved with the use of language.

Likewise, although the analysis of Marques (2009) provided more tangible outcomes of the political correctness phenomenon in a SWOT analysis, this analysis was based on previous studies without quantitative research. Accordingly, further quantitative research should be conducted to determine whether these findings can be implemented in real situations.

In a linguistic aspect, the findings of Andrew (1996), and Banning (2004) illustrated the relationship between ideology, socio-cultural issues, and language practice. However, these studies were specifically focused on theoretical frameworks and the philosophy of PC. In contrast, the study of Lin (2010) was conducted to understand the actual use of PC language in daily life with the factors of native languages, gender, generation and race. However, the results cannot be generalized and such studies should also be conducted in regions where English is not the official language.

As a result, this research study will examine the awareness and attitudes towards the use of English language with political correctness of students in a university in Bangkok, Thailand, a group of people from different backgrounds who have been exposed to English for a significant period of time. The results of this study will provide new findings that may bridge the previous research gaps and shed light on the use of English with political correctness in real situations in Thailand. It also aims to raise awareness, which will be useful for individuals in the globalized era with respect to communicating properly and avoiding conflicts.

CHAPTER 3
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter will describe: (1) the subjects, (2) the materials (3) the procedures used in the collection and analysis of the data, and (4) the data analysis.

3.1   Subjects

Participation

The subjects in the study were 100 students studying in a master's degree program in a university in Bangkok, Thailand.

The students were enrolled in a master's degree in English program. They were students interested in English with different ages, occupations, and genders. Thus, the use of English with *political correctness* will be essential for these students to enhance their ability to communicate in an international environment and develop their careers. Likewise, their attitudes and knowledge about the use of English with *political correctness* can reflect the reality and tendency of this phenomenon.

3.2   Materials

The research instrument of this study was a set of questionnaires consisting of three parts: general information, a 30-item multiple-choice test, and a survey. Interviews were also conducted to gain qualitative data from the respondents.

3.2.1 Questionnaire

Part 1: General Information

This part asked for respondents' demographic information: gender, age, occupation, previous degree, and TU-GET or other English test score. All of respondents' information was kept confidential.

Part 2: Test of the Use of English with Political Correctness

The second part consisted of a 30-item test on different types of English vocabulary with political correctness used in diverse situations featuring more than two choices and one blank line for their own version. The types of vocabulary included gender, race/ethnicity, physical/mental challenges, and other types of politically correct language. The choices were adapted from Lin's (2010) questionnaire (See appendix A).

The choices were not provided in an orderly sequence to prevent respondents from guessing the objectives of the experimental procedure according to W.E Lambert (1967) (as cited in Lin, 2010).

Part 3: Opinions and Attitudes

The third part of the test was 25 questions that asked for respondents' opinions and attitudes towards the use of English with political correctness. The questionnaire was adapted from the Language Attitudes Survey from the Chickasaw Nation (2006), Cherokee Nation (2002), Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California (n.d), Hinton (2001), which has been used to survey the attitudes towards the importance of languages. Thus, in this research, the term 'language' in the former survey was modified to 'politically correct language' with adapted questions in three main topics: (1) attitudes towards the importance of politically correct language, (2) opinions towards the practical use of politically correct language, and (3) limitations, negative attitudes towards the use of politically correct language. All of the answers were based on a scale of 1–5. (See appendix A)

3.2.2 Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were conducted, which is a qualitative method of inquiry that combines a pre-determined set of open questions with the opportunity for the interviewer to explore particular themes or further responses. The interviews were conducted anonymously with five respondents.

The questions of the interview were about the definition of politically correct language, opinions about the use of English language with political correctness, opinions about political correctness in English and Thai language, and the use of

language with political correctness in real life. The basic questions were adapted from Lin (2010) (see appendix B).

3.3 Procedures

3.3.1 Research Design

The data was collected from five students who were studying in the second year of a master's degree program as a pilot study to check the quality of the test and questionnaire. These five students were not considered as a population for this study.

3.3.2 Data Collection

After a pilot study and the test enhancement, 100 hard copies of the test and questionnaire were distributed to 100 students and they were asked to return them the same day. The interviews were recorded and transcribed for further data analysis.

3.4 Data Analysis

The quantitative data from the questionnaires, i.e., the English with politically correct language test and the opinions and attitudes survey, were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences Program (SPSS) to calculate the frequency, percentage, and mean. Frequency and percentage were used to describe participants' personal data. Meanwhile, the qualitative data, i.e., the interviews and opinions, were interpreted for further results and discussion.

English with politically correct language test

As mentioned earlier, the test consisted of 30 questions covering three main types of political correctness; (1) Gender (2) Race, Ethnicity (3) Physical, Mental Challenges, and also other types of political correctness. (See Appendix A)

Table 3.1: The Topic Areas and Specific Politically Correct Language Terms

Category: Gender
1) 1.   - Each participant must present his ID badge at the door.   **- All participants must present their ID badges at the door.**   **- Each participant must present his/her ID badge at the door.**
2) 5.   - Businessman   **- Businessperson**   - Businesswoman
3) 8.   - Policeman   - Policewoman   **- Police officer**
4) 10.   **- Cabin crew**   **- Flight Attendant**   - Air Hostess/ Steward
5) 15.   - Mankind   **- Humankind**
6) 22.   When referring to a mixed group, you say…   - Guys   **- Folks**   **- Friends**
7) 23.   **- Artificial**   - Man-made
8) 26.

-Mail Carrier -Mailman -Postman
Category: Race/Ethnicity
9) 2. - **African people** - Black people - Negro people
10) 6. - Red Indian **- American Indian** **- Native American**
11) 11. - Oriental **- Asian**
12) 16. He is from Taipei. He is - Chinese **- Taiwanese** **- Chinese Taipei**
13) 29. **- Banned** - Blacklisted

Category: Mental, physical Challenges
14) 3. - Handicapped people **- Disabled people** **- Physically-challenged people**
15) 4. - Elderly person

- Mature person **- Senior citizen**
16) 7. **- Differently-sized person** - Fat person **- Larger-than-average person**
17) 12. **- Intellectual disability** - Retarded person **- Late developer**
18) 17. **- Plain-looking** **- Cosmetically different** - Ugly
19) 18. - Blind person **- Optically-challenged person**
20) 19. - Short person **- Vertically-challenged person**
21) 30. **- Hearing impaired** - Deaf **- Hard-of-hearing**

Others
22) 9. - His uncle died. **- His uncle passed away.** **- His uncle returned to dust.**
23) 13.

