



**Learners' Knowledge of Grammar and Vocabulary in Relation to
Pragmatic Competence: A Case of 1st Year Medical Students**

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**A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Master of
Arts Degree in Teaching English as an International Language**

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ชื่อวิทยานิพนธ์	ความสัมพันธ์ระหว่างความรู้ของผู้เรียนด้านไวยากรณ์และคำศัพท์กับ ความสามารถด้านวจนปฏิบัติศาสตร์: กรณีศึกษานักศึกษาแพทยศาสตร์ ชั้นปีที่ 1
ผู้เขียน	นางสาวตะวัน รัตนประเสริฐ
สาขาวิชา	การสอนภาษาอังกฤษเป็นภาษานานาชาติ
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บทคัดย่อ

การศึกษากึ่งการทดลองนี้ จัดทำขึ้นเพื่อศึกษาความสัมพันธ์ระหว่างความรู้ของผู้เรียนด้านไวยากรณ์และคำศัพท์ภาษาอังกฤษกับความสามารถทางวจนปฏิบัติศาสตร์ของนักศึกษา คณะแพทยศาสตร์ มหาวิทยาลัยสงขลานครินทร์ วิทยาเขตหาดใหญ่ การศึกษามีจุดประสงค์ในการสำรวจความรู้ของผู้เรียนด้าน (1) ไวยากรณ์ภาษาอังกฤษและคำศัพท์ภาษาอังกฤษ (2) ความสามารถทางด้านวจนปฏิบัติศาสตร์ ภาษาอังกฤษ ของผู้เรียนในด้านการขอโทษ ขอร้อง ตอบรับการขอร้อง และปฏิเสธการขอร้อง รวมทั้ง (3) ความสัมพันธ์ระหว่างความรู้ด้านไวยากรณ์และคำศัพท์ ภาษาอังกฤษกับความสามารถด้านวจนปฏิบัติศาสตร์ของผู้เรียน กลุ่มตัวอย่างที่ใช้ในการศึกษานี้ ประกอบไปด้วยนักศึกษาแพทย์ชั้นปีที่ 1 จำนวน 62 คน เก็บข้อมูลโดยใช้เครื่องในการวิจัย 3 แบบ คือ แบบทดสอบความรู้ด้านไวยากรณ์และคำศัพท์ แบบทดสอบความสามารถ ทางวจนปฏิบัติ ศาสตร์ และแบบสอบถาม ข้อมูลที่ได้จากเครื่องมือวิจัยทั้งหมดนำมาหาค่าความสัมพันธ์ (Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient) หลังจากข้อมูลทั้งหมดถูกนำมาวิเคราะห์ แล้ว ผลปรากฏว่า เมื่อยึดคะแนนด้านไวยากรณ์และคำศัพท์ภาษาอังกฤษเป็นหลัก กลุ่มทดลองถูกแบ่งออกเป็น 2 กลุ่ม คือกลุ่มที่มีคะแนนในระดับสูง และกลุ่มที่มีคะแนนในระดับกลาง ไม่ ปรากฏคะแนนของผู้ที่ ถูกจัดอยู่ในกลุ่มระดับต่ำ เมื่อนำคะแนนของผู้เรียนทั้งสองด้านมาวิเคราะห์ พบว่า กลุ่มที่มีคะแนน ไวยากรณ์และคำศัพท์ ในระดับสูง มีคะแนนความสามารถทางวจนปฏิบัติ ศาสตร์ ในระดับ ต่ำกว่า กลุ่มที่มีคะแนนไวยากรณ์และคำศัพท์ในระดับกลาง ทำให้ความสัมพันธ์ของความรู้ด้าน ไวยากรณ์ และคำศัพท์ภาษาอังกฤษ กับความสามารถทางวจนปฏิบัติศาสตร์ ของทั้งสองกลุ่มเป็นไปในเชิงลบ ข้อเสนอแนะจากงานวิจัยนี้คือ ผู้เรียนควรได้รับความรู้ที่มีเนื้อหาด้านวจนปฏิบัติศาสตร์ในห้องเรียน เพิ่มเติมเพื่อเพิ่มความรู้ความสามารถด้านวจนปฏิบัติศาสตร์ให้มีประสิทธิภาพมากขึ้น

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ABSTRACT

This quasi-experimental study investigated (the relationship between) the learners' knowledge of grammar and vocabulary and the pragmatic competence of the first year Medical students at Prince of Songkla University, Thailand. The purpose of the study was to explore the participants' knowledge about grammar, vocabulary, pragmatic competence in four speech acts – apology, requests, acceptance, and decline, and the relationship between the participants' grammar and vocabulary knowledge and pragmatic competence. Sixty-two first year medical students participated in this present study. Data collection involved the use of a multiple-choice test of grammar and vocabulary, a contextualized pragmatic judgment test, and a questionnaire. Results indicated that participants scoring highly in the test of grammar and vocabulary performed rather poorly in the test of pragmatic knowledge, and vice versa. In comparing the 2 domains: the linguistic test and the pragmatic test, the imbalance between the 2 subject groups was found. The scores on linguistic and pragmatic tests of both the High and the Middle-score groups were negatively related. The results, thus, suggested the necessity in providing more contents of pragmatics to the classroom instruction in order help to the students increase their pragmatic competence.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The present study investigated the knowledge of grammar and vocabulary in relation to pragmatic competence of 1st year Medical students at Prince of Songkla University, Thailand. This chapter contains rationale of the study, purposes of the study, research questions, scope and limitation of the study, significance of the study, and definition of terms.

1.1. Rationale of the study

English is a global language; it is spoken in almost every country. To date, as a *lingua franca*, no any other language is used as widely (Pakir, 2001). English has played an important role as a major medium for international communication by people in Krachu's 3 circles (Krachu 1996, Crystal 1997 and Pakir, 2001): namely the inner circle, the outer circle, and the expanding circles. In other words, in addition to countries where English is used as L1, the language is used in all the countries as L2 and foreign language. Moreover, the number of speakers in the expanding circle, where English is used as a foreign language, is rising constantly.

Considering the function of the English language, both native and non-native speakers use the language for different purposes: to access intellectual resources, to further study, and to increase career opportunities, to name a few. At a larger scale, English is considered a prominent language in different fields, including international trade, banking, industry, diplomacy, science and technology, entertainment and education (Crystal, 1997). To achieve the communication purposes, interlocutors are required to command the language at the comprehensibility level.

For this reason, most countries around the world emphasize on foreign language learning and teaching. In Thailand, a non English speaking country in the so-called expanding circle, for example, English has been taught/learned as a compulsory subject. All Thai students in the formal education system are required to

take certain number of English courses as imposed by the Ministry of Education based on the Implementation of the Basic Education Core Curriculum No. OBEC 293/2551 (2008) A.D. 2008. Generally, Thai students start learning English at the age of 3 to 5 during which they practice the four language skills – speaking, listening, reading, and writing. These skills are mostly taught through the content of the language construction. Therefore, the study of how the language is properly used in actual communication is not the first priority of the English language learning.

Pragmatics, or how a language is used properly, is involved with the study of meaning as communicated by a particular person and interpreted by another person (Yule, 1996). This language science is the interpretation of what a person intends to convey in his or her utterance. The words or phrases in those expressions might contain a denotation rather than the meaning contained in the language construction (Yule, 1996). In other words, this communicative competence is the speaker's ability to use grammatically correct sentences in appropriate contexts (Hymes, 1971). Ellis (1994) stated that when a speaker produces an utterance in a particular context, he/she achieves 2 things: (1) interactional acts and (2) speech acts.

A speaker's pragmatic knowledge or ability is reflected as his or her communicative competence. Lacking this competence can lead to communication failure. Pragmatic failure can be more serious than linguistic failure (Thomas 1983). Ungrammatical sentences, unacceptable intonation and wrong pronunciation may hinder a flow of communication, for example. However, the speaker's mistakes on such language features is considered as his/her poor language proficient. If he/she makes pragmatic mistakes, on the other hand, he might sound rude or impolite. Even worse, such mistakes may break down the communication and personal relationship; linguistic failure may not likely to lead to such damage.

As humans being live in groups within a society, individuals ought to know how to behave in a particular circumstance and be accepted by other group members. One very important thing is that, they have to speak the language appropriately. Leaver et al (2005) suggested that if a speaker intended to talk to a person with a higher social status, he/she is supposed to choose more formal language to speak to him/ her, for instance. On the other hand, if the speaker is talking to a person with a lower status, he/she should choose a more casual language.

Investigation on different aspects of pragmatic competence in using of English language by non-native speakers of English in the Thai context is still has been carried out for a certain amount. However, this area of study is still limited. The present research, therefore, aims at studying this language aspect focusing on the relationship between the participants' grammar and vocabulary knowledge and their pragmatic competence.

In particular, the investigation was carried out to identify this language competence of 1st year Medical students. This focus group, the doctors to-be, will need to communicate with a large number of people in their future career, including foreigners. They must be communicating with their foreign lecturers, reporting research studies, continuing their study overseas, as well as communicating with patients through English. To achieve the communication goal, they have to command the English language effectively, having gain linguistic and pragmatic competence.

In brief, failing to acquire linguistically accurate language, a person may not achieve his/her communication goal, failing to command their language pragmatically, he/she may cause communication breakdown and damage interpersonal relationship. Thus, it is essential that the investigation on pragmatic knowledge of English learners, EFL learners, especially those who need to communicate through English substantially like Medical students or doctors be carried out. The present study, thus, sought to discover whether the learners are able to deliver the appropriate language in real situations after they have learnt the language. It also finds out whether there is correlation between the participants' pragmatic knowledge and their knowledge of English grammar and vocabulary. In particular, it is hypothesized that learners' language competence is connected to their pragmatic knowledge.

1.2. Purposes of the study

The objectives of the present study are as follow:

1. To investigate the grammar and vocabulary knowledge of the 1st year Medical students at Prince of Songkla University.

2. To investigate the pragmatic knowledge of the 1st year Medical students at Prince of Songkla University.

3. To investigate the relationship between the participants' grammar and vocabulary knowledge and pragmatic competence.

1.3. Research questions

To fulfill the research objectives, 3 research questions were posed.

1. To what extent do the 1st year medical students know about grammar and vocabulary?

2. What is the 1st year medical students' pragmatic competence?

3. Is there any relationship between the participants' knowledge of grammar and vocabulary and pragmatic competence?

1.4. Scope and limitation of the study

The investigation in the present study was carried out within the scope of 3 aspects consisting of (1) research instruments, (2) participants and (3) language variables.

Regarding the research instruments, this quasi-experimental study investigated the participants' knowledge of grammar and vocabulary using 2 tests: a standardized tests and a contextualized pragmatic judgment test.

As for participants, only 62 first year Medical students enrolled in the 2010 academic year at Prince of Songkla University involved in the investigation. Relating language variables, the investigation embraced 4 speech acts of pragmatics: apology, request, acceptance, and decline. The speech acts were designed for the exchange of people with 3 social statuses: the exchange with the superior, acquaintance, and stranger.

1.5. Significance of the study

Findings from the present study are expected to depict the relationship between the knowledge of English grammar and vocabulary and the pragmatic knowledge of the 1st year Medical students in the 4 aspects of speech acts: apology, request, acceptance, and decline. The findings found will further benefit to the English language teaching, and material and curriculum development in the EFL context, Thailand in particular.

1.6. Definitions of important terms

The investigation on the participants' grammatical, lexical and pragmatic knowledge and their relationship involved the following 7 relevant terms.

Pragmatics

Pragmatics is the study about meaning intended by a particular speaker and, then, interpreted by his/her interlocutor (Yule, 1996). In the present study, the term refers to the ability in communicating through the language in an appropriate way in a particular situation and to particular person. Four speech acts of politeness – apology, request, acceptance, and decline, are the focus of the investigation. The levels of language the participants use in a certain situation with people are also examined.

Grammar

Grammar is concerned with a set of rules, and how words and groups of words can be arranged to form sentences in a particular language (Cowan, 2008). In addition, Greenbaum and Nelson (2002) identified that grammar mediates between the system of sounds or of written symbols, and the system of meaning. In the present

study, the term refers to the 1st year Medical students' knowledge of the English language rules and systems of structures. The knowledge was elicited through a multiple-choice test adapted from versions of commercial standardized tests. (See appendix A)

Vocabulary

Vocabulary refers to a set of lexemes including single words, compound words and idioms (Richarts and Schmidt, 2002). The participants' knowledge of vocabulary in the present study was elicited in order to find out the relationship of this language aspect and their pragmatic competence. Like their grammar competence, the participants' vocabulary repertoire was measured through an adapted version of standardized tests commercially published. (See appendix A)

Pragmatic competence

Pragmatic competence, a part of communicative competence (Bachman, 1990; Canale and Swain, 1980; Hymes, 1971), refers to the ability to use language forms appropriately in a particular context. It involves the ability to use language in the interpersonal relationships, considering such complexities as social distance and indirectness (Thomas, 1983; Kasper, 1997).

Speech acts

Speech act can be defined as an action performed when a speaker says some utterances in a particular situation (Austin, 1962 as cited in Cutting, 2008; Levinson, 1983). Besides delivering meaning, an utterance can also make various actions, for example; a request, a command, an apology, a decline and a promise. In this present study, 4 speech acts: apology, request, acceptance, and decline were investigated.

Politeness

According to Richards et. al, (1992), Politeness in language study refers to how language expresses the social distance between speakers and with same or different social statuses. It covers the differences between formal and informal speech. In the other word, politeness involves showing awareness when a speaker says something considering social distance and closeness (Yule, 1996)

Contextualized pragmatic judgment test

CPJT is a test type developed by Bardovi - Harlig and Dörnyei (1998). Originally, the test consisted of 20 scenarios designed to measure the participants' pragmatic and grammatical awareness. The participants are tested to see whether they are aware of grammatical or pragmatic errors in the given sentences. The CPJT employed in the present study, was adapted from the original version. It was constructed and employed only to elicit the participants' pragmatic features in question. (See appendix B)

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

The present study investigated 2 aspects of learners' knowledge: linguistics and pragmatics. In particular, it explored both the extent of the participants' knowledge and the connection of the 2 areas. This chapter embraces a review of literature related to the language aspects in question, and a review of related studies.