- Slum **- Substandard housing**
24) 14. - Underdeveloped country **- Developing country**
25) 20. - Poor **- Economically disadvantaged** **- Low-income**
26) 21. **- Undocumented Immigrant** - Illegal Immigrant **- Undocumented Alien**
27) 24. **- Lacking a formal education** - Uneducated
28) 25. - Prostitute **- Sex Worker** - Hooker
29) 27. **- Homeless person** - Bum **- Displaced homeowner**
30) 28. If you had to list the names of international leaders, you would list them by **- Alphabetical order** - Power order - Gender order (either men to women or vice versa)

Questionnaire

The questionnaire was constructed based on a Likert-type scale. The researcher adapted the rating format from Gardner's Attitude/Motivation Test Battery as a five-point Likert-type scale.

The format of the five-point Likert-type scale was as follows:

5 = strongly agree

4 = agree

3 = neither agree nor disagree (neutral)

2 = disagree

1 = strongly disagree

The data, which was analyzed by the SPSS program, showed the degree of opinions through the range of the mean score values. The mean scores were classified into five interval scales based on the study of Srisa-ard (2010).

The criteria for determining the degree of opinions are shown in Table 3.2

Table 3.2 Criteria to Determine Degree of Opinions

Interval Scale	Range of Mean Score	Meaning/Opinion
5	4.51 - 5.00	Strongly Agree
4	3.51 - 4.20	Agree
3	2.51 - 3.40	Neutral
2	1.51 - 2.60	Disagree
1	1.00 – 1.50	Strongly Disagree

CHAPTER 4
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter reports the results from the data analysis. The descriptive statistics are discussed first, followed by the results of the study. This chapter is divided into three parts based on the test, the survey, and the interview questions. The data analysis was conducted by using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences Program (SPSS) to calculate descriptive statistics such as frequency, percentage, and mean, and summarize the test.

4.1 Personal Data of the Respondents

The first part of the questionnaire examined the demographic data concerning student number, gender, age, occupation, previous degree, English score (TU-GET or others), and years of learning/using English.

In this study, 150 questionnaires were distributed; a total of 100 questionnaires were returned, which yielded a response rate of 66.67 percent. Most of the respondents preferred to be anonymous by not filling in their student number and some of the personal data.

Table 2 displays the participants' gender. The total number of participants was 100, with 12 male respondents, 87 female respondents, and 1 missing response. In other words, males accounted for 12%, females 87%, and 1% of an unidentifiable gender.

Meanwhile, 69% of the respondents' were between 21-30 years old while 29% of them were between 31-40 years old. Likewise, there were two respondents who were aged between 41-50 and more than 50, which accounted for 1% for 31-40 and 1% for more than 50. Likewise, 41% were working in the private sector whereas 15% were working in the public sector, 11% were teachers/tutors and 11% were students. However, 22% did not provide an answer to this question. Meanwhile, the table also shows that 91% had a bachelor's degree and 6% already possessed a master's degree. A total of 3% did not provide answers to this question.

Table 3 displays the respondents' years of studying/using English. Most of respondents had learnt and used English for more than 15 years. Table 4 displays the

TU-GET scores from 59 respondents, which varied from 470 to 890. Five respondents also identified their score using TOEIC results, which were 790, 850, 880, 890, and 900. Two respondents also indicated their score using IELTS results, which were 5.5 and 6.

Table 4.1 General Background Information

Description	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	12	12.0
Female	87	87.0
Missing	1	1.0
Total	**100**	**100**
Age		
21-30	69	69.0
31-40	29	29.0
41-50	1	1.0
Over 50	1	1.0
Total	**100**	**100**
Occupation		
Student	11	11.0
Teacher/Tutor	11	11.0
Public Sector	15	15.0
Private Sector	41	41.0
Missing	22	22.0
Total	**100**	**100**
Previous Degree		
Bachelor's	91	91.0
Master's	6	6.0
Missing	3	3.0
Total	**100**	**100**

Table 4.2: Years of Learning/Using English.

Year	Frequency	Percent
7	1	1.0
10	6	6.0
11	5	5.0
12	4	4.0
13	1	1.0
14	1	1.0
15	18	18.0
16	5	5.0
17	4	4.0
18	7	7.0
19	2	2.0
20	24	24.0
21	4	4.0
22	1	1.0
23	3	3.0
25	6	6.0
26	1	1.0
Total	93	93
Missing	7	7
Total	100	100

Table 4.3: TU-GET Score

TU-GET Score	Frequency	Percent
470	1	1
530	1	1
540	1	1
550	11	11
555	1	1
560	3	3
570	3	3
580	2	2
590	1	1
620	6	6
650	8	8
690	2	2
700	4	4
710	4	4
720	1	1
740	1	1
750	2	2
770	2	2
790	1	1
800	1	1
840	1	1
870	1	1
890	1	1
Total	59	59
Missing	41	41
Total	100	100

4.2 Test on the Use of English with Political Correctness

This part sought to examine the respondents' use of English with political correctness. The test consisted of 30 questions covering three main types of political correctness: (1) Gender (2) Race, Ethnicity (3) Physical, Mental Challenges, and also other types of political correctness. From 100 respondents, the highest score was 28, the lowest score was 9, and the average score was 18.45.

4.2.1 Gender

Items 1, 5, 8, 10, 15, 22, 23, and 26 were related to gender-inclusive language. Table 4.4 displays the result of these questions. It can be seen that most of the respondents used politically correct language in the gender-inclusive sentence (97% in item1) but they used less gender-inclusive versions of words that have –man suffix; such as, 'artificial' (69%), 'police officer' (68%), 'businessperson' (55%), 'humankind' (43%), 'mail carrier' (33%). Likewise, only 51% of respondents used 'folks/friends' to refer to a mixed group instead of using 'guys'. However, respondents used the more neutral word for occupations such as 'cabin crew/ flight attendant' (84%).