2.1 Review of Literatures

2.1.1 Grammar

Grammar is the discipline involving structure, patterns, and categories of sentences that govern human language (Letourneau, 2001; Payne, 2006; Thornbury, 1999). It concerns several contents including the system of sounds or phonology, the written symbols or syntax, on the one hand, and the system of meaning or semantics on the other (Greenbaum and Nelson, 2002). Normally, people are not aware of their internalized grammar but use it to communicate in their social communication (Payne, 2006). To successfully communicate in a conversation with his/her interlocutor, a speaker must be able to employ rules of the language. In terms of acquiring a language, native speakers usually have fewer problems in acquiring the knowledge about language rules since they learnt it from using. On the contrary, non-native speakers may encounter much more difficulties, especially in mastering the grammar (Lobeck, 2000).

Grammar composed of 3 linguistic components: structure, sound and meaning. Structure refers to syntax or word order. For example, an adjective is a modifier which comes before nouns. The phrase 'the lady beautiful' is ungrammatical because it lacks a linking verb to connect between the subject and the predicate; the correct sentence should be 'The lady is beautiful'. A study of words has to stand according to a syntactic rule. Communication orally, however, needs another set of

rules called phonological rules. In phonology, the phonetic rules function as the essential guideline in pronouncing words, as well as strings of words. The learner should be able to distinguish between the 'r' and 'l' sound. Pronouncing a word incorrectly may result in misunderstanding or communication failure. This study of sound pattern is known as phonology.

The last component related to grammar study is the study of meaning, semantics. It includes is the study of meaning of words, phrases, and sentences (Yule, 2006). Meaning in language has 2 levels: denotation and connotation. Denotation is a literal meaning of word. For example, tongue means 'the soft part inside your mouth that you can move about and use for eating and speaking' (Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English). On the other hand, tongue in '*Hold your tongue*' means differently. The sentence does not literally suggest the hearer to really hold his or her tongue but to stop speaking. This interpretation of words meaning is called connotation.

2.1.2 Pragmatics and Pragmatic Competence

Pragmatics

The term 'pragmatics' is defined variously. Leech (1983), for example, viewed it as the study of "how utterances have meanings in situations" while Crystal (1987) perceived the subject as the study of "the facts that govern our choice of language in social interaction and the effect of our choice on others". Another notion was given by Yule (1996), who described pragmatics as the study of meaning that is given out by a speaker and interpreted by an interlocutor in a particular context and how the context influences what is said. Richards, J. Platt, & H. Platt (1992) referred pragmatics as how a language is used to express meanings in communication by speakers and writers. Pragmatics in the present study referred broadly to the study of language use in a context. The emphasis is on the fact that meaning of an utterance or a written text depends on not only the linguistic structures but also the contexts, the situational context and background knowledge (Cutting, 2000), as shown in the example below.

A and B are talking about their mutual friend Jones.

A: Does Jones have a new girlfriend?

B: He's been spending a lot of time in New York.

(Cutting, 2000, p. 3)

B's answer is irrelevant to A's questions. However, given that these two speakers are friends, B's utterance successfully and appropriately answered the question. When Jones has a girlfriend, he might often spend time with his girlfriend. B's answer implied that Jones might have a new girlfriend now because of his '*spending a lot of time in New York*'.

In addition to the shared background knowledge, social relationship between speakers and hearers also has an effect on the way people communicate. A speaker tends to use different words or structures when speaking to people having different status. If a speaker is talking to whoever considered superior, he/she will choose a particular set of words and structure. On the other hands, if the speaker is talking to a youngster or inferior, he/she will choose another set he/she considers appropriate (Leaver et.al, 2005).

Pragmatic competence

Pragmatic competence refers to the participants' ability in using a language appropriately, and judge an utterance as appropriate or inappropriate. Pragma-linguistic is the ability to use linguistic elements, such as form, meaning and context, to perform speech acts (Chang, 2011). Socio-pragmatic, on the other hand, refers to the ability to switch one speech act to another according to the situational or social variables (Chang, 2011). As is known, pragmatics is the study of an underlined or intended meaning the speaker tried to convey through an utterance. In order to achieve this purpose, the hearer and the speaker should share the same context, both linguistic and situational context. Linguistic context or co-text is a word or set of words or phrases used in the same sentence, such as deixis (*here, there, you, me, him, then, yesterday*), anaphora (referring back by the use of a pronoun), inference

(creating a connection between what is said and what is meant as in '*Where's the spinach salad sitting?*'), and reference (Yule, 2006 and Fromkin & Rodman, 1993).

In certain cases, only linguistic context is insufficient for the hearer to comprehend the speaker's intended meaning. Another type of required context is situational context. According to Fromkin & Rodman (1993), situational context includes shared beliefs, knowledge, physical environment, the subject being discussed, and many others. This type of context helps the hearer to fully understand the utterance given.

The distinction between what is said and what is meant or indirect meaning can be best explained by Grice's conversational implicature. Grice (1968) suggested that the speaker, by way of uttering an utterance, communicates one thing but also suggests another meaning which, to certain extent, is related to the information exchanged.

Grice (1968) suggested that all speakers should follow a basic principle of conversation which he coined, co-operative principle. He developed four categories of conversational maxims: quantity, quality, relation and manner. Quantity, referring to being brief, means not giving more information than it is required. Quality, being truthful, suggests that the speaker should try to speak only what is true. Relation means the speaker needs to say relevant things. Finally, manner, being clear, is concerned with how the utterance is given. Thus, a response '*There is a new restaurant shop over there*' to an utterance '*I am very hungry*' is comprehensible. Failure to comply with the principle may cause a misunderstanding or communication breakdown or what Thomas called pragmatic failure.

Thomas (1983) argued that cross-cultural communications may undergo some difficulties which can result to misunderstanding. Pragmatic failure can be divided into two types: pragma-linguistic failure and socio-pragmatic failure. Pragma-linguistic failure is a linguistic related mistakes occurring when an inappropriate form is used. Socio-pragmatic failure, on the other hand, concerns with a situational variables caused by cultural differences.

In order for an EFL learner to attain pragmatic competence, he/she may require a high language proficiency. In Chang's (2010) study of Chinese speakers' development of pragmatic competency in making an apology, he found that

the higher language proficient the learners were, the higher pragmatic competence they became. In his study, participants were asked to write what they would say in the eight situations for apology: four addressed to a high status hearer and four to an equal status interlocutor. It was found that *'I'm sorry'* and *'sorry'* were adopted by beginners and intermediate learners. On the other hand, the more advanced learners were found to use more formal expressions like, *'I apologize'*, *'Pardon me'*, and *'I'm terribly sorry'*. In addition, they were able to give an explanation for the cause of their problem. *'Forgot about the appointment'* and *'Need to take care of something important'*, for example, were given as an excuse for being late for a group discussion.

2.1.3 Speech Acts

People use language to communicate with other people in their daily life. Since language is a form of behavior, and it is conditioned by a set of rules, it is used to perform actions such as explaining, describing, asking questions, giving opinions, and getting other people to do things (Searl, 1969). Therefore, in addition to meaning, an utterance performs an action. It can make a request, give a command, an apology, a decline and a promise. The acts carried through the language use are called *speech act*.

Austin (1978) maintained that language is not merely descriptive but also performative. Similarly, Blum-Kulka (1997, p.40) argued that 'linguistic expressions have capacity to perform certain kinds of communication acts.'

According to Austin (1978), there are three types of speech acts: locutionary acts, illocutionary acts, and perlocutionary acts. Locutionary act is an act of saying something. The second, an illocutionary act, is an act speakers performed with their words. The meaning of a locutionary act or what is said can be determined by grammatical structure and words used in an utterance. The meaning of an illocutionary act, however, usually goes beyond the surface structure. The last act, perlocutionary act, refers to the effect of words on the hearer, or the hearer's reaction (Cutting, 2002; Cruse, 2000; and Searle, 1969). As Mattelart & Mattelart (1998, p. 114) put in, '...through the act of speaking, one can act upon others, cause them to act,

or act oneself'. Based on the definition, an utterance, *It's hot in here*, can be analysed at a surface level as a statement telling how the speaker feels. Its illocutionary act is, however, more than that. It may function as a request to the hearer. In response to the speaker's utterance, if the hearer opens the window or turns on the air-conditioning, the perlocutionary act is performed.

The illocutionary act may sometimes be different from its form and its literal meaning. To determine what the intended meaning or act implied, the hearer needs to consider its context. The speaker may speak directly to the hearer, '*Please close the window*' to make a request. Also, the speaker may speak indirectly, as in, '*It seems a bit chilly in here*' (Blum-Kulka, 1997, p. 44). He can also use other structures, such as an imperative sentence, as in, '*Could you please close the window*' and '*May I ask you to close the window?*' (Blum-Kulka, 1997, p. 44).

Searle (1969) classified illocutionary acts into five groups: declaratives, representatives, commissives, directives, and expressives. Representatives occur when the speaker asserts a proposition he or she believes to be true, using certain verbs as *state*, *believe*, *conclude*, *deny*, and *suggest*. Directives are statements the speaker employs to make the hearer do something, using words like *ask*, *order*, *command*, *beg*, *insist*, and *request*. Commissives include acts which the speaker commits himself or herself to a course of action he or she is given by using verbs as *offer*, *promise*, and *vow*. Expressives are acts expressing the speaker's attitude or feeling to or toward a state of affairs. Verbs, such as *apologize*, *appreciate*, *congratulate*, *deplore*, *detest*, *regret*, and *thank*, are used in such cases. Finally, Declarations are words and expressions the speaker uses to change the status or condition as in '*I hereby pronounce you man and wife*'. '*This court sentences you to ten years*' (Cutting, 2002, p. 16 and Cruse, 2000, p. 342).

Sometimes an illocutionary information comes directly from the grammar when performative verbs are used, such as *I promise to do it tonight* or *I warn you*'. However, most often grammar is not an account for the illocutionary force (Searle, 1991; Katz, 1977 and Cruse, 2000). Speakers can make a request by making a statement, as in '*It is hot in here*'. Likewise, we can give an order by asking a question, such as '*Why don't you open the window?*'. In the cases above, the meaning of each case does not come from the words used but something else instead.

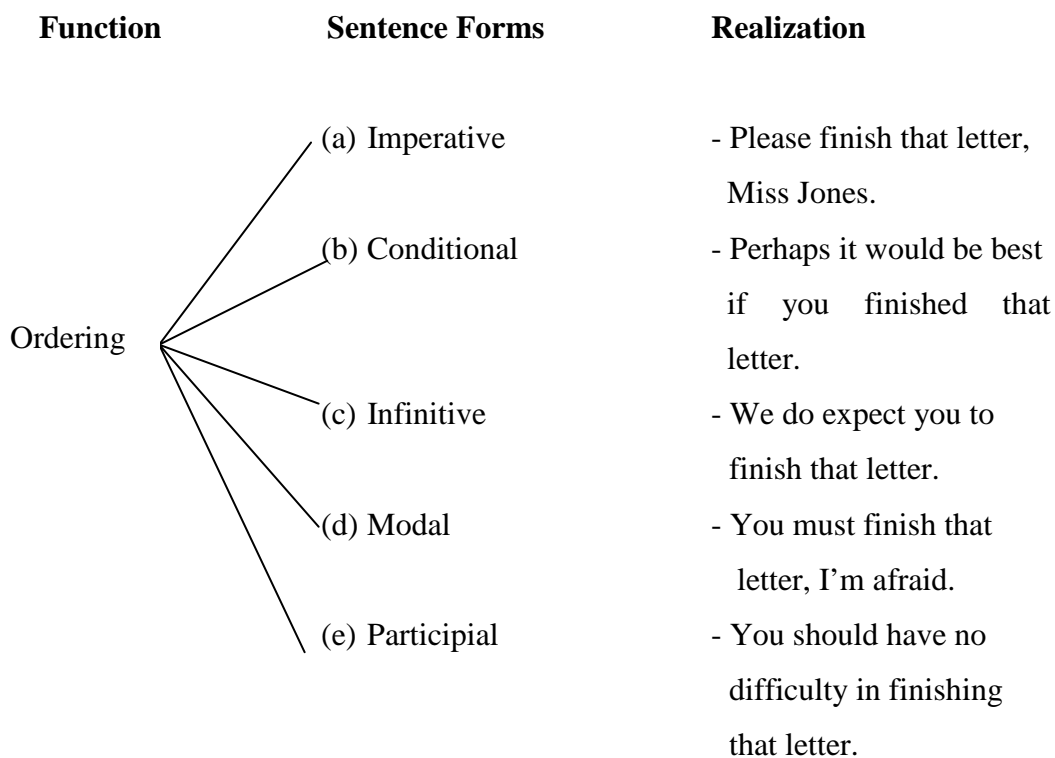
In other words, the hearer needs to product the intended meaning so that he/she can perform the right action.

An imperative sentence, in addition to giving an order or command, can be used to present a suggestion, threat, instruction and warning, as shown below.

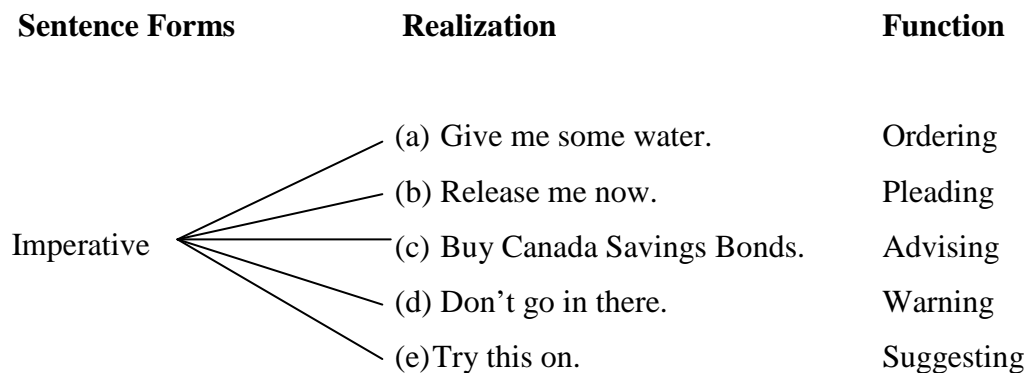
Find a seat and I'll get the drinks.	(suggestion)
Do that and I'll knock your teeth in.	(threat)
Connect the hose to the water supply.	(instruction)
Turn left at the traffic lights and take the third turning on the left.	(direction)
Watch your glass.	(warning)
Have a drink.	(invitation)

(Wilkins, 1972, p. 147)

There is also a case in which the same type of sentence can be produced by other sentence forms. Yalden (1983, cited in Tonthong, 1991) gave an example of how communicative function interrelates with the form and produce different realizations.