Table 4.4: Results on Gender Test

Item	Correct	Suggested Version
1) 1. - Each participant must present his ID badge at the door. **- All participants must present their ID badges at the door.** **- Each participant must present his/her ID badge at the door.**	97%	- ID badge must be presented at the door.
2) 5. - Businessman **- Businessperson** - Businesswoman	55%	- Depends on gender

3) 8. - Policeman - Policewoman **- Police officer**	68%	- Depends on gender - Police
4) 10. **- Cabin crew** **- Flight Attendant** - Air Hostess/ Steward	84%	
5) 15. - Mankind **- Humankind**	43%	
6) 22. When referring to a mixed group, you say… - Guys **- Folks** **- Friends**	51%	
7) 23. **- Artificial** - Man-made	69%	- Unnatural
8) 26. **- Mail Carrier** - Mailman - Postman	33%	

4.2.2 Race/ Ethnicity

Items 2, 6, 11, 16, and 29 were related to words that are politically correct in terms of race and ethnicity. Most respondents used the politically correct version in this category: 96% for 'Taiwanese/Chinese Taipei', 84% for 'American Indian/Native American' and 'Asian', and 71% for 'African people'. Moreover, the word 'blacklisted', which is considered a politically incorrect as the term 'black' is used with a negative meaning, was still used more than the alternative version; 'banned'(42%).

Table 4.5: Results on Race/Ethnicity test

Item	Correct	Suggested Version
9) 2. - **African people** - Black people - Negro people	71%	- Colored people
10) 6. - Red Indian **- American Indian** **- Native American**	84%	
11) 11. - Oriental **- Asian**	84%	
12) 16. He is from Taipei. He is - Chinese **- Taiwanese** **- Chinese Taipei**	96%	
13) 29. **- Banned** - Blacklisted	42%	

4.2.3 Physical, Mental Challenges

Items 3, 4, 7, 12, 17, 18, 19, 30 aimed to examine politically correct language in terms of physical and mental challenges. A total of 73% of respondents used the politically correct version of 'disabled people/physically challenged people', 68% used 'differently sized person/larger-than-average person', 67% used 'intellectual disability/late developer', 63% used 'plain-looking/cosmetically different', 58% used 'mature person/senior citizen' and 'hearing-impaired/hard-of-hearing'. Meanwhile, only 37% of respondents used the politically correct version of an 'optically-challenged person' and 'vertically-challenged person'.

Table 4.6: Results of Physical, Mental Challenges test

Item	Correct	Suggested Version
14) 3. - Handicapped people **- Disabled people** **- Physically-challenged people**	73%	
15) 4. - Elderly person **- Mature person** **- Senior citizen**	58%	
16) 7. **- Differently-sized person** - Fat person **- Larger-than-average person**	68%	- Chubby person - Overweight person
17) 12. **- Intellectual disability** - Retarded person **- Late developer**	67%	- Person with mental problem - Slow to learn person - Delayed development
18) 17.	63%	

- Plain-looking - Cosmetically different - Ugly		
19) 18. - Blind person - Optically-challenged person	37%	- vision disability person - visual impaired person
20) 19. - Short person - Vertically-challenged person	37%	- Not tall/ medium height/ small person
21) 30. - Hearing impaired - Deaf - Hard-of-hearing	58%	

4.2.4 Others

In this category, the test aimed to examine various types of politically correct language. Most respondents used politically correct versions of the following situations: 98% chose 'homeless person/displaced homeowner', 82% used 'developing country' 80% used 'pass away/return to dust', 64% used 'economically disadvantaged/low-income'. Notably, only 51% used 'substandard housing' instead of 'slum'.

On the other hand, 43% of respondents would list the names of international leaders in alphabetical order, 40% used 'undocumented immigrant/undocumented alien', 28% used 'lacking a formal education', while only 13% used the term 'sex worker'.

Table 4.7: Results on Other Categories Test

Item	Correct	Suggested Version
22) 9. - His uncle died. **- His uncle passed away.** **- His uncle returned to dust.**	80%	
23) 13. - Slum **- Substandard housing**	51%	- economically depressed neighborhood
24) 14. - Underdeveloped country **- Developing country**	82%	
25) 20. - Poor **- Economically disadvantaged** **- Low-income**	64%	- Underprivileged
26) 21. **- Undocumented Immigrant** - Illegal Immigrant **- Undocumented Alien**	40%	
27) 24. **- Lacking a formal education** - Uneducated	28%	
28) 25. - Prostitute **- Sex Worker** - Hooker	13%	
29) 27. **- Homeless person** - Bum **- Displaced homeowner**	98%	

30) 28. If you had to list the names of international leaders, you would list them by **- Alphabetical order** - Power order - Gender order (either men to women or vice versa)	43%	

4.3 Opinions and Attitudes Survey

According to the survey, the questions were categorized into three categories: (1) attitudes towards the importance of politically correct language, (2) opinions towards the practical use of politically correct language, and (3) limitations and negative attitudes towards the use of politically correct language. Most of respondents agreed on questions that showed supportive attitudes towards the use of politically correct language. Meanwhile, most of them were neutral and disagreed with questions that represented unsupportive attitudes towards politically correct language. Likewise, respondents agreed with certain questions examining opinions towards the use of politically language. However, they were neutral on the question that asked whether politically correct language is politicized and disagreed that politically correct language has been overused.

Table 4.8: Results on the Opinion/Attitudes Survey

No.	Statement	Mean	S.D.
Attitudes towards the importance of politically correct language			
1. It is important for members of our community to know politically correct language.		4.20	0.68
2. Politically correct language is vital to promote equality among different groups of people.		4.21	0.64

3. Politically correct language is worth using	4.16	0.63
5. Our community should work hard to promote the use of politically correct language	4.06	0.62
6. It would be a good idea to promote the use of politically correct language at home	3.71	0.83
7. Politically correct language actually promotes equality	4.14	0.62
8. It is important that politically correct language is encouraged and used in workplaces	4.22	0.68
9. Politically correct language should be encouraged and used in the media.	4.41	0.55
10. Politically correct language should be encouraged and used in formal speech	4.44	0.61
11. Politically correct language should be encouraged and used in government activities	4.42	0.64
13. I would be willing to promote the use of politically correct language	3.97	0.67
14. I normally use politically correct language	3.24	0.81
15. Politically correct language should be taught in schools	4.33	0.63
23. Politically correct language can reduce misunderstandings and/or conflicts in cross-cultural communication	4.15	0.74
24. People who use politically correct language are considered to be more reliable and professional	4.15	0.77
25. Politically correct language builds good relationships between interlocutors (persons in a conversation)	4.11	0.80

Limitations, negative attitudes towards the use of politically correct language

4. Politically correct language is difficult to use	3.58	0.78
12. It does not matter if the language is written and spoken without being politically correct	2.51	0.96
16. I think politically correct language is not important		

in my daily life	2.43	0.83
17. I think politically correct language		
is still not widely used	3.86	0.80
18. I think politically correct language is not important		
in my workplace	2.56	1.02

Opinions towards the practical use of politically correct language		
19. In the future, people will use		
more politically correct language	3.87	0.85
20. Politically correct language is influenced by the society	4.09	0.65
21. Politically correct language is politicized	3.56	0.78
22. Politically correct language has been overused	2.42	0.89

4.4 Interviews

Five participants were interviewed anonymously to collect in-depth data about their attitudes toward politically correct language. There were a total of eight questions that the interviewees were asked to elaborate on their opinions: (1) What is your understanding about politically correct language/How would you define the term 'Political Correctness'? (2) What is your opinion of the phenomenon of Political Correctness? (3)What influence do you think it has or may have on the people, the language and the society in general? (4) Is it a temporary phenomenon or will it continue to develop in the future? (5) What is your opinion about political correctness in English language? (6)What is your opinion about political correctness in Thai language? (7)What are the difficulties and problems of politically correct language? (8) Will you use PC language once you have already studied about it?

Definition of Politically correct language

As political correctness and politically correct language are not clearly defined and their meanings seem to be different according to individuals, the interviewees were asked questions about the definition of these terms such as 'What is your understanding about politically correct language?' 'How would you define the

term 'Political Correctness'? The result showed that they viewed the use of this kind of language as a tool to avoid conflicts and promote equality. One interviewee said "in my understanding, politically correct language is language that has no discriminate sense whether it is in terms of sex, race or socio-economic status which is basically considered as a liberalist language" and the other's opinion was "due to my understanding about political correctness, it is the term used to describe avoidance of using offensive languages toward sensitive issues; gender, ethnicity, color discrimination, and etc." As a result, it can be summarized that the interviewees had basic knowledge about politically correct language as language for equality and they had positive attitudes towards politically correct language.

However, the interviewees understood and defined the term 'politically correct language' as language used for specific purposes and they viewed politically correct language as not a normal method of communication with general people. For example, one interviewee said that it is "an alternative way of communication with respect and equality" while the other said that "it's a kind of language usage to form a new word for specific purposes such as euphemism, bias-free language, etc." They also mentioned that the term political correctness is very broad and difficult to define as it can be implemented with any topic; for example, languages, political expressions, and ideologies. One interviewee mentioned one situation that was related to political correctness that she could not comment or give opinions about politics, which had a tendency to criticize the politicians that her family supported. Thus, she also viewed 'political correctness' as a way of speaking or expressing something that is not against the surrounding people.

Opinions about the Use of Language with Political Correctness

In this topic, the interviewees were asked questions such as: what is your opinion of the phenomenon of Political Correctness?; what influence do you think it has or may have on the people, the language and the society in general?; is it a temporary phenomenon or will it continue to develop in the future? Most of the interviewees viewed the phenomenon of political correctness and politically correct language as a phenomenon that is happening limitedly to some groups of people. For instance, one interviewee stated that it is "a phenomenon for only some group of

people but for people in general it is still something new". Interviewees also viewed that this phenomenon occurs "only in groups of educated, urban people" and "it should be implemented in a developed society" Accordingly, it can be interpreted that the participants view political correctness ideology and politically correct language as an idea which is merely known and discussed in few groups of people. The other interesting opinions about the political correctness phenomenon are that, according to the interviewees, "political correctness should be viewed as a peace maker since some conflicts can be declined by political correctness" and "it is a good thing that people are getting more and more aware of political correctness because it protects marginalized group but some of the time. It has a potential to create a very good impact to the society; as long as it doesn't overwhelm people, it create a new bias view which, in turn, oppress illiberal view. So, in my opinion, it has a potential to create a very good impact to the society; as long as it doesn't overwhelm people and oppress illiberal view." Accordingly, it can be seen that interviewees are positive towards the phenomenon as long as it is not overused and it will only affect people who are aware of it. However, the interviewees agreed that this phenomenon helps support and promote awareness about equality in society. Interviewees also said that the use of political correctness alongside the role of mass media and social media will influence the society and individuals as "languages are not only shape the ideas of people in the particular societies, but it also influences on one's role". However, interviewees had different views towards the future of the use of language with political correctness. One interviewee does not think that it is only a temporary phenomenon as "people are increasingly educated in various ways. Thus, the more they are educated, the more they begin to think critically"; meanwhile, other interviewees seemed to view this phenomenon as a declining trend as it is not concise, unclear, and only few groups of people really care about political correctness. They also mentioned that political correctness has the potential to be developed if there are more attempts to promote people's interest in the phenomenon.

In conclusion, participants' opinions towards the use of language with political correctness were, in general, positive. They saw language with political correctness as a tool to promote equality and produce good impacts on individuals and the society in relation to the development of critical thinking. However, they still

viewed political correctness as a limited phenomenon; only few groups of people, mostly urban and some educated people, were aware and enthusiastic about promoting and developing this kind of language. Likewise, the use of language with political correctness is viewed as something new for society in general and sometimes it could be overused.