Diagram 2.1: Function to Form

(Yalden, 1983, p. 40 cited in Tonthong, 1991, p. 18)

Diagram 2.2: Form to Function

(Yalden, 1983, p. 40 cited in Tonthong, 1991, p. 18)

There are different types of speech acts. In this study, only four types of speech acts request, acceptance, apology, and decline, were investigated.

2.1.3.1 Request

According to Blum-Kulka & Olshtain's (1985) Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realization Project (CCSARP) framework, request expressions can be divided into three levels: direct, conventional-indirect, and non-conventional indirect. Direct requests include imperatives, performatives, obligations, and want statements, such as '*Please lend me a pen*'. Conventional indirect requests include preparatory and suggestions, as in '*Can you lend me a pen?*' or '*How about going to the beach?*'. Lastly, non-conventional indirect requests include strong and mild hint, such as '*My pencil is broken*' (Blum-Kulka, S. & Olshtain, E., 1985, p.65-67).

Table 2.1: *Coding framework for requests based on Blum-Kulka, & Olshtain, E. (1985)*

I. Direct Expressions	
1. Imperatives	e.g., Please lend me a pen.
2. Performatives	e.g., I'm asking you to lend me a pen.
3. Implicit performatives	e.g., I want to ask you to lend me a pen.
4. Obligation Statements	e.g., You should lend me a pen.
5. Want Statements	e.g., I want you to lend me a pen.
II. Indirect Expressions	
A. Conventional indirect	
6. Preparatory questions	e.g., Could you lend me a pen?
7. Suggestions	e.g., How about lending me a pen?
8. Permissions	e.g., May I borrow a pen?
9. Mitigated Preparatory	e.g., I'm wondering if you could lend me a pen.
10. Mitigated Wants	e.g., I'd appreciate it if you could lend me a pen.

B. Non-conventional indirect

- | | |
|-----------------|---------------------------------------|
| 11. Strong hint | e.g., My pen just quit. I need a pen. |
| 12. Mild hint | e.g., Can you guess what I want? |

(Blum-Kulka, S. & Olshtain, E., 1985, p.65-67)

2.1.3.2 Acceptance

Acceptance speech act is to perform the action of agreement. In addition to *yes*, speakers use other words to express their acceptance including *of course*, *okay*, *certainly*, and *sure* (Junthawithed, 2002 cited in Pinyo, 2010, p. 9). All these words suggest direct acceptance. There are also certain strategies used to express the speaker's agreement.

In a study of the nature of making invitation and acceptance in the Jordanian society from a pragmatic point of view, Al-Khatib (2006) found that in making an agreement Jordanian employed several strategies, including thanking and appreciating (*thank you very much*), good-wishes, (*on happy occasions, God willing*), stressing common membership (*I need no invitation*), and complimenting (*It is very kind of you*) (Al-Khatib, 2006, p.280). Rather than accepting an invitation directly, the speaker may say, '*That's a good idea*', to indicate his or her acceptance. Thus, it is the hearer's responsibility to interpret the speaker's intention when this kind of indirect speech act was made.

2.1.3.3 Apology

The main reason for a person to make an apology is to show that he/she is sorry and at the same time to seek forgiveness. Brown and Levinson (1987 cited in Eslami-Rasekh & Mardani, 2010, p. 97) suggested that making an apology is the act of 'approaching an offence, modes of operation for confirming or assuring of mutual solidarity'. In saying '*I'm sorry*', the speaker indicates that he/she accepts a

responsibility in an offense. At the same time, trying to redeem it by confirming or reassuring of not doing it again.

Olshtain and Cohen (1983, cited in Lee, 2010) suggested that there are five strategies for making an apology, presented below.

1. An expression of apology
 - a. An expression of regret as in '*I'm sorry*'
 - b. An offer of apology '*I apologize*'
 - c. A request for forgiveness '*Excuse me*', '*Forgive me*'
 - d. An expression of an excuse '*It wasn't my fault*'
2. Acknowledgement of responsibility
3. An explanation or account
4. An offer of repair
5. A promise of non-recurrence

(Olshtain and Cohen, 1983, cited in Lee, 2010, p. 583)

The speaker, for example, firstly says '*I am sorry that I was late*' or '*I'm really very sorry*' to imply that he or she recognizes his/her fault in causing the infraction. He/she, then explained the cause, such as '*The bus was late*', '*My clock doesn't work*'. After that, he/she gave an action to redeem or pay for the damage resulted from his/ her infraction, '*How can I make it up to you- why don't I buy you lunch on Friday?*' Finally, the speaker makes a promise not to do the offense again '*I will never be late again!*'

In addition to saying '*I'm sorry*', Chang (2010, p. 419) suggested that certain intensifiers '*so*', '*very*', '*really*', '*extremely*', and '*terribly*' in particular, were used to indicate the degree of the apology. Sometimes double intensifiers were employed, as in '*I'm really really sorry*' and '*I'm very very sorry*' (Chang, 2010, p. 419).

An act of apology usually comes with performative verbs, *sorry*, *excuse*, *apologize*, *forgive*, *regret* and *pardon* (Blum-Kulka and Olshtain, 1985), as shown below.

- | | |
|---------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. (be) sorry | I'm sorry (that) I'm so late. |
| 2. excuse | Excuse me for being late. |
| 3. apologize | I apologize for coming late. |
| 4. forgive | Forgive me for coming late. |
| 5. regret | I regret that I can't help you. |
| 6. pardon | Pardon me for interrupting. |

(Blum-Kulka, S., and Olshtain, E., 1985, cited in Chang, 2009, p.6)

Based on Olshtain and Cohen's (1985) apology strategies, Al-Zumor (2011) developed a model for his study of apology in Arabic and English. His model composed of six steps. The first stage is called IFIDs, which stand for illocutionary force. It is used to indicate devices, including an expression of regret, and a request for forgiveness and accepting the apology. The strategy was mostly adopted in a situation where the victim is physically hurt.

2.1.3.4 Decline

The speech act of refusal occurs when a speaker directly or indirectly says *no* to a request or invitation. Saying 'No' directly can be considered as a face-threatening act (Brown and Levinson, 1978). Therefore, the refusal is usually employed indirectly to save the hearer's face or avoid conflict.

According to Beebe et al. (1990), indirect refusals can be given through several strategies, as follows:

1. Mitigated Refusal '*I don't think it's possible*', '*I wouldn't be able to attend*' '*It's not possible*'
2. Reasons/Explanations '*I have plans*'
3. Indefinite Reply '*I don't know if I'll have time*' '*I'll try to be there, but I can't promise you anything*'
4. Regret/Apology '*Forgive me*' '*I'm really sorry*'

5. Alternative *'Why don't we go out for dinner next week?'*
6. Postponement *'I'd rather take this class next semester' 'I'll think about it'*
7. Repetition *'Monday at 2:00 p.m.?'*
8. Request for Information *'What time is the party?'*
9. Set Condition for Future or Past
10. Acceptance *'If I have to take the class later, I'll take it then', 'If you had told me earlier, I would have accepted'*
11. Clarification Request *'Did you say ...?'* Wish *'I wish I could stay'*

(Beebe et al., 1990, p. 79)

2.1.4 Politeness

In language study, politeness refers to how a language expresses the social distance between speakers with the same or different social statuses (Richards et. al, 1992). Yule (1996) defined politeness as polite social behavior, or etiquette within a culture. It shows how language expresses the relationship between a speaker and his interlocutor (Richarts, J. Platt, & H. Platt, 1992).

According to Brown and Levinson (1987), politeness embraces 3 ideas: face, face threatening acts (FTAs), and politeness strategies.

First, politeness is involved **face** – “the public self-image that every member wants to claim for himself” – and the efforts made by interlocutors to “maintain each other’s face” (Meyer, 2009, p.62). The face is broadly divided into 2 types: positive and negative face. The former means one’s self esteem while the latter refers to one’s freedom to act. When employing these 2 strategies in social interaction, the speakers would try to keep their face, and do not want to make the others loose face, known as face threatening.

Face-threatening acts are acts that damage the face of the addresser or the speaker by acting oppositely to the wants and desires of the other (Brown and Levinson, 1987). To perform the FTAs, actors have to judge the potential of face risks and consider the social contextual factors between them and a hearer. These social factors usually refer to social status.

In order to keep or save the interlocutor's face, the speaker needs to carefully use politeness strategies, the last aspect of politeness. Politeness strategies can basically be divided into 2 parts: positive strategies and negative strategies. Positive strategies refer to a hearer's positive face wants. Negative strategies are addressed to the hearer's negative face wants. In most English-speaking contexts, a face saving act is more commonly performed via a negative politeness strategy.

2.2 Reviews of Related Studies

Previous studies have covered investigation on different aspects of pragmatic competence performance by native and nonnative speakers of English. Apology, for example, has received great interest. Apology is a speech act needed at rather various occasions. An appropriate expression '*I'm sorry*' is used for those different communication purposes. It is employed when a speaker wants to change the offensive situation, for example. It is also said when he wants to repair the damage done earlier (Al-Zumor, 2010).

Despite the universal objectives, apologizing is varied across cultures. Researchers have tried to test this hypothesis. A number of studies focused on the pragmatic competence exhibited by English second language learners (ESL). Al-Zumor (2010), for instance, conducted a comparative research on making apologies between Arab speaking ESL learners and a group of English native speakers. In another study Chang (2010) investigated the same pragmatic knowledge presented by a group of Chinese ESL learners. It was found in both studies that both Arab and Chinese ESL learners adopted the same apology strategies namely: Illocutionary Force Indicating Device (IFID), an expression of regret or offer of apology, e.g., '*I'm sorry*' or '*I apologize.*'. They also used an adjunct, an explanation or account of the cause which brought about the violation or an expression of the speaker's responsibility for the offense, e.g., '*It's my fault/my mistake*' (Olshtain and Cohen, 1983 cited in Lee, 2010). It was found, however, that the 2 ESL learner groups showed a high frequency in using apology adjuncts.

A similar study (Afghari, 2007) was carried out to examine the patterns used in performing the speech act of apologizing in Persian and English of a group of Arab students. It was also to study the effect of two contexts – the external variables of social distance and the social dominance, on the frequency of using apology intensifiers. The researcher employed a Discourse Completion Test (DCT) in eliciting data. The test included 10 fixed discourse situations with the addressee's characteristics and social distance in each dialogue. The students were asked to judge themselves with the persons committing the offenses in the situations and write down their normal language reaction in such situations. Each utterance made was analyzed to identify five possible apologetic patterns: (a) an expression of an apology, *e.g. I apologize.*; (b) an acknowledgement of responsibility, *e.g. It was my fault.*; (c) an explanation or account of the situation, *e.g. I'm sorry, the bus was late.*; (d) an offer of repair, *e.g. I'll pay for the broken vase.*; and (e) a promise of forbearance, *e.g. This won't happen again.* Apart from the patterns, the researcher included the categories of internal intensifiers in the study: (a) intensifying adverbials, *e.g. I'm very sorry.*; (b) emotional expressions, *e.g. Oh God.*; (c) double intensifier, *e.g. I'm very very sorry.*; (d) The word "Please", *e.g. please, forgive me.*; (e) Hope for forgiveness, *e.g. I hope you'd forgive me.*; and (f) Swearing, *e.g. I swear I forgot.* The findings suggested that Persian and English apologies were as formulaic in pragmatic structures. In Persian, a direct expression of apology and an acknowledgement of responsibility were found to be the most frequent apology patterns made across the majority of the apology situations, followed by an explanation of the situation and an offer of repair. A promise of forbearance was rarely used as an apology speech act. In case of the intensifiers, "hope for forgiveness" and "swearing" were the two apology intensifiers found in Persian. In addition, the most intensified apologies were offered to close friends and the least intensified apologies were offered to strangers. Generally, it was found that more intensified apologies are used according to the addressee's dominance over the speakers.

A speech act second to apology having been investigated is refusal. Making a refusal is related to the speaker's perceptions of politeness in his/her culture. In other words, the degree of politeness in making a refusal is varied across cultures. Japanese and Chinese speakers, for example, perceived refusals as being offensive. In Chen and Zhang's study, they investigated Chinese refusal by administering a written discourse completion test to 100 native speakers of Mandarin (50 men and 50 women having lived in the U.S. for about 2 years). The study focused on the distributions of refusal strategies in relation to social status in responding to 4 types of speech acts: request, invitation, suggestion, and offer. It was found that the act of refusal tends to be avoided. On the other hand, refusals occurred more frequently among Americans who hardly comply with the others' request (Chen et.al, 1995).

In addition to the use of different speech acts, investigation has also focused on teaching pragmatics. Bardovi-Harlig and Dörnyei (1998), for example, explored an awareness of differences in L2 learners' target-language production relating grammatical and pragmatic features. Research participants consisted of 173 ESL learners in USA, 370 EFL learners in Hungary, 112 EFL learners in Italy and 53 teachers (28 native-speakers of American English and 25 native-speakers of Hungarian). To test the difference in the learners and teachers' awareness of grammatical and pragmatic aspects, they developed a contextualized pragmatic and grammatical judgment test presented in a video format. Results showed that the EFL learners and teachers were more aware of grammatical errors than pragmatic errors. The ESL learners and teachers, on the other hand, were found the otherwise.

Relevant to the preceding study, Gülten (2006) investigated the pragmatic awareness of 27 female third-year university Turkish teacher trainees using a contextualized pragmatic and grammatical judgment test prepared by Bardovi - Harlig and Dörnyei (1998). It was found that most of the Turkish teacher trainees were relatively aware of pragmatic inappropriateness. It was, thus, suggested that providing an ample amount of pragmatically relevant input and raising the learners'

awareness through activities could aid learners to notice pragmatics failure, both in the ESL and EFL settings.

Another aspect of speech act, declining, has also been investigated. Nelson et al. (2002) studied the similarities and differences in declining between Egyptian Arabic and American- English speakers. A modified version of the discourse completion test (DCT) developed by Beebe et al. (1990) was employed in collecting data. Although each refusal was grouped into its different component strategies, data were analyzed simply to compare the average frequencies of direct and indirect strategies. Specific indirect strategies, and the effect of interlocutor status on strategies with similar frequency in making decline were also investigated. A slight difference between the 2 sample groups was found; 298 declines were made in 30 US interviews, while 250 in 25 Egyptian interviews.