Opinions about Political Correctness in English and Thai Language

In this part, the participants were asked to give opinions about the use of political correctness, specifically in terms of English and Thai languages. In the case of English language, a participant stated that "I think political correctness started in the Western world. Therefore, PC in English language is pretty clear in itself. We can easily differentiate PC and non-PC terms" However, other interviewees viewed political correctness in English as confusing and unclear language despite having good objectives. For example, when someone tries to use 'optically-challenged person' or 'vertically-challenged person' to replace 'blind' and 'short', people, especially non-native speakers, can sometimes feel that these are "unclear and redundant" Likewise, some words are not required to be gender-inclusive if we know the gender of the mentioned person already. For example, we can use 'businesswoman' if the person is a woman or 'fireman' if that person is a man.

In the case of Thai language, the interviewees found it difficult to think about some examples; some interviewees said they could not find any examples about the use of political correctness in Thai language and Thai people tend not to be interested in developing their language with political correctness. In relation to the society, one interviewer viewed political correctness in Thai language in a way that "the sense of PC that is originally from Thai language doesn't exist because we didn't have a history of marginalized people who fought for themselves like in the West. Also, Thailand is still hierarchical, so is its language. If I need to think of PC in Thai, it is all those correspond to Western terms and stories".

Interestingly, some interviewees said that it is difficult to find examples because Thai language is already gender-inclusive. For example, 'he' or 'she' in Thai language can be 'เขา' (khao), affix –man is neutral form of 'นัก (nak) or 'มนุษย์' (ma-nood); for example, either businessman or businesswoman is 'นักธุรกิจ' (nak-too-ra-kij)

or either humankind or mankind is 'มนุษยชาติ' (ma-nood-sa-ya-chad). Other point given by an interviewee is that nowadays Thai people seem to adopt more transliteration from English language. Accordingly, politically correct transliteration should be promoted. For example, Thai people used to call female cabin crew as 'แอร์' (air) from air hostess and male cabin crew 'สจ๊วต' (steward). In this case, an interviewee suggested that people should promote the term 'ลูกเรือ' (luk-rua), the Thai translation of cabin crew, or 'พนักงานต้อนรับบนเครื่องบิน' (pa-nak-ngan-ton-rub-bon-kruang-bin), the Thai translation of flight attendant more than using 'air' and 'steward'.

Moreover, one interviewee gave an opinion that

"I think that different words give different feelings not only in English or Thai language but also in any language; for instance, the differences of black people and African people. Firstly, I think we need to separate the language from speaker's agenda. For example, one might say black people with no offense, while others might consider this word offensive. Sometimes, it can be implied that one who see it offensive is also the one who has negative attitude about those mentioned people".

It can be concluded that the interviewee saw no difference between the use of political correctness in Thai and English language and it depends on the intentions and how people are educated about such terms. This interviewee also mentioned that many Thai people were still not aware that the term 'negro' is offensive and she also gave the example that "while people of other races cannot call colored people 'negro' or 'nigga', colored people can call each other with these words without feeling offended.

However, some interviewees said that the media has a lot of influence on the use of language with political correctness. For example, they said that while many in the Western media were aware of politically correct language, some famous Thai media still write their headlines with offensive and non-PC language. One interviewee mentioned the use of the word 'นักขุดทอง' (nak-kud-tong), which means 'gold-digger' to refer to LGBT people or 'ไอ้มืด' (ai-mued), which means 'the dark' to refer to colored people in the news headlines, which are completely politically incorrect in this interviewee's opinion; nevertheless, it is acceptable for a lot of people and they use these terms in a funny way as people are familiar and influenced by the media.

The Use of language with Political Correctness in Real Life

In this part, the interviewees were asked to give opinions about the problems and difficulties of the use of English language with political correctness and they were also asked if they would use English language with political correctness once they had already studied this term. All interviewees stated that the difficulty is that English with political correctness sometimes has unfamiliar terms and vocabulary, which might cause misunderstanding. Moreover, people can eventually ignore the use of such terms as one interviewee said that "it contrasts to the standard of language, so to replace the new set of words into people daily lives will be a problem". Meanwhile, another interviewee also emphasized the importance of the agenda of the speakers as mentioned in case of the term 'black' and 'colored' people in the previous topic. The other problem stated by the interviewee is that language with political correctness can sometimes be overused. The overuse of political correctness can be harmful to the speakers themselves as an interviewee said that "listeners might be confusing and eventually lose credibility and interest".

Lastly, the interviewees were asked whether they would use English language with political correctness once they had already studied it. All interviewees said that they would use politically correct language if they had knowledge about it. However, they would only use some words that they considered very sensitive and that normal people would understand. For example, the interviewees said that they would use more gender-inclusive terms and vocabulary while they would prefer to use words such as short, blind, etc. rather than the politically correct ones.

CHAPTER 5
CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter presents (1) summary of findings, (2) the implications of the study, (3) the conclusion and (4) recommendations for further research.

5.1 Summary of findings

This study was conducted to examine the number of politically correct words and terms that students could use correctly and to examine students in a university in Bangkok, Thailand's attitudes towards the use of English with political correctness.

The study was conducted both quantitatively and qualitatively. A set of questionnaires that contained a test on the use of English with political correctness and opinions and attitudes survey about political correctness was distributed to 100 participants who were master's degree students in a university in Bangkok, Thailand. Also, five of the participants were interviewed about their attitudes towards the use of English with political correctness. The major findings from the study are presented based on two research questions as follows:

5.1.1 How many politically correct words and terms can students use correctly?

The results revealed that most of participants used a number of politically correct words and terms. As shown in chapter 4, most of the words and terms used correctly by more than 50% of participants were words and terms that have been widely used already. For example, gender-inclusive sentences and the word 'cabin-crew' or 'flight attendant' instead of 'air hostess' or 'steward'. However, gender-inclusive words for occupations were sparingly used according to participants' familiarity with those words. For example, 68% of respondents used the politically correct version of 'police officer' instead of 'policeman' but only 33% used the correct version of 'mail carrier' instead of 'mailman' or 'postman'. Likewise, in terms of physical and mental challenges, 73% of respondents used the politically correct version of 'disabled people/physically challenged people' while only 37% of respondents used the politically correct version of 'optically-challenged person' and 'vertically-challenged person'.