In addition to speech acts, other aspects of pragmatics have also been studied. Hinkel (1994), for instance, compared the level of acceptance in writing by NS and NNS of English. The study was aimed to identify the differences between the writing conventions accepted in the discourse traditions influenced by Confucian and Taoist precepts and those accepted in the U.S. academic environment. The study compared the native and non-native English speakers' evaluations of four short essays, two written by NSs and the other two by advanced ESL learners. Little similarity was found in the NS' and NNS' judgment regarding the text's purpose, audience, specificity, clarity, and adequate support in academic writing. The effects of dissimilarity on L2 learners' pragmatic interpretations were examined and discussed for an appropriate writing pedagogy.

The study is justified by Kasper (1989) that most of the previous studies in cross-cultural and interlanguage pragmatics (ILP) have focused on comparing learners' speech act realizations with native speakers' performance as to provide information on the interactive norms in different languages and cultures. Recently, studies in ILP are more likely to be conducted to identify the learner's pragmatic development, both in the second and foreign language classrooms. In

second language contexts, results found in ILP research on speech acts illustrated that the perceptions of directness and positive politeness in requests were associated with the learners' length of residence in the target community or their level of proficiency (Blum-Kulka, 1987; Hassall, 2001, cited in Kasper, 1989). Research conducted in the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) context, on the other hand, reported that the range of speech acts and realization strategies was quite narrow. It was also found that the typical classroom interaction patterns restricted the pragmatic input and opportunities for practicing discourse organization strategies (Lörscher and Schulze, 1988, cited in Kasper, 1989).

In another study, Soler (2005) investigated the efficacy of two instructional paradigms—explicit versus implicit instruction—and the learners' ability in using request strategies in the EFL contexts. One hundred and thirty-two EFL Spanish learners were randomly selected and divided into three groups: explicit, implicit and control. The explicit group received a focus on forms instruction based on the use of direct awareness-raising tasks and the provision of metapragmatic feedback on the use of appropriate requests. The implicit group was provided with a focus on form instruction by means of input enhancement of request strategies and a set of implicit awareness-raising tasks. The control group was on the comprehension and production of the English language. It was found that learners' awareness of requests was resulted only from the explicit and implicit instruction. The explicit group, however, showed an advantage over the implicit one. The control group did not show evidence of the awareness in the pragmatic feature.

More recently, Ne'meth T. and Bibok (2010) conducted a study proposing that grammar and pragmatics were the two components which were not independent from each other, but always functioned with each other. With their main research question: what role the interaction between grammar and pragmatics plays in the meaning construction of these utterances?, they investigated 3 types of Hungarian utterances: utterance containing implicit argument, implicit predicates, and co-composition. They found in their study that grammar and pragmatics were not independent of each other. These 2 elements always functioned in an interaction with

each other. Moreover, these 2 components also related when detached from their contexts. It was claimed, thus, that they could be the important part of the lexical-semantic representation.

Considering the 2 domains, namely linguistics and pragmatics, it was observed that researchers had put great importance to the investigation of the relationship between linguistic competence and pragmatic competence. Previous research tried to find out whether learners with high language proficiency would acquire a relevant level of pragmatic competence. Hoffman-Hicks (1992), for instance, studied the relationship between these 2 areas of language. Nine native speakers and 14 students of French were asked to do 3 tests: a standardized multiple-choice test of French, a role-play questionnaire, and a discourse completion test. It was found that learners' linguistic competence was necessary for pragmatic competence. The researcher also maintained that linguistic competence does not guarantee pragmatic competence.

However, in a comparative study Bardovi-Harlig (1999) study found that the students with high proficiency seemed to acquire higher level of pragmatic competence. Nonetheless, other researchers argued that even having high language proficiency learners had not been proficient in certain basic pragmatics (e.g, Blum-Kulka & Olshtain (1986), T. Takashi & Beebe (1987)).

Due to the inconclusive findings reviewed above, findings from the present study was hoped to add to the literature of this language study field.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This quasi-experimental study, aiming at investigating the learners' knowledge of grammar and vocabulary in relation to pragmatic competence of the participants, was carried out to discover answers for 3 research questions. This chapter is divided into 5 sections of the research methodology: the participants, the research instruments, the pilot study, the data collection, and the data analysis and statistical procedure.

3.1 Participants

Sixty-two 1st year Medical students enrolled in the 2010 academic year at Prince of Songkla University, Songkla, Thailand, participated in the current study. Thirty-two of the participants were males and the rest were female. All participants, whose age ranged from 18 to 20, have taken 2 required courses: (1) 890-101 *Fundamental English Listening and Speaking* and (2) 890-102 *Fundamental English Reading and Writing*. Regarding the participants' English language proficiency, almost half of them were judged by the university entrance examination scores as exceptional; 8 were exempted from the *Fundamental English Listening and Speaking* (890-101), 15 were exempted from the *Fundamental English Reading and Writing* (890-102), and 4 were exempted from both courses. The rest (35) had to enroll in the 2 courses. Regardless of being exempted from the 2 fundamental courses or having to take them, the participants were required to take one or 2 more advanced English courses. Thus, while the present study was being carried out, they were all enrolled in *Reading for Sciences and Technology* as one of them. Some of them were also taking *Advanced Writing*.

Upon signing up as research participants, the subjects were divided into 3 groups according to their test scores on grammar and vocabulary using Kelley's 27 percent discrimination technique (Kelley et.al, 2002): high, middle and low-score

groups. The 62 participants were group into 3 sub-groups accordingly. According to the discrimination technique, the top 27 percentage of participants was assigned to the high-score group; the bottom 27 percentage was assigned to the low-score group, and the rest were assigned to the middle-score group. When applying the technique to the participants of the present study, however, only 8 students were assigned to the high-score group and 54 students to the middle-score group, while no student was assigned to the bottom 27 percentage. In other words, none of the research participants were considered poor in grammar and vocabulary. Instead, they were rather highly proficient in English according to the test results.

In taking the linguistic test, the most proficient participant scored 48 out of 60, while the poorest scored 24. When considered the scores of each group, it was found that the highest score of the high group was 48 while that of the middle group was 43. That is to say, the lowest score of the High-score group was 44 while that of the Middle-score group was 24, as shown in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1 Scores on Grammar and Vocabulary

	High English Proficiency	Middle English Proficiency
Highest score	48	43
Lowest score	44	24

In addition to their English language background attested by the 2 Foundation English courses and the grammar and vocabulary test for the present study, the participants' language interest was also investigated through a questionnaire.

The information sought from the questionnaire showed that 34 of the participants took extra (tutorial) classes since they were in primary school all through their senior high school. Thirty-three participants stated that their parents involved in supporting their English learning. Moreover, 17 participants had various opportunities exposing to direct experiences in the English speaking countries. Among them, 3

experienced traveling in Canada, Australia, Sweden, Malaysia and Singapore; 8 had direct experiences joining exchange programs in the USA, Australia, the Britain, Canada, and Japan; and 6 had taken short courses in Japan, Malaysia, Australia, China and the USA. In particular, 4 had experiences in doing those activities abroad more than 3 times.

3.2 Research Instrument

Three sets of instrument were employed in the present study: a grammar and vocabulary test (GVT), a contextualized pragmatic judgment test (CPJT), and a questionnaire.

3.2.1 Grammar and Vocabulary Test

The grammar and vocabulary test consisted of 60 multiple-choice test items constructed to measure participants' knowledge of the English grammar and vocabulary. This linguistic test was divided into 2 parts: 40 items testing knowledge of English grammar, and 20 items testing knowledge of English vocabulary. Each test item weighed 1 point equally. The test was constructed by modifying different versions of published standardized tests, including TOFEL. In order to elicit participants' knowledge of grammar, the grammar part included 18 grammatical features: subject-verb agreement, modal auxiliary verb, adjective, comparative adjective, possessive adjective, conjunction, passive voice construction, object pronoun, question word, preposition, conditional sentence, determiner, infinitive, present continuous tense, present perfect tense, past simple tense, past continuous tense, and present participle. These language aspects are believed to cause a relative broad scope of the English language grammar.

The number of the test items of each grammatical feature varies. Eight test items were allotted to test the participants' knowledge of modals, for instance. As pragmatics is directly related to politeness, the participants' use of modal auxiliary verbs was more emphasized than the use of prepositions, which was tested through only 2 test items.

The other part of the test was allocated to 20 multiple-choice items to test the participants' lexical knowledge. Like the first part, all vocabulary test items were modified from published standardized tests, including TOFEL. The vocabulary part consisted of 10 test items to test the participants' ability in using context clues to figure out the meaning of the words unknown to them. The other 10 test items consisted of 10 words the participants had learned (See Appendix A). The full scores of the grammar and vocabulary test was 60.

3.2.2 Contextualized Pragmatic Judgment Test

In addition to the multiple-choice grammar and vocabulary test, a contextualized pragmatic judgment test, was administered. The test was modified from the version developed by Bardovi - Harlig and Dörnyei (1998). This kind of instrument has been employed in previous studies to identify participants' use of pragmatic features in the study on pragmatic versus grammatical awareness in EFL teacher training by Gülten (2006), for instance. The test administered in the present study was aimed to examine the participants' pragmatic awareness in 4 speech acts: apology, request, acceptance, and decline.

The test battery consisted of 16 test items related to the 4 speech acts in question: 5 items on apology, 4 items on request, 3 items on acceptance, and 4 items on decline. Each test item contained the information guiding the participants to deliver an appropriate utterance in interacting with his or her interlocutor having 3 different social statuses: stranger, acquaintance, and superior. The test provided 16 scenarios in a university. In each scenario, 2 speakers communicated with each other. The participants were required to judge whether the response in each scenario was appropriate or inappropriate based on his or her interlocutor's status and the circumstance. They had 2 alternatives to choose: YES and NO. 'YES' means the response in each particular item was appropriate. 'NO' means the otherwise, inappropriate. The participants were asked to write their own response for all the items they selected 'No' (See Appendix B). In other words, they should be able to 'correct' any item they considered 'inappropriate'.

3.2.3 Questionnaire

In addition to the test administered to tab the participants' grammatical, lexical and pragmatic knowledge, a questionnaire was given to the participants.

The questionnaire was constructed to seek information on the participants' biodata to be employed in the subject data analysis. The questionnaire comprised 6 items asking about the participants' personal information: gender, age, English learning experience, including their exposure to the English speaking context. (See Appendix B)

3.3 Pilot Study

The grammar and vocabulary test and the contextualized pragmatic judgment test were cross-checked and piloted before the actual data collection. First, the 2 tests were scrutinized to assure linguistic accuracy, level of difficulty, and pragmatic appropriateness by 2 lecturers holding doctoral degrees. The tests were revised according to the comments and suggestions given by the reviewers. After the revision, the two tests were piloted.

The pilot study was carried out with 32 third-year, English Teaching Major students at Songkhla Rajabhat University, Thailand in the 2010 academic year. The pilot test takers were allowed to spend 1 hour and 50 minutes to finish the test. After piloting, it was found that some items of the grammar test needed to be revised, the part of speech of each answer choice and the format of the test, for instance. Subsequently, the revision version of the test was applied to both groups of participants for the actual data collection.

3.4 Data Collection

The 3 sets of instrument having been revised according to the pilot test results, were administered to the participants. The data collection was conducted during the English class time at the Faculty of Liberal Arts, Prince of Songkla University. The 62 participants were in 2 English classes: 30 in one class and 32 in

another class. In launching the tests, the researcher first explained the test objectives and instruction, and allowed some time for their questions before the participants started to take the tests. The total time spent for the data collection of each group was 2 hours. The data collection procedure was divided into 3 steps: grammar and vocabulary test administration, contextualized pragmatic judgment test administration, and questionnaire administration, as described below.

3.4.1 Grammar and Vocabulary Test Administration

The first test administered was the grammar and vocabulary test. The test was given during an English class time, allowed by the course instructor. In administering the test, the researcher first explained in detailed the objective and the instruction on how to do the test. While taking the test, the participants were not allowed to use any referential document, textbook or communicate with other test takers. They were asked to complete the test in 60 minutes. When time ran out, all the test copies and answer sheets were collected. The test takers were given a ten-minute break before another test administration. This same procedure was applied to both groups.

3.4.2 Contextualized Pragmatic Judgment Test Administration

Following the grammar and vocabulary test administering, a contextualized pragmatic judgment test was given. Similar to the 1st test, both participant groups were explained the objective and instruction of the test. Then, they were asked to finish the test within 50 minutes. Likewise, they were asked not to use any referential document or textbook during the test taking.

3.4.3. Questionnaire Administration

The last instrument distributed to the participants was a questionnaire. The participants were requested to answer the questionnaire asking about their own personal data involved with English learning. This procedure ended within 10 minutes.

3.5 Data Analysis and Statistical Procedure

The data gathered from the grammar and vocabulary test, the contextualized pragmatic judgment test, and the questionnaire were analyzed qualitatively and quantitatively according to the research questions as described below.

Research question 1: To what extent do the 1st year medical students know about grammar and vocabulary?

The research question was answered through a statistical test of the scores obtained from the grammar and vocabulary test. The test scores, totally 60 (40 for grammar and 20 for vocabulary), were first tallied to identify the frequency of each test score. The total scores were, then, computed into percentages to determine the mean score of the whole group. In answering research question 1, to what extent do the 1st year medical students know about grammar and vocabulary?, the test scores on grammar and vocabulary were also computed separately.

Research question 2: What is the 1st year medical students' pragmatic competence?

To answer research question 2, the scores on the 16 items of the contextualized pragmatic judgment test were collected. Each item weighted 1 point. The scores were computed into percentage to determine the mean score, standard deviation, minimum and maximum scores.

Research Question 3: Is there any relationship between the participants' knowledge of grammar and vocabulary and pragmatic competence?

In answering research question 3, 2 sets of scores were employed, one from the grammar and vocabulary test, and the other from the contextualized pragmatic judgment test. These 2 sets of scores were computed to determine the relationship of the participants' ability and pragmatic knowledge using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Test. The statistical test was performed to locate the similarity and difference among those 3 domains: grammar, vocabulary and pragmatics. The correlation was tested first between the whole scores of the 2 tests. Then, each of the 4 speech acts (apology, request, acceptance, and decline) was compared with the scores of grammar and vocabulary.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents statistical findings and discussion of the findings consisting of 2 parts. The first part reports on the statistical test results concerning the research questions posed. The discussion of results and analysis of sentences produced by the participants were presented in the second part.

4.1 Research Findings

This quasi-experimental study investigated the relationship between the learners' knowledge of English grammar and vocabulary in relation to their pragmatic competence. The investigation answered 3 research questions, restated below.

1. To what extent do the 1st year medical students know about grammar and vocabulary?
2. What is the 1st year medical students' pragmatic competence?
3. Is there any relationship between the participants' knowledge of grammar and vocabulary and pragmatic competence?

The data, collected through the research instruments designed to tap the learners' knowledge of grammar, vocabulary and pragmatics, were analyzed statistically to answer the research questions.

4.1.1 Grammatical Knowledge

In answering Research Question 1, the scores sought from the test of grammar and vocabulary were computed, of which the results are shown in the Table 4.1 and 4.2.

Table 4.1: Learners' Grammatical and Lexical Knowledge

(n=62)

Group	Score range (%)	\bar{x}	S.D.	Number of Participants
1. High-score	74-100	76.04	2.66	8
2. Middle-score	28-73	61.73	7.28	54
3. Low-score	0-27	-	-	-

The participants' scores on grammar and vocabulary were calculated into percentage and used Kelley's 27-percent discrimination technique (Kelley et.al, 2002) to assign the subjects into the high, middle, and low score groups, as shown in Table 4.1. However, due to the participants' rather high scores, the 62 participants were divided into only 2 groups: 8 assigned to the High-score group and the rest, 54, to the Middle-score group. In other words, no participant was placed into the Low-score group. It was found that the participants scored the highest at 80.00 % and the lowest at 40.00 %. The mean score of the High-score group was 76.04 and that of the Middle-score Group was 61.73. These figures, therefore, indicated that these EFL learners had modulate to high knowledge of grammar and vocabulary.

In addition to answering Research Question 1, asking about the participants' knowledge of grammar and vocabulary found in Table 4.1, the test scores were also analyzed using the raw scores to determine the mean, highest and lowest score of each sub-group, as shown in Table 4.2 and Table 4.3.

Table 4.2: Mean, Minimum, and Maximum Scores on Grammatical Knowledge

Groups (n=62)	Scores (Total scores = 40)			
	\bar{x}	S.D.	Min	Max
1. High-score (8)	30.38	2.00	27	34
2. Middle-score (54)	25.87	3.08	17	31
Total (62)	26.45	3.32	17	34

The data in Table 4.2 indicated that the best student of the High-score group scored 34 out of 40 and the poorest one scored 27 out of 40. The best of the Middle-score group, on the other hand, scored 31 while the poorest scored 17 out of 40. The figures confirmed that the participants had rather high competence in English grammar. In addition, the standard deviation of scores on grammar showed no difference in the scores on grammatical knowledge among these groups of research participants.

4.1.2 Lexical Knowledge

Besides the subjects' grammatical knowledge, Research Question 1 also aimed at identifying the lexical knowledge. The scores from the language test, thus, were analyzed, of which the results are shown in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3: Mean, Minimal, and Maximal Scores on Lexical knowledge

Groups (n=62)	Scores (Total scores = 20)				
	\bar{x}_1	\bar{x}_2	S.D	Min	Max
1. High-score (8)	76.25	15.25	1.16	14	17
2. Middle-score (54)	55.35	11.07	2.07	7	15
Total (62)	58.05	11.61	2.42	7	17

Table 4.3 shows the vocabulary test scores of High-score and Middle-score groups. \bar{X}_1 represents the means scores calculated from the scores converted to percentage and \bar{X}_2 represents those calculated from the raw scores. From the total scores of 20, the High-score group obtained the minimal scores of 14 and maximal scores of 17. The Middle-score group, on the other hand, obtained the minimal scores of 7 and maximal scores of 15. However, the mean score of the High-score group was 15.25 out of 20 or 76.25 percent while that of the Middle-score group was 11.07 out of 20 or 55.35 percent. When considering the whole subject group, the mean score of

vocabulary test was 11.61 or 58.05 percent. The figures showed that the participants under this investigation had rather impressive scores on vocabulary. Moreover, the distribution of the vocabulary scores (S.D) is relatively low at 2.42.

4.1.3 Pragmatic Knowledge

As described in Chapter 3, 2 tests were performed in the data collection process, the Grammar and Vocabulary Test and the Contextualized Pragmatic Judgment Test. The former was employed to tap the subjects' grammar and lexical knowledge and the latter to measure their pragmatic knowledge. The Contextualized Pragmatic Judgment Test was administered to elicit the subjects' competence on pragmatics in the 4 speech acts: apology, request, acceptance, and decline. Results are shown in Tables 4.4 and 4.5 below.

Table 4.4: Learners' Pragmatic Knowledge

Group	(n=62)	
	<u>Pragmatic knowledge (in percentage)</u>	
	\bar{x}	S.D
1. High-score (8)	57.81	15.22
2. Middle-score (54)	73.26	11.09
Total (62)	77.27	12.68

Table 4.4 indicates the participants' overall knowledge of pragmatics. The participants' scores on pragmatic knowledge were calculated into percentage to identify the mean scores in both two groups. After calculating, it was found that the High-score group, scoring highly on grammar and vocabulary test, scored lower on pragmatic test than the Middle-score group; the mean score on pragmatics of the High-score group was 57.81 while that of the Middle-score group was 73.26. Tables 4.4 and 4.5 show the converse data of the two groups. The High-score group performed poorer on the test of pragmatic knowledge than Middle-sore group, who, on the other hand, did poorer in the test of grammar and vocabulary. These

unexpected results show interesting information about the participants' knowledge of the 2 domains, and thus are further demonstrated in the following tables.

Tables 4.5 - 4.7 show the statistical results related to the subjects' knowledge of the 4 speech acts of pragmatics. In analyzing the participants' pragmatic knowledge, the whole scores of the test were discriminated according to the 4 speech acts before performing statistical analyses.

Table 4.5 Learners' Pragmatic Knowledge in 4 Speech Acts

Speech acts (n=62)	Scores (Total scores = 16)				
	\bar{x}_1	\bar{x}_2	S.D	Min	Max
Apology (5)	72.00	3.60	.69	2	5
Request (4)	64.50	2.58	.90	1	4
Acceptation (3)	63.33	1.90	.84	0	3
Decline (4)	82.75	3.31	.92	0	4
Total	71.25	11.40	2.03	5	15

Table 4.5 shows the scores calculated in percentages and raw scores of each speech act performed by the whole subject group. \bar{X}_1 represents the means scores calculated from the scores converted to percentage and \bar{X}_2 represents those calculated from the raw scores. It was found that this group of Medical students performed best in decline (82.75%, 3.31), followed by apology (72.00%, 3.60). They performed relatively as well in the other 2 speech acts (request and acceptance), 64.50% (2.58) and 63.33% (1.90), respectively. When further analyzed, it was found that the mean score (in raw score) in decline was higher than the other 3 speech acts, 3.31 from total score of 4.

In addition to the analysis of the whole group's performance in the pragmatic test, each sub-group's performance in the 4 speech acts were analyzed, as shown in Tables 4.6 and 4.7

Table 4.6: Knowledge of 4 Aspects of Pragmatics of the High-score Group

Speech acts (n=8)	Scores (Total scores = 16)				
	\bar{x}_1	\bar{x}_2	S.D	Min	Max
Apology (5)	65.00	3.25	.89	2	4
Request (4)	56.25	2.25	.71	1	3
Acceptation (3)	33.33	1.00	.76	0	2
Decline (4)	68.75	2.75	1.58	0	4
Total	57.81	9.25	2.43	5	13

Among the 4 speech acts, the subjects in this sub-group scored rather well in 2 speech acts, apology and decline. Like the analysis of the whole group's performance, due to the unequal scores allocated to each speech act, the scores were analyzed both from raw scores and scores in percentages. Table 4.6 shows results of the analysis of the 4 speech acts in question. It was found that the High-score group performed rather well in apology and decline. Their mean scores on apology and decline were 65% (3.25) and 68% (2.75), respectively. The speech act they scored at a modulate level was request, 56.25% (2.25). The speech act they scored worst is acceptance, 33.33% (1.00).

Like the analysis of the High-score group's pragmatic knowledge, the Middle-score group's performance was analyzed in the same manner, from raw scores and converted scores, of which the results are shown in Table 4.7.

Table 4.7: Knowledge of 4 Aspects of Pragmatics of the Middle-score Group

Speech acts (n=54)	Scores (Total scores =16)				
	\bar{x}_1	\bar{x}_2	S.D	Min	Max
Apology (5)	73.00	3.65	.65	2	5
Request (4)	65.75	2.63	.92	1	4
Acceptation (3)	68.00	2.04	.78	1	3
Decline (4)	84.75	3.39	.76	1	4
Total	73.25	11.72	1.77	7	15

Table 4.7 shows the scores on 4 speech acts performed by the Middle-score group. Similar to the High-score group, these subjects scored better in apology and decline, while did poorly in the other two, request and acceptance. Nonetheless, they outperformed in pragmatics test compared to their counterpart.

Results from the Pragmatic test (CPJT) suggest that learners with higher language competence might not have comparable competence in pragmatics. Results from the 2 tests show that those who performed better in the grammar and vocabulary failed to achieve as good the scores. Those who performed worse in grammar and vocabulary, on the contrary, performed better in pragmatics. While the High-score group means scores were 65 in apology and 68.75 in decline, the Middle-scores group's means scores were 73.00 in apology and 84.75 in decline, respectively. They also scored better in the other 2 speech acts, request and acceptance ($X= 65.75$ and 68.00 , respectively). Their counterpart's means score, on the other hand, were 55.25 and 33.33, respectively.

Statistical results presented above to answer Research Question 1 and Research Question 2, asking about the research participants' knowledge of grammar and vocabulary (Research Question 1) and pragmatics (Research Question 2) can be summarized in Figure 4.1.

Figure 4.1: Learners' Scores on Linguistics and Pragmatics

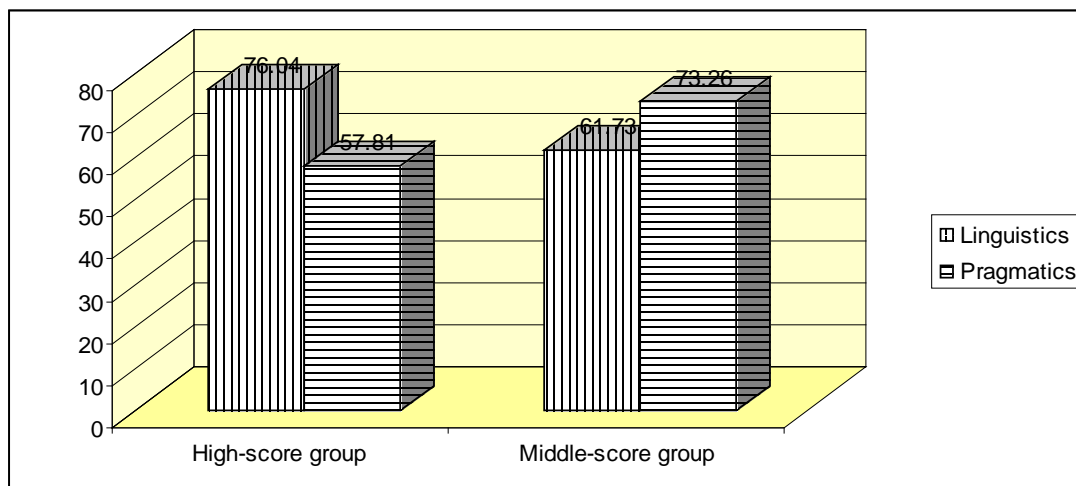


Figure 4.1 shows the results of 2 tests: linguistics and pragmatic test performed by each subject group. The figures indicated that the High-score group's mean scores on grammar and vocabulary was 76.04 and that on pragmatics was 57.81. Whereas the Middle-score group's mean scores on the 2 language aspects were 61.73 and 73.26, respectively.

4.1.4 The Relationship between Linguistics and Pragmatic Knowledge

The investigation in the present study was aimed to determine the subjects' linguistic and pragmatic knowledge. The investigation also sought to find out whether there is connection between the 2 areas of language competence, Research Question 3.

Results shown in Tables 4.5 to 4.7 above answered Research Question 1 and Research Question 2 asking about the subjects' language competence concerning grammar and lexical knowledge. To answer Research Question 3, asking whether there exists any connection between the learners' linguistic and pragmatic knowledge, a series of correlation test –Pearson's Product Moment Coefficient, was performed, of which the results are shown in Tables 4.8 – 4.10.

Table 4.8: Relationship between Linguistic and Pragmatic knowledge

(n=62)	Correlation				
	Apology	Requests	Acceptation	Decline	Total
Grammar (40 items)	-.106	-.095	-.154	-.219*	-.264*
Vocabulary (20 items)	.003	-.287*	-.195	-.182	-.304**
Total (60 items)	-.035	-.193	-.174	-.238*	-.292*

*Significant at 0.05

** Significant at 0.01

Table 4.8 shows the results of a Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient Test performed to identify the linguistic and pragmatic competence of the whole subject group. It was found that scores on the language test was negatively related to those on pragmatics. The students who achieved high scores on grammar and vocabulary test did poorly on the pragmatic knowledge test, and vice versa. In particular, the findings suggested that the pragmatic knowledge and knowledge of grammar and vocabulary of the 1st year medical students at Prince of Songkla University were not uniformly related. For instance, positive relationship was found between the participants' scores on vocabulary and the speech act of apology. A negative relationship between the linguistic scores and pragmatic scores of the whole subject group was found (-0.292*), at the significant level of 0.05.