In terms of race and ethnicity, most participants used the politically correct words: 96% for 'Taiwanese/Chinese Taipei', 84% for 'American Indian/Native American' and 'Asian', and 71% for 'African people'. However, respondents still used the word 'blacklisted' more than the alternative version 'banned' (42%)

For other categories of politically correct language, respondents used more politically correct words and terms with which they were familiar. For example, 98% used 'homeless person or displaced homeowner' instead of 'bum'. Meanwhile, the term 'sex worker', which is considered the official and politically correct version for 'prostitute', was used by only 13%.

5.1.2 What are students' attitudes towards the use of English with political correctness?

According to the survey and the interviews, the results showed that students mainly have positive attitudes towards the use of English with political correctness. Most of the respondents agreed that political correctness is important in promoting equality and people should have knowledge about this.

Meanwhile, they agreed that the use of politically correct language should be encouraged in various fields, such as media, formal speech, government activities, and workplaces. They also agreed that politically correct language should be taught in school. Likewise, they agreed that politically correct language can reduce misunderstandings and/or conflicts in cross-cultural communication, politically correct language builds good relationship between interlocutors (persons in a conversation), and people who use politically correct language are considered to be more reliable and professional. Meanwhile, the interview results also displayed that if they had studied about politically correct language, they would be willing to use this type of language but limited to certain terms only.

On the other hand, respondents disagreed with the statements that it does not matter if the language is written and spoken without being politically correct and they considered politically correct language important in their daily life and their workplaces. While they viewed that politically correct language would be used more in the future, which is similar to the finding of Lin (2010) that most participants believed that PC is not temporary but it will continue to develop. However, the in-depth interviews showed that they seemed to view this phenomenon as a declining

trend as it is not concise, unclear, and only few groups of people really care about political correctness. This result might be related to the current world political situation in 2017, with the ideals of liberalism seeing a decline. Meanwhile, they also viewed that politically correct language is influenced by the society.

5.2 Implications of the Study

The implications of this study are as follows:

5.2.1   Master's degree students in a university in Bangkok, Thailand can use a number of politically correct words and terms in English. As a result, they should be encouraged to promote and continue to use politically correct words and terms in their daily life and workplaces in order to popularize English with political correctness in the society.

5.2.2   The results on attitudes toward the use of English with political correctness could be used as essential information to promote and develop the use of English with political correctness among non-native speakers.

5.2.3   The results showed that the limitations of politically correct language, according to the participants, are that it is sometimes unclear, not concise, and some people are overusing it. Thus, there should be a theory, standard, or common agreement among linguists, professors, or institutes about the use of English with political correctness. A standard for English with political correctness could be useful and develop the importance of politically correct language, which is viewed as formal and respectful language.

5.3 Discussion

5.3.1 The Use of English with Political Correctness and Demographic Information.

In Lin's study (2010), the researcher concluded that native speakers of English, especially whites, have different attitudes toward PC compared with non-native speakers. He pointed out that non-native speakers tend to use more politically correct language than the white native speakers. Accordingly, as participants in this research were non-native speakers, they, in terms of race and ethnicity, often used politically correct words: 96% for 'Taiwanese/Chinese Taipei', 84% for 'American Indian/Native American' and 'Asian', and 71% for 'African people'. However, the

respondents still used the word 'blacklisted' more than the alternative version 'banned' (42%), which can imply that the word 'blacklisted' does not make black people feel offended and it is still popularly used in daily life.

This result is also similar to the results of Andrews (1996) showing that political correctness was caused by powerful socio-cultural movements and it reflected the dynamic interplay of linguistic signs within changing social contexts.

5.3.2 Attitudes towards the Use of English with Political Correctness

The result about the attitudes towards the use of English with political correctness is related to study of Goncalo et al (2015), which mentioned that the political correctness norm, which is often maligned as a threat to free speech, may play an important role in promoting gender parity at work by allowing demographically heterogeneous work groups to more freely exchange creative ideas. In this study, the participants viewed political correctness as a peace maker and it should be promoted in a workplace. However, the threat of political correctness could occur when it is overused.

This result relates to the SWOT analysis of the political correctness phenomenon, which holds that political correctness can help people with awareness of political correctness in career advancement and create a good workplace environment (Marques, 2009). The interview results also showed that if they had studied about politically correct language, the respondents would be willing to use this type of language but limited to certain terms only.

5.4 Conclusion

According to the discussion and findings above, the following conclusions can be made:

5.4.1 Master's degree students in a university in Bangkok, Thailand are able to use certain politically correct words and terms correctly. However, the correctness depends on the familiarity of the respondents regardless of the categories of politically correct language.

5.4.2 Respondents have positive attitudes toward the use of politically correct language and they considered this type of language as a formal and

respectful language. Accordingly, their opinions showed that English with political correctness should be implemented in workplaces and certain fields. They also agreed with the importance of politically correct language and suggested that the limitations of English with political correctness are that it is unclear and there is no institution or academic initiative to standardize the use of English with political correctness, which is sometimes overused.

5.5 Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusion, the following recommendations are made for further study:

5.5.1   As the subjects were limited to master's degree students in a university in Bangkok, Thailand, further research could be conducted with other subjects and in different places in order to extend the knowledge about this topic.

5.5.2   The subjects of this study were only non-native speakers. As a result, further research with native speakers should be conducted.

5.5.3   This study only looked at political correctness in the linguistics area. As a result, further research might examine the use of political correctness in other fields.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A
QUESTIONNAIRE
Research Questionnaire

Title: **An Analysis of the Use of English with Political Correctness: A Case Study of Graduate Students in Thailand.**

This questionnaire is a part of a thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in Career English for International Communication, Language Institute, Thammasat University.