In addition to the relationship of the linguistic and pragmatic knowledge of the whole subject group, that of each subject group was also examined, of which the results are shown in Tables 4.9 and 4.10

Table 4.9: Relationship between Linguistic and Pragmatic Knowledge of the Middle-score group

(n=54)	Correlation				
	Apology	Requests	Acceptation	Decline	Total
Grammar (40 items)	.062	-.011	.073	-.147	-.045
Vocabulary (20 items)	.104	-.293*	.069	-.078	-.138
Total (60 items)	.138	-.138	.111	-.152	-.057

*Significant at 0.05

** Significant at 0.01

Table 4.9 shows the results of a Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient Test performed to identify the relationship between the scores on the language test and the pragmatic test of the Middle-score group. In comparing each speech act with the linguistic performance, a negative relationship between their language knowledge and the pragmatic knowledge was found. When the score on each speech act was compared with that of vocabulary, however, it was found that one of the speech acts (request) was negatively related to the score of vocabulary, at the significant level of 0.05. In other words, their lexical knowledge was low but they performed better in 'request'

As reported above, a negative relationship was found in the comparison of the total scores of language test and total scores on the pragmatic test. However, positive relationship between grammar scores and speech acts of apology and acceptance was found .062 and .073. The vocabulary score was also found to be positively related to two speech acts – apology and acceptance, meaning that the subjects' knowledge of the 2 language aspects were rather equivalent.

According to table 4.9, the total scores on grammar and vocabulary and pragmatics of the Middle-score group suggested that the relationship of the knowledge in these 2 aspects was negative. This negative relationship signifies that the knowledge of grammar and vocabulary and knowledge of pragmatics were not equivalent, and that they might not influence each other. Although their grammar and vocabulary score was at the middle level, they showed a better competence in judging the sentences produced in each scenario in terms of pragmatic appropriateness.

The evidence could be interpreted that they were aware of the English language use although they were not accurate in the language construction.

Table 4.10: Relationship between Language and Pragmatic Knowledge of the High-score group

(n=8)	Correlation				
	Apology	Request	Acceptation	Decline	Total
Grammar (40 items)	-.707*	-.380	-.284	-.102	-.522
Vocabulary (20 items)	.623*	.434	.000	.039	.378
Total (60 items)	-.429	-.158	-.355	-.099	-.376

*Significant at 0.05

** Significant at 0.01

Table 4.10 shows the results of Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient Test performed to identify the relationship between the language scores and those of pragmatics performed by the High-score group. Considering the total scores on the language test and pragmatic test, it was found that there was negatively relationship between these two areas of the language at the level of -.376. It means that the participants' knowledge on these 2 domains were not correspondent. Similar to the results of the Middle-score group, the statistical test showed a negative relationship between the total score of the grammatical knowledge and the 4 speech acts. It was found that the scores on the 4 speech acts were also negatively related to the score on grammar especially the score on the speech act of apology which was negatively related to that of grammar at the significant level of 0.05 (-.707*). On the contrary, the score on vocabulary was positively related to the score of every speech act, especially the positive relationship between the vocabulary and speech act of apology at the significant level of 0.05 (.623*), which indicates the consistency of the score on vocabulary and apology of the High-score group.

In this analysis, the converse information of High-score group and Middle-score group was found. As described above, the knowledge of grammar and vocabulary and that of pragmatics of the Middle-score group were negatively related; the High-score group's data was in the similar way. Even though they performed well

on grammar and vocabulary, they did rather poorly on pragmatics. This occurrence might be interpreted that the High-score group was rather accurate in the language construction, while not as accurate in how to use the language in a proper way in each situation.

4.1.5 Learner Factors Influencing English Language Learning

In the present study 2 tests were performed to investigate the subjects' grammatical, lexical and pragmatic knowledge, (the grammar and vocabulary test, and the Contextualized Pragmatic Judgment Test). Also, a questionnaire was given to seek the information other than the 2 language aspects in question. In particular, the Questionnaire items asked about factors that could have a role in the subjects' knowledge of the English language and language learning experience. Results from the 2 tests, as described earlier, show that the whole group achieved moderate to high scores in the test of English grammar and vocabulary. Interestingly, the High-score group, who scored better in the linguistic test, performed worse in the pragmatic test, and vice versa. This observation, thus, concluded that linguistic competence did not result in their pragmatics competence. This results support the findings of previous studies that grammatical development does not guarantee a corresponding level of pragmatic development (Bardovi-Harlig & Hartford, 1991, 1993; Omar, 1992). Although the participants in the High-score group performed better in linguistic aspect, they, on the contrary, could not perform in corresponding level on certain pragmatics aspects.

The information gained from the questionnaire was calculated into percentages. Some significant variables were revealed. Twenty-five of the participants have been learning English for 13-14 years. In addition, 57 of the participants were highly interested in learning English, while only 5 participants were less interested in learning English. Moreover, 80.64% of the participants have taken various courses on English grammar in various tutorial institutes. About 40.32% of the participants saw movies and listened to music in English in order to practice their English language. Furthermore, talking in English with their parents was another variable they used to practice English.

They were also requested to answer about their experiences in order to elicit the deeper information on the participants' experiences about English exposure. It was found that 16 of the group has participated in exchange programs abroad. Thirteen of them had taken English short courses: 1-3 months and 1-year courses abroad. Further, 23 of the participants had joined school English language activities and traveling abroad. This finding is relatively opposite to the results found by Bardovi-Harlig and Dörnyei (1998). They found that the participants who had spent some time abroad or had had native English teachers did not score high on both grammatical and pragmatic items.

4.2 Discussion of the Results

This part discusses the results obtained from the statistical analysis related to the 3 Research Questions. Included are the discussion on the participants' knowledge of linguistics, pragmatics, and the relationship between the 2 domains as well as the analysis of the participants' production.

4.2.1 Learners' Linguistic Knowledge

The results from the statistical performance showed that the subjects, 1st-year Medical students, were relatively high competent in English linguistics. According to their scores on the linguistic test, the participants were divided into 2 groups: High-score group and Middle-score group, no one was allocated in the low-score group. Calculated into percentages, the highest score was 80.00 % and the lowest was 40.00 %. The mean score of the High-score group was 76.04 and that of the Middle-score group was 61.73. The results confirmed their high competence in English language construction and English vocabulary.

Considering the data given in the questionnaire, it showed that most (58) participants had broad exposure to language construction learning since they were at the primary level. It can probably be concluded that they gave the first priority to the language construction because they were required to pass the university

entrance examination which seemed to focus heavily on the language domain. In order to get admitted to the Faculty of Medicine, the candidates had to be aware of various fields of sciences. In terms of English, they must use this language as a major medium in acquiring knowledge from textbooks, all of which are more or less written in English. The participants, thus, must have endeavored to achieve that relatively high competence in the English grammar and vocabulary.

4.2.2 Learners' Pragmatic Knowledge

In the present study, the participants' pragmatic competence was elicited through the contextualized pragmatic judgment test (CPJT). The statistical results revealed that the whole subject group was able to perform 71.25 % on the pragmatic test. The most outstanding score in percentages they performed among the 4 speech acts was 82.75%, on the speech act of decline. In contrast, they performed the worst, 63.33 %, on the speech act of acceptance. When their performance on the speech act of request was considered, it was found that statistically they achieved moderate scores. The participants reached only 64.50 % on this speech act. The results from the analysis of the answers given in the test supported the findings in the studies by Wannurak (2005) and Luksaneeyanawin (2005). They found that the Thai EFL students in their studies tried to be too polite when they communicated in English by using indirect strategies to make their requests sound polite.

The statistical results on their pragmatic competence in each group were also analyzed. The High-score group performed best at 68.75% on decline but scored worst at 33.33% on acceptance, while those in the Middle-score group scored best at 84.75% on decline but scored worst at 65.75 on request. The results showed interesting information; the participants in the present study acquired extremely low on the speech act of acceptance. This phenomenon might imply that the participants had not experienced sufficient input in the target language leading to communication failure which was more serious than linguistic failure (Thomas, 1983).

4.2.3 The Relationship between the Participants' Knowledge of Grammar, Vocabulary and Pragmatics

The results discovered through the use of the 3 types of research instrument indicate the imbalance in the 2 language domains of the participants. Participants in the High-score group performed highly in the test of grammar and vocabulary while performed rather poorly in the pragmatic test. Those in the Middle-score group, on the other hand, performed the otherwise. One possible explanation to the results could be contributed to the teaching techniques. The participants scored rather high in grammar could have resulted from the pedagogy they received in the class which was widely known for emphasizing more on language construction and vocabulary. The information sought from the questionnaire revealed that the participants were involved with the English academic environment since they were at the primary level. They might have paid full attention to the language construction which could have led to their lack of the awareness of how to use the language properly in real life situations.

The Middle-score group, on the other hand, although they performed moderately on grammar and vocabulary, they achieved rather impressive scores on the pragmatic test. The results confirmed previous studies showing that the amount of input to which the participants exposed played an important role in their pragmatic competence (Bardovi-Harlig, 1996; Jung, 2002; Kasper and Rose, 2002).

The information also shows the converse results of the participants. The High-scored group, with higher grammatical competency, might imply that they had rather high grammatical competence because they had had more exposure to grammatical instruction, from the classroom, than pragmatic instruction. According to the questionnaire information, the participants had had ample experience taking English tutorial courses.

Participants in the Middle-scored group, on the other hand, showed higher competence in pragmatics in a variety of contexts (e.g., request, decline, acceptance, and apology). This could be resulted from their more exposure to pragmatic experience outside the classroom. Interestingly, this group viewed that communicate via the language appropriately was much more important for them than to use the language accurately.

As shown in the results shown, the students who mastered high grammatical proficiency were not mastering high proficiency on pragmatics. Even though high scores in grammar and vocabulary could help the participants succeed in learning, lack of pragmatic knowledge might cause failure in their communication and, thus, breakdown the interpersonal relationship between the speakers and the hearers.

4.2.4 Analysis of Pragmatic Sentences Produced by Participants

Besides the scores on pragmatics elicited from the contextualized pragmatic judgment test (CPJT), the sentences produced by the participants were examined. The test comprising 16 items of 4 speech acts, 5 items on apology, 4 items on request, 3 items on acceptance, and 4 items on decline. In each speech act the participants were provided with some information and the utterances made by 2 speakers of 3 social statuses: stranger, acquaintance, and superior, in a university setting. The last sentence of the conversation was left for the participants to judge whether the sentences produced by the speakers were appropriate according to the situation and social status.

The condition of the test was that if the participants judged the last sentence in each item as inappropriate, they had to make their own utterance(s) to complete the conversation. Below shown are sentences the participants produced in 16 scenarios followed by an analysis of each utterance.

1. Peter is a university student. He goes to see his lecturer at his office. When he arrives, his lecturer is busy.

Peter: (knock on the door)

Lecturer: Yes come in

Peter: Hello, Mr. Gordon. I'm wondering if you have a minute.

Lecturer: Erm... I'm afraid not. Could you come back later?

Peter: *OK. I will be back here tomorrow morning at 8.*

Is Peter's response appropriate? Yes No

Your version _____

Item 1 was to elicit the participants' knowledge on the speech act of acceptance responding to a superior. This item required them to judge whether Peter's response to answer his lecturer's request was appropriate. It was found that the majority, forty-five out of 62 participants or 72.5%, judged it inappropriate. Their responses matched the judgment made by the English native speaker (NS) raters. The rest, 17 participants or 27.4%, judged this sentence as appropriate.

Further, 45 of the participants gave their own versions of the sentence they considered more appropriate, as shown below. The first two participants made the sentence more polite by asking the lecturer's available time. The second 2 participants showed politeness by offering the time to make an appointment. The last two participants instantly offered time to see the lecturer. These two sentences implied that although the participants judged it as inappropriate they failed to respond in a more polite way.

Examples of participants' versions

Participant 1: *OK. So what time should be ok?*

Participant 2: *OK. What time are you available?*

Participant 3: *OK. Can I be here tomorrow morning at 8?*

Participant 4: *OK. Will I meet you tomorrow morning?*

Participant 5: *OK. I will come back to see you again.*

Participant 6: *OK. I will come here early*

2. In a class, it is Anna's day to give her talk in class but she is not ready.

Lecturer: Thank you Steven, that was very interesting. Anna, it's your turn to give your talk.

Anna: *I can't do it today, but I will do it next week. .*

Is Anna's response appropriate? Yes No

Your version _____

This scenario required the participants to show their knowledge on the speech acts of decline to a superior. In the scenario, Anna has to decline her lecturer's request to give a talk. The English NS raters judged the last sentence in this item as inappropriate. It was found that 56 out of total participants, or 90.3%, judged it as inappropriate, which corresponded to the NS raters'. Only 6 participants, or 9.6%, considered the sentence appropriate. It can be interpreted that most of the 1st year Medical students participating in the present study gave the first priority to how to make the utterance more polite, especially when talking to a lecturer.

Below are some versions given by the participants.

Examples of participants' versions

Participant 1: *Sorry, sir. I'm not ready now. Can I talk next week?*

Participant 2: *Sorry, I'm not ready. May I do it next week, please?*

Participant 3: *I'm sorry. I've prepared but it still not quite complete. Would it be alright if I do my speech next time? I really need some more time to make it just perfect!*

Participant 4: *Forgive me. I can't do it today?*

Participant 5: *I'm not ready to give my talk today. Could I do it for you next week?*

Participant 6: *I'm afraid I can't. I have not prepared yet. Could it be on next week please?*

Among the participants, 3 started their response with 'Sorry' to make it more polite. One participant asked for forgiveness and refused to take the turn in giving a talk. However, the last 2 participants declined the request by using modal verbs in order to make better utterances.

The examples given by the participants also indicated that they were aware of the social status of the hearer. Wannurak (2005) claimed in her study that a speaker's awareness of a superior status and the characteristics of being humble in L1 culture motivated pragmatic transfer.

3. Peter and George are classmates. George is going to the library. Peter asks him to return a library book.

George: Well, I'll see you later. I've got to the library to return a library book.

Peter: *Oh, if you are going to the library, can you please return my book too?*

Is Peter's response appropriate? Yes No

Your version _____

Below are 6 versions of responses made by the participants.

Examples of participants' versions

Participant 1: *Can you please return my book too?*

Participant 2: *Could you return my book, please?*

Participant 3: *Oh, if you don't mind, please return my book too.*

Participant 4: *If you are going to the library please return my book too?*

Participant 5: *Oh, if you are going to the library, could you please return my book too?*

Participant 6: *Oh, I will go with you, I have to return my book too.*

Scenario 3 asked the participants to judge the appropriateness of the request made to an acquaintance by Peter, who requested his classmate to return a book to the library for him. 48 participants, or 77.4%, judged Peter's request as appropriate. Similar to the NS raters, they judged the request as appropriate enough. However, 14 participants or 22.5%, judged the utterance as inappropriate. In analyzing their sample versions, it was found that the participants made the requests more polite by using a modal verb 'Could' as an indirect question. It can be interpreted that those participants who failed to make a correct judgment might have difficulty in identifying the social status of the hearer. Because the hearer had an equal status to the speaker, the use of modal verb 'Could' and an indirect question made the speech sound too polite.