Directions:

   This questionnaire is designed to examine the use of English with Political Correctness of graduate students. Please answer all questions from your own idea. Your participation in this research is considered voluntary. Your information and answers will be kept strictly confidential and will be used for academic purpose only. This questionnaire consists of three parts as follows:

(1) General Information of the respondents
(2)Test of the Use of English with Political Correctness
(3)Opinions and Attitudes Survey

If you have further questions, please kindly contact researcher at below details:
   Researcher: Mr. Napat Phumsiri
   Mobile Number: 089-2030121
   E-mail address: nphumsiri@gmail.com

Part 1: General Information of the Respondents

Directions: Please put X in the box in front of the information that matches with you and fill in your information in the provided blanks.

Student ID:_____

   1. Gender:_____

   2. Age

□21-30 □ 31-40 □ 41-50 □ Over 50

   3. Occupation _____

   4. Previous Degree _____

   5. TU-GET/ Other English test score (Please specified) _____

   6. Years that you have been learning/using English:_____

     Political Correctness is a term used to describe language or behavior that provides the least offenses to some sensitive issues; for example, racism, sexism, and discrimination (Lin, 2010)[1]. In this study, **political correctness** is the language that is evolved and has dynamics together with social speech codes and political ideas which are inclusive, egalitarian and aimed to reduce conflicts related to some sensitive issues; for example, racism, sexism, and discrimination.

Part 2: Test of the Use of English with Political Correctness

Directions: **Please fill out the form on the pages below. Under each number, choose and mark with an "X" for the term you most often use in your daily life. You may choose one or two variations or include your own version.**

1) □ Each participant must present his ID badge at the door.

□All participants must present their ID badges at the door.

□Each participant must present his/her ID badge at the door.

□ Your version:_____

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[1]Lin, Hsien-Chuan. (2010). A study of the use of politically correct language on the campus of a US Midwestern university.*2010 International Conference on Language Education for Specific Purpose Southern Taiwan University*, Retrieved November 6, 2016, from http://ir.fy.edu.tw/ir/handle/987654321/1746

2) □ African people

□ Black people

□ Negro people

□ Your version:_____

3) □ Handicapped people

□ Disabled people

□Physically challenged people

□ Your version:_____

4) □ Elderly person

□Mature person

□ Senior citizen

□ Your version:_____

5) □ Businessman

□ Businessperson

□ Businesswoman

□ Your version:_____

6) □ Red Indian

□ American Indian

□ Native American

□ Your version:_____

7) □ Differently sized person

□ Fat person

□ Larger-than-average person

□ Your version:_____

8) □ Policeman

□ Policewoman

□ Police officer

□ Your version:_____

9) □ His uncle died.

□ His uncle passed away.

□ His uncle returned to dust.

□ Your version:_____

10) □ Cabin crew

□ Flight Attendant

□ Air Hostess/ Steward

□ Your version:_____

11) □ Oriental

□ Asian

□ Your version:_____

12) □ Intellectual disability

□ Retarded person

□Late developer

□ Your version:_____

13) □ Slum

□Substandard housing

□ Your version:_____

14) □ Underdeveloped country

□ Developing country

□ Your version:_____

15) □ Mankind

□ Humankind

□ Your version:_____

16) He is from Taipei. He is

□ Chinese

□ Taiwanese

□ Chinese Taipei

□ Your version:_____

17) □ Plain-looking

□Cosmetically different

□ Ugly

□ Your version:_____

18) □ Blind person

□Optically challenged person

□ Your version:_____

19) □ Short person

□Vertically challenged person

□ Your version:_____

20) □ Poor

□Economically disadvantaged

□ Low-income

□ Your version:_____

21) □ Undocumented Immigrant

□ Illegal Immigrant

□ Undocumented Alien

□ Your version:_____

22) When referring to a mixed group, you say…

□ Guys

□ Folks

□ Friends

□ Your version:_____

23) □ Artificial

□ Man-made

□ Your version:_____

24) □ Lacking a formal education

□ Uneducated

□ Your version:_____

25) □ Prostitute

□ Sex Worker

□ Hooker

□ Your version:_____

26) □ Mail Carrier

□ Mailman

□ Postman

□ Your version:_____

27) □ Homeless person

□ Bum

□ Displaced homeowner

□ Your version:_____

28) If you had to list the names of international leaders, you would list them by

□ Alphabetical order

□ Power order

□ Gender order (either men to women or vice versa)

□ Your version:_____

29) □ Banned

□ Blacklisted

□ Your version:_____

30) □ Hearing-impaired

□ Deaf

□ Hard-of-hearing

□ Your version:_____

Part 3: Politically Correct Language Opinions and Attitudes Survey

**Directions: Answer the questions based on a scale of 1–5, each statement applies
to you by using the scale below:**

1 means you <u>strongly agree</u> with the statement

2 means you <u>agree</u> with the statement

3 means you are <u>neutral</u> to the statement

 4 means you <u>disagree</u> with the statement

**5 means you <u>strongly disagree</u> with the statement**

<u>Politically Correct Language Attitudes Questions</u>

	Statement	Strongly Agree (5)	Agree (4)	Neutral (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)
1.	It is important for members of our community to know politically correct language.					
2.	Politically correct language is vital to promote equality among different groups of people.					
3.	Politically correct language is worth using					
4.	Politically correct language is difficult to use					
5.	Our community should work hard to promote the use of politically correct language					
6.	It would be a good idea to promote the use of politically correct language at home					
7.	Politically correct language actually promotes equality.					

8.	It is important that politically correct language is encouraged and used in workplaces					
9.	Politically correct language should be encouraged and used in the media.					
10.	Politically correct language should be encouraged and used in formal speech.					
11.	Politically correct language should be encouraged and used in government activities.					
12.	It does not matter if the language is written and spoken without being politically correct.					
13.	I would be willing to promote the use of politically correct language.					
14.	I normally use politically correct language.					
15.	Politically correct language should be taught in schools					
16.	I think politically correct language is not important in my daily life.					
17.	I think politically correct language is still not widely used.					
18.	I think politically correct language is not important in my workplace.					
19.	In the future, people will use more politically correct language.					
20.	Politically correct language is influenced by the society.					
21.	Politically correct language is politicized.					
22.	Politically correct language has been overused.					