4. Peter and George are classmates. Peter and George meet before class. They want to do something before class starts.

George: Hey, we have 15 minutes before the next class.
 What shall we do?

Peter: *Let's go to the snack bar.*

Is Peter's response appropriate? Yes No

Your version _____

A speech act of acceptance performing to an acquaintance was given in this item. After investigating the participants' ability on making a request, out of 52 participants or 83.8% considered the last sentence of the item appropriate. The majority of the answers were in accordance with the answers of NS raters.

On the other hand, 10 participants or 16% considered the sentence inappropriate, as shown in the 6 samples below.

Examples of participants' versions

- Participant 1: *Let's have some snack.*
- Participant 2: *Let's go to the snack bar, shall we?*
- Participant 3: *Let's go to the library to review the lessons.*
- Participant 4: *Shall we go to the snack bar?*
- Participant 5: *We shall go to the snack bar.*
- Participant 6: *Why don't we prepare the lesson.*

In analyzing the versions above, it was found that most of the sentences they produced were not different in terms of politeness, for example, *Let's have some snack*. Some participants used the modal verb 'shall' to make the request. Two of them were aware of the content of the sentence. They judged the last sentence as inappropriate and changed the content from requesting his friend to a snack bar to requesting him to prepare a lesson or to go to the library.

5. Anna has borrowed a book from a classmate, Maria. Maria needs it back, but Anna has forgotten to return it.

Maria: Do you have the book I gave you last week?

Anna: *Oh. I'm really sorry but I was in a rush this morning and I didn't bring it today.*

Is Anna's response appropriate? Yes No

Your version _____

Item 5 asked the participants to judge the speech act of apology made to a superior. Anna needed to apologize her teacher because she forgot to bring back her teacher's book. Most of the NSs who examined this instrument agreed to judge this sentence as appropriate enough. Forty-nine or 79% out of the participants judged the response as appropriate. The rest, 19 participants, on the other hand, judged the utterance as inappropriate as shown in the sample versions below.

Examples of participants' versions

- Participant 1: *Ok. I'm really sorry but I was in a rush this morning and I didn't bring it today, so can I give it to you this evening?*
- Participant 2: *I'm really sorry because I was in a rush this morning and I didn't bring it today?*
- Participant 3: *Oh I'm really sorry because I was in a rush this morning but I promise that I will bring t tomorrow.*
- Participant 4: *Oh. I'm really sorry I will come back to my room and bring it to after the class finished.*
- Participant 5: *Oh. I have forgotten. I will return it to you tomorrow.*
- Participant 6: *Oh. I'm really sorry. I didn't bring it today but I will bring it to return tomorrow.*

The sample versions above showed that the participants tried to make the sentences more polite by adding more content about how to return the book to the hearer. They emphasized on their awareness of the intention to return the book. According to Brown and Levinson (1987), the participants use a positive strategy, which is one of the politeness theories, to perform positive responses.

6. Maria and Anna are friends. Maria invites Anna to her house but Anna cannot come.

Maria: Anna, would you like to come over this afternoon?

Anna: *I'm sorry, I'd like to come but I have a difficult history test tomorrow.*

Is Anna's response appropriate? Yes No

Your version _____

Item 6 was to elicit the participants' ability in making a decline to an acquaintance. According to NS raters' judgment, the decline was appropriate. Regarding the research participants, it was found that 55 participants or 88.7% considered the utterance appropriate, corresponding to NS raters. Seven participants or 11.2%, on the other hand, considered it inappropriate. Below are some versions given by the participants who judged the utterances inappropriate.

Examples of participants' versions

- Participant 1: *I'm afraid I can't. I'd like to come but I have a difficult history test tomorrow.*
- Participant 2: *I'm sorry, I can't come but I have a difficult history test tomorrow.*
- Participant 3: *I'm sorry, I'd like to come but I have to study for history test tomorrow.*
- Participant 4: *I'm sorry I'd like to come but I'm afraid that I have a difficult history test tomorrow.*
- Participant 5: *I'm sorry, I'd like to go but I will have a difficult history test tomorrow.*
- Participant 6: *I'm sorry, I'd like to come but I'm having test tomorrow. May be next time?*

All the sample sentences produced by the participants started with '*I'm sorry*'. Their answers were, in fact, not different from the given sentence in terms of politeness but only in the content.

7. Peter and George are classmates. Peter is going to George's house. He is quite late.

Peter: Hi George.

George: Hi Peter. I've been waiting for over half an hour for you. Weren't we supposed to meet at 4?

Peter *I couldn't come earlier. And anyway, we don't have to hurry anywhere.*

Is Peter's response appropriate? Yes No

Your version _____

Scenario 7 asked participants to make an apology to an acquaintance; Peter made an apology to his friend when he came to George's house late. According to NS raters' answers, this sentence was inappropriate. Impressively, all participants judged it the same way as NS raters' judges. Below are some versions given by the participants.

Examples of participants' versions

Participant 1: *Sorry I'm late. I have some business before come here.*

Participant 2: *I'm sorry. I didn't plan my time properly.*

Participant 3: *Yes, it's supposed to be 4. Sorry for being late, George.*

Participant 4: *Oh, I'm really sorry George but I couldn't come earlier.*

Participant 5: *I'm so sorry. I won't late next time.*

Participant 6: *Sorry, I have an accident. I didn't mean to do that.*

In analyzing the sample versions mad by the participants, it was found that all of them put the polite word 'sorry' to make their apology which was similar to the NS raters'.

8. Peter and George are classmates. George invites Peter to his home, but Peter cannot come.

George: Peter, would you like to come over to my place tonight?

Peter: *I'm sorry. I just can't I'm very tired. I couldn't sleep last night.*

Is Peter's response appropriate? Yes No

Your version _____

Scenario 8 asked participants to judge Peter's decline. In this scenario, Peter's response contained an apology expression "I'm Sorry". Also it is obviously stated that the 2 speakers have the same social status. Thus, the response given by Peter is appropriate according to NS raters' judgment. However, only 20 or 32.2% of the participants considered it appropriate while the rest, 42 or 67.7%, of the participants, considered it inappropriate. Below are some versions given by the participants.

Examples of participants' versions

- Participant 1: *Thank you but I'm afraid I can't go to your home because I feel very tired.*
- Participant 2: *I'd love to but I feel really tired today because I couldn't sleep last night. I'll go next time.*
- Participant 3: *I'm sorry. I'm very tired because I couldn't sleep last night.*
- Participant 4: *I would like to but I'm really have to rest.*
- Participant 5: *I'm afraid I can't. I feel very tired because I had a terrible night. I couldn't sleep last night.*
- Participant 6: *I'm sorry. I have something to do tonight. Can it be tomorrow?*

After analyzing the sample versions given by the research participants, it was found that the clauses 'I am sorry' and 'I would love to' were used to express their declines. The clause 'I would love to' was used to show their intention to please the hearer but because of tiredness, the speaker could not accept the interlocutor's offer. Their answers were, in fact, not different from the given sentence in terms of politeness but only in the content.

9. Anna goes to the cafeteria to have something to eat.

Anna: I would like a cup of chocolate, please?

Shop assistant: Of course. Would you like some bread either?

Anna: *No, I don't want it.*

Is Anna's response appropriate? Yes No

Your version _____

Scenario 9 asked participants to judge the decline made to a stranger. In this scenario, Anna was going to have something to eat at the cafeteria. Anna asked the shop assistant for a cup of chocolate. When the shop assistant offered a different kind of food, Anna replied "No, I don't want it". Most of the participants, 58 or 93.5%, judged the response as inappropriate. According to the NS raters' judges, the response was inappropriate. The rest 4 or 6.4%, however, considered the sentence as appropriate enough.

Below are 6 versions these participants made.

Examples of participants' versions

Participant 1: *No, thanks.*

Participant 2: *No, thank you.*

Participant 3: *No, I wouldn't.*

Participant 4: *No, I wouldn't like.*

Participant 5: *No, that's all. Thank you.*

Participant 6: *No, a cup of chocolate is enough.*

When analyzing the examples given from the participants, it was found that most of them added 'thanks' or 'thank you' to make it more polite. When the versions given by the NS raters were analyzed, it was found that they also added 'thank you' to the sentences. Moreover, some of the participants agreed that the response was inappropriate but they didn't add any polite words in their sentences. This might imply that they produced the sentence by transferring certain L1 pragmatic characteristics.

10. In a class, the lecturer asks Peter to help with the plans for the class trip.

Lecturer: OK. So we'll go by bus. Who live lives near the bus station? Peter, could you check the bus schedule for us on the way home tonight?

Peter: *No, I can't tonight. Sorry*

Is Peter's response appropriate? Yes No

Your version _____

In order to elicit the participants' knowledge of the speech act of decline to a superior, scenario 10 required them to judge whether Peter's response was appropriate. Fifty-four participants, or 87.09%, judged it as inappropriate, which corresponded to the judgment made by the NS raters. However, 8 participants, or 12.9%, judged the otherwise. Below are 6 versions made by the 8 participants.

Examples of participants' versions

Participant 1: *Sorry, sir. Could it be tomorrow night? I already have an appointment.*

Participant 2: *Sorry. I won't be available tonight but I will check it for you as quickly as I can.*

Participant 3: *No, I'm afraid that I can't, sorry.*

Participant 4: *Oh! I'm sorry, I can't check it tonight but I will do tomorrow.*

Participant 5: *I'm sorry I can't do it tonight. Can I do it tomorrow?*

Participant 6: *I'm afraid not, but I will check it tomorrow.*

It can be seen that most of the examples started with 'sorry'. They added the expression to make the sentence more suitable. Moreover, they added a sentence to show their intention of offering, '*Could it be tomorrow night?*', for instance.

11. Anna is a university student. She is working on a research project, and going to ask her lecturer to answer a questionnaire for her. She knocks on the office door.

Anna: (knocking on the door)

Lecturer: Yes, come in.

Anna: *Hello. My name is Anna Kovacs. If you don't mind, I would like you to fill this in for me.*

Is Anna's response appropriate? Yes No

Your version _____

Scenario 11 asked participants to judge the speech act of request to a superior. The request made by Anna was judged as inappropriate by the NS raters. Regarding the participants, it was found that 38 participants, or 61.2%, judged it as inappropriate, corresponding to the NS raters. Twenty-four participants, or 38.7%, on the other hand, judged it appropriate enough. They produced their own versions as shown below.

Examples of participants' versions

Participant 1: *Excuse me lecturer. My name is Anna Kovacs. Would you mind it you fill this in for me?*

Participant 2: *Hello. My name is Anna. Do you have any free time? Could you please fill this in for me?*

Participant 3: *Hello. My name is Anna Kovacs. I'm doing a research project and I'm looking for people to fill the questionnaires. Do you have a minute?*

Participant 4: *Hello. My name is Anna Kovacs. I'm working on my research project which requires a certain amount of data. Would you mind filling this in for me, please?*

Participant 5: *Hello. My name is Anna Kovacs. Could you have the little time to help me to fill this questionnaire.*

Participant 6: *If you don't mind, I would like you to fill this in for me.
May I come in for asking some questions?*

According to the examples given, they made the new sentences, mostly using a modal verb, for example, 'would, could', to make it polite. Native speakers, on the other hand, added 'Excuse me' for politeness. They also added certain information or reason for requesting. (See Appendix C)

12. In the library, Maria talks to a librarian to reserve a textbook.

Maria: I'd like to borrow the new version psychology textbook that I reserved yesterday.

Librarian: Oh I'm sorry. The book you mentioned is not returned to the library yet. Do you mind coming again tomorrow?

Maria: *Well, that's ok.*

Is Maria's response appropriate? Yes No

Your version _____

Scenario 12 was to bring out the participants' ability in making a speech act of acceptance a request or offering to a stranger. According to the NS raters, the speech was inappropriate. To make it appropriate, they added some expressions, *sure, no problem*, for example. Since the hearer of the situation in this scenario did not have a higher social status, the speaker could speak informally. Thirty-six participants, or 58.06%, judged the utterance as appropriate enough while 26 participants, or 41.9%, judged otherwise.

Below are 6 sample versions made by the participants.

Examples of participants' versions

- Participant 1: *No, I will come tomorrow. Thank you.*
- Participant 2: *No, I don't mind. Thank you very much.*
- Participant 3: *Thank you I will come again tomorrow.*
- Participant 4: *No, that's alright.*
- Participant 5: *Never mind. I will come back again.*
- Participant 6: *Well, that's ok. Thank you.*

The examples made by the participants also gave a view of informal language. They used some expressions showing an informal style of the language, *that's alright*, *that's ok*, for example. The utterances they produced, thus, sounded friendlier.

13. In the lecturer's office, Anna has borrowed a book from her lecturer. Her lecturer needs it back, but Anna has forgotten to return it.

Lecturer: Anna, have you brought back the book I gave you yesterday?

Anna: *Oh. I'm very sorry. I completely forgot. Can I give it to you tomorrow?*

Is Anna's response appropriate? Yes No

Your version _____

Scenario 13 required the participants to judge a speech act of request to a superior. According to the NS raters, the utterance was appropriate. Interestingly, however, only 4 participants, or 6.4%, judged it inappropriate, the incorrect judgment. Fifty-eight participants, or 93.5%, on the other hand, judged it as appropriate enough.

Below are some versions made by the participants who gave wrong judgment.

Examples of participants' versions

- Participant 1: *Oh I'm very sorry. I completely forgot. Could I give it to you tomorrow?*
- Participant 2: *Oh I'm really sorry. I completely forgot it. Would you mind if I will bring it tomorrow.*
- Participant 3: *Oh I'm very sorry. I completely forgot. May I give it to you tomorrow?*
- Participant 4: *I extremely sorry. I completely forgot. May I give t to you tomorrow?*

It was found from these sample versions that the participants had similar points of view to the NS raters in making an apology to a superior; the majority of their answers were similar to those of NS raters.

14. In a university's cafeteria, Peter goes to the snack bar to get something to eat before class

Shop keeper: May I help you?