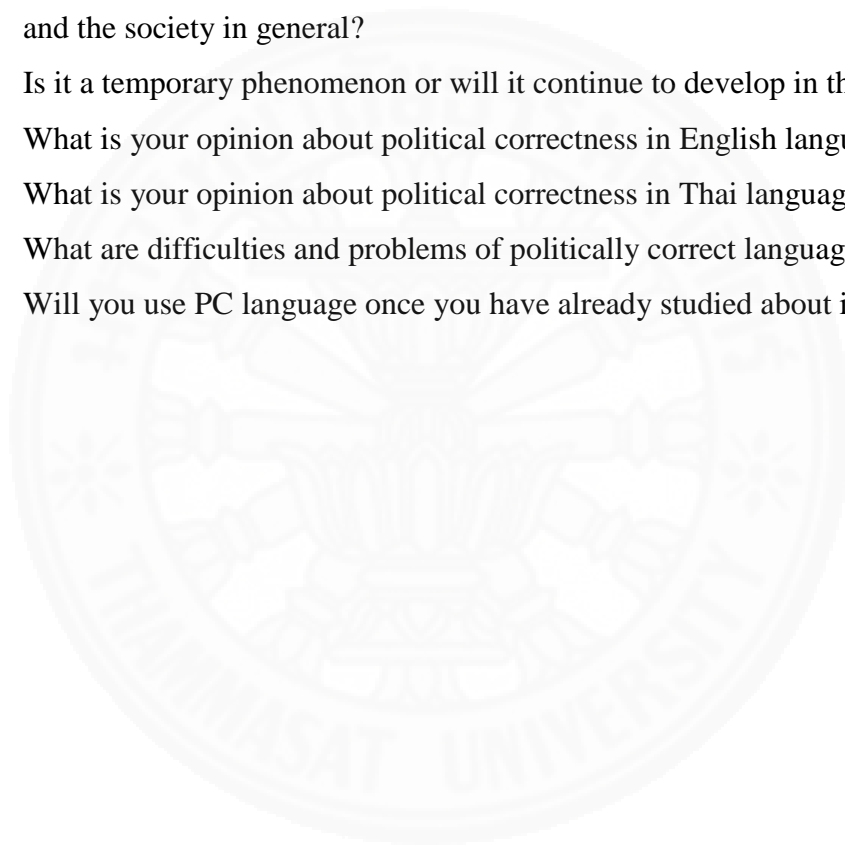| 23.	Politically correct language can reduce misunderstandings and/or conflicts in cross-cultural communication.					
24.	People who use politically correct language are considered to be more reliable and professional					
25.	Politically correct language builds good relationship between interlocutors (persons in a conversation).					

--- ☺ End of the questionnaire. Thank you very much for your kind support ☺ ---
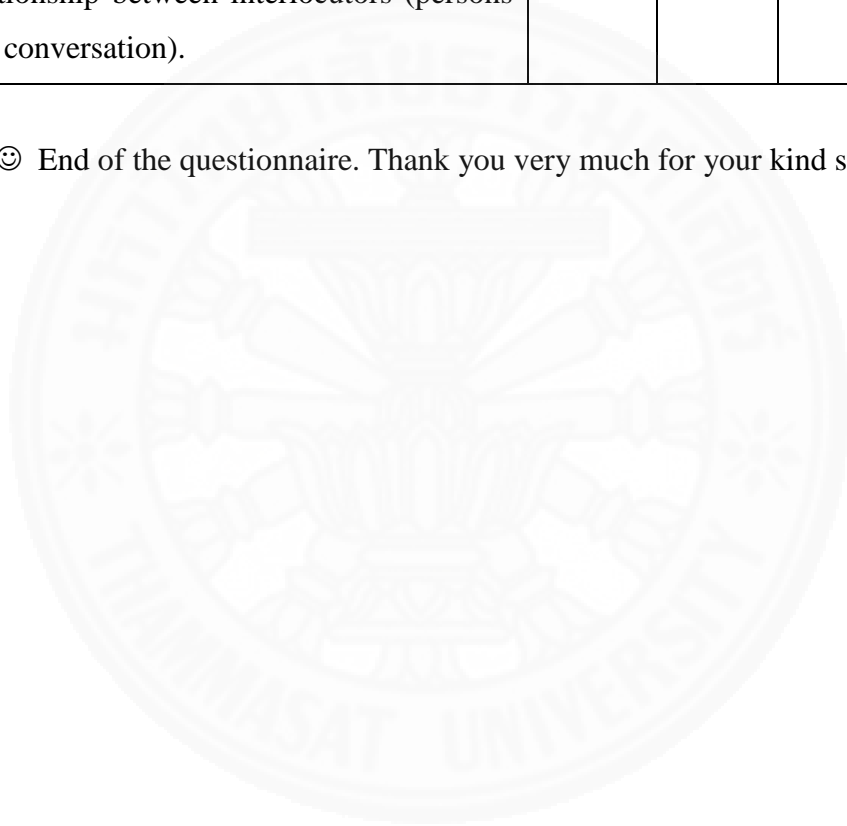
APPENDIX B
SAMPLE QUESTIONS FOR THE INTERVIEW

1. What is your understanding about politically correct language?
2. How would you define the term 'Political Correctness'?
3. What is your opinion of the phenomenon of Political Correctness?
4. What influence do you think it has or may have on the people, the language and the society in general?
5. Is it a temporary phenomenon or will it continue to develop in the future?
6. What is your opinion about political correctness in English language?
7. What is your opinion about political correctness in Thai language?
8. What are difficulties and problems of politically correct language?
9. Will you use PC language once you have already studied about it?

BIOGRAPHY

Name	Mister Napat Phumsiri
Date of Birth	January 9, 1995
Educational Attainment	2017: Bachelor of Political Science (International Relations), 1 st Class Honors, Faculty of Political Science, Chulalongkorn University, Thailand
	2016: Bachelor of Arts (Spanish), Faculty of Humanities, Ramkhamhaeng University, Thailand
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Work Position	Consular Officer
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Scholarship	2016: Language Institute, Thammasat University
Work Experiences	Liaison Officer
	Football Association of Thailand