Peter: *Would you be so kind as to give me a sandwich and a yogurt please?*

Is Peter's response appropriate? Yes No

Your version _____

Scenario 14 aimed at eliciting the participants' ability in making a request to a stranger. The NS raters judged the request as inappropriate. Regarding the participants' responses, it was found that 54, or 87.09%, considered it inappropriate, corresponding to the NS raters. However, 8 participants, or 12.9%, considered it appropriate. Below are 6 versions given by these participants.

Examples of participants' versions

- Participant 1: *I would like a sandwich and a yogurt please.*
- Participant 2: *Yes, I would like a sandwich and yogurt.*
- Participant 3: *May I have a sandwich and a yogurt please?*
- Participant 4: *I need a sandwich and a yogurt please.*
- Participant 5: *A sandwich and yogurt please.*
- Participant 6: *Can I have a sandwich and a yogurt, please?*

Although the responses sounded polite and could be responded to whomever the speaker wants, social status still plays an important role in the language use. Thus, speakers have to be aware of their interlocutors' social status in order to make appropriate utterances. In this scenario, Peter spoke formal language to the shop keeper, which in fact was not necessary.

According to the majority of the participants' answers, it showed that their points of view in making such request to a stranger were not different from the NS raters'.

15. In a lecturer's office, Peter goes there and asks his teacher for a book.

Peter: Excuse me, Mr. Smiths?

Lecturer: Yes?

Peter: *Could I possibly borrow this book for the weekend if you don't need it?*

Is Peter's response appropriate? Yes No

Your version _____

Scenario 15 aimed to elicit the participants' ability in making a request to a superior. According to the NS raters, the request was appropriate. It was found that the majority of the participants' answers was similar to the NS raters'. That is, 33 participants, or 53.2%, considered the sentence appropriate. Twenty-nine participants, or 46.7%, however, considered it inappropriate. Below are their 6 versions given by these participants.

Examples of participants' versions

- Participant 1: *Would you mind if I borrow this book for the weekend?*
- Participant 2: *Could I borrow this book for the weekend?*
- Participant 3: *Could you please lend me this book for the weekend?*
- Participant 4: *Could I possibly borrow this book for the weekend if you don't use it?*
- Participant 5: *May I borrow this book for the weekend?*
- Participant 6: *Could I borrow this book this book the weekend please.*

Regarding this scenario, the setting was the conversation between a student and his lecturer, a superior. The sample versions shown above indicated that the participants were aware of the social status of the hearer in the scenario. They tried to make the sentences more formal using modal verbs, *Would, Could, May*, for example, to make indirect questions. However, in terms of politeness, their answers were not different from the given sentence, but only in the content.

16. Anna is a university student. She is walking into a bookshop when she knocks over some books.

Anna: (knocks over some books) *Oh no! I'm sorry! I will pick them up.*

Is Anna's reaction appropriate? Yes No

Your version _____

The last scenario of the contextualized pragmatic judgment test was to elicit the participants' ability in making an apology. The NS raters judged the apology as an appropriate one. Because the situation occurred in a bookshop, the speaker, thus, could produce an informal language to suit the place and the hearer. Regarding the research participants, it was found that the majority, 59 participants or 95.1% considered this sentence appropriate, as did the NS raters. Only 3 of them, or 4.8% judged it as inappropriate.

Below are the versions given by the participants who gave judgments deviating from the NS raters.

Participants' versions

Participant 1: *Oh! I'm really sorry. I will keep them to their place.*

Participant 2: *Oh! I'm sorry. I will pick them up.*

Participant 3: *Oops ! I'm very sorry! I'll pick them up.*

The participants' versions shown above showed an interesting point. Regarding the setting, the speaker could use informal language. However, these 3 participants seemed to make the utterance more formal using '*really*'. They might try to use this word to express a stronger expression of apology.

When considered the scores on pragmatic competence of the 2 groups, it was found that the High-score group achieved lower scores (57.81%) than did the Middle-score group. The Middle-score group, although, did rather poorly on the scores of grammar and vocabulary test, they reached the outstanding scores on pragmatics (73.25%). However, in comparing the 2 domains: the linguistic test and the pragmatic test, the imbalance between the 2 subject groups was found. In summary, the result showed that the scores on linguistic and pragmatic tests of both the High and the Middle-score groups were negatively related.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMENDATIONS

This chapter is allotted to 3 parts: a summary of the research findings about the 1st year Medical students' linguistic knowledge in relation to pragmatic competence; the pedagogical implications; and the recommendations for further studies.

5.1 Summary of Research Findings

In the present study, 3 sets of instrument were employed to elicit the data: a grammar and vocabulary test (GVT), a contextualized pragmatic judgment test (CPJT), and a questionnaire. Participants consisted of 62 first year Medical students, Prince of Songkla University, Thailand in the 2010 academic year. They were 32 males and 30 females. Statistical analyses yielded results to answer 3 research questions summarized below.

5.1.1 First, the subjects were tested on the linguistic knowledge — grammar and vocabulary. As for the linguistic overall score, it was found that, among the 62 participants, no one fell into the Low-score group. In other words, the participants were categorized into a High and a Middle - score group. The mean scores on grammar and vocabulary of the High-score group (n=8) was 76.04% and their pragmatic knowledge was 57.81%. The score on grammar and vocabulary of the Middle-score group (n=54) was 61.73% and their pragmatic knowledge was 73.26%.

Considering only knowledge of grammar, it was found that the High-score group reached the maximal score of 34 and minimal score of 27 out of the total score of 40. The highest score of the Middle-score group was 31 and lowest score of 17 out of 40. The data confirmed that the subjects had rather high competence in English grammar, both the High and the Middle-score group.

Another part of the linguistic test was vocabulary. From the total score of 20, the High-score group obtained the minimal score of 14 and maximal score of 17, whereas the Middle-score group obtained the minimal score of 7 and maximal score of 15. The data showed an impressive score the Medical students obtained in the aspect of English vocabulary.

5.1.2 In addition to the linguistic knowledge, the participants' competence in 4 speech acts were investigated: request, apology, acceptance and decline. The statistical data analyses showed that the mean score on pragmatics of the High and Middle-score groups was 71.25%. The High-score group achieved 57.81% as their mean score on pragmatics. They performed rather well in apology and decline; the maximal score being 65.00% and 68.75%, respectively. On the other hand, they scored only 33.33% on acceptance, and 56.25% on request.

The participants in the Middle-score group, they were found to score 73.25% as their mean score on overall pragmatic aspects combined. The maximal score they made was 84.75% on decline, and 73.00% on apology.

5.1.3 When the total score on grammar and vocabulary was compared to the total score of pragmatics, it was found that the score of the Middle-score group showed a negative relationship in these 2 aspects. Besides each linguistic and pragmatic aspect, the present study investigated the connection between the 2 linguistic aspects with the 4 pragmatic aspects in question.

Similar results were found in the High-score group. Although they achieved high scores on grammar and vocabulary, they did not score as well on pragmatics.

5.2 Pedagogical implications

Findings sought from the questionnaire asking about possible factors influencing the scores of the language competencies (i.e. accuracy and appropriateness), showed that participants in High-score group, with higher grammatical competency, had strong grammatical competence because they had more

exposure to grammatical instruction, both inside and outside the classroom compared to pragmatic instruction. On the other hand, participants in Middle-score group scored better in pragmatics. This could be the effect of more exposure to pragmatic learning outside the classroom. In addition, their perception, having ability to communicate via the language appropriately was much more important for them than being able to use the language grammatically correct, could have played an important role in their pragmatic competence. They reported having taken short courses focusing on how to use real-life language in different contexts appropriately and fluently.

As such, the disparity between the Thai learners' grammatical and pragmatic knowledge may be partly attributed to two important factors: a limited exposure to L2 pragmatic instruction as well as learners' points of view. Regarding the present study, it investigated the 1st year Medical students' knowledge of English linguistics in relation to their pragmatic competence. The results, thus, suggested the necessity in providing more contents of pragmatics to the classroom instruction in order help to the students increase their pragmatic competence. Henceforth, the following aspects should be more concerned in the English language classroom:

5.2.1 Besides grammatical instruction, a focus on pragmatic instruction should be placed in the classroom so that students can acquire a sufficient level of pragmatic knowledge.

5.2.2 It is advisable that language teachers engage their students in interactive classroom and socio-cultural contexts. This instructional practice is known to allow students to practice using the language in various situations and contexts. In such practice, there may be more room for teachers to raise learners' pragmatic awareness pointing out the significance of using the language appropriately according to each social context.

To successfully master English in international communication, people having different linguistic and cultural backgrounds truly need communicative competence: the ability to use grammatically-correct sentences in proper contexts (Hymes, 1971). Besides emphasizing on only grammar aspects, teachers must

encourage language learners to pay more attention on how to use the language appropriately and avoid making such a pragmatic mistake to breakdown the communication. Thus, it is necessary that the teacher instruct them the social rules of the English, demonstrate to them what pragmatic transfer is, and provide them with pragmatic knowledge. Researchers (Olshtain and Cohen, 1990; Kasper, 1997) suggested that the EFL classroom environment is a good place for EFL learners to obtain pragmatic knowledge. Following that EFL Thai learners should be provided with similar environment to enhance their learning of the authentic English. Helping learners to use the language in real situation would enhance them to focus more on how to use the language in the proper way with proper person and situation. Teachers are assumed to have the most important role leading learners into the learners' success. It is suggested, thus, that teachers pay more attention on selecting suitable textbooks containing ample amount of pragmatic content. All the above mentioned reasons are believed to be of benefits to the curriculum makers in the future.

5.3 Recommendations for further studies

This present study investigated the 1st-year Medical students' knowledge of grammar and vocabulary in relation to pragmatic competence in the four speech acts of request, apology, acceptance and decline. The English grammar and vocabulary competence of the participants in the present study was relatively high. To investigate the deeper of the relationship between grammar and vocabulary and pragmatics, the learners of different disciplines and different level of linguistic competence should be studied. It is recommended that learners of different disciplines be investigated.

In addition, different subject groups, such as teachers or other fields of occupation, such as engineers, staff in service sectors, should be investigated in order to discover different aspect, probably more intensive and extensive, relationship between the knowledge of grammar and vocabulary and pragmatic knowledge. Moreover, future studies may employ other types of research instrument.

Finally, because the present research focused on only 4 speech acts: apology, request, acceptation, and decline; and 16 grammar features in the grammatical test, it would be of importance if research in the future investigate other speech acts, greeting, complaints, and thanks, to name a few.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

Grammar and Vocabulary Test

คำชี้แจง ข้อสอบชุดนี้จัดทำขึ้นเพื่อวัดความรู้ความสามารถทั่วไปทางด้านภาษาอังกฤษ ประกอบด้วย

ข้อสอบแบบปรนัยจำนวน 60 ข้อ แบ่งเป็น 2 ตอน คือ

ตอนที่ 1 วัดความสามารถทางไวยากรณ์ภาษาอังกฤษ 40 ข้อ

ตอนที่ 2 วัดความสามารถทางคำศัพท์ภาษาอังกฤษ 20 ข้อ

Part I: Grammar

Directions: Choose the best answer for each item.

1. A notebook computer _____ an opportunity for convenient and efficient work in everywhere.

- | | |
|-------------------|--------------------|
| A. provides | B. to be providing |
| C. which provides | D. providing it |

2. 'I'm very sorry, sir. I'm so late because of the unexpected traffic jam. _____ I go in and join the meeting, please?'

- | | |
|-----------|----------|
| A. Should | B. Might |
| C. May | D. Can |

3. Some psychologists _____ about the personal motivation a very important factor for a person to succeed in doing something.

- | | |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| A. was studying | B. were studied |
| C. is studied | D. are studying |

4. That beautiful bouquet of roses really _____ my eye.

- | | |
|-------------|------------------|
| A. catch | B. to be catches |
| C. catching | D. catches |

5. The university previously _____ its entrance examination system in order to push the students to work harder.

- A. reform B. reforms
C. reforming D. reformed

6. 'I'm very sorry; the computer software you mentioned is out of stock now. _____ to try other versions?'

- A. Would you want B. Could you like
C. Will you want D. Would you like

7. The exhibition hall could hold more than 10,000 people. It is _____.

- A. aerial B. specially
C. wonderfully D. spacious

8. The scientists are studying about some useful bacteria to find out if they can be _____ for human.

- A. used B. of use
C. using D. in use

9. Unluckily, we didn't get 'Harry Potter' tickets, _____ we _____ 'James Bond' instead?

- A. are, going to see B. shall, see
C. will, see D. do, see

10. I found she was hiding something. _____ you still want to trust her.

- A. Will B. Do
C. Can D. Would

11. It is hard to believe that the relationship between you and _____ has ended.

- A. I B. their
C. your D. me

12. It's half past ten now, _____ we start the test, Mr. Gordon?

- A. Can
- B. Do
- C. Should
- D. May

13. A: How long has Mila been in London?

B: _____

- A. She has been there until 1990.
- B. She went there when she was ten.
- C. She went there with her friend.
- D. She has been there for 10 years.

14. What _____ you _____ at the moment?

- A. did / watch
- B. do / watching
- C. are / watching
- D. were / watching

15. The weather in Thailand is not _____ in Canada.

- A. as colder as
- B. as cold as
- C. as the cold than
- D. as cold more than

16. I think *Transformer II* is _____ when compared with *Transformer I*

- A. better
- B. the best
- C. gooder
- D. the goodest

17. A: _____?

B: Sure. Go prepare your stuff!

- A. Will we go skiing tomorrow?
- B. Are we going skiing tomorrow?
- C. Do we go skiing tomorrow?
- D. Can we go skiing tomorrow?

18. Which is the correct question?

- A. Who is this passport on the table?
- B. Who own this passport on the table?
- C. Whose passport is on the table?
- D. Whose is this on the table passport?

19. Many lazy students _____ work harder this year or they will fail his exam.

- A. shouldn't
- B. must
- C. could
- D. will

20. In addition to meat, soybean is another excellent source _____ protein.

- A. that
- B. with
- C. of
- D. have

21. In the ancient time, paper _____ from papyrus.

- A. is done
- B. was done
- C. is made
- D. was made

22. The fairy tale 'Alice in Wonderland' is _____ for children.

- A. appropriation
- B. appropriable
- C. appropriately
- D. appropriate

23. The hero of this story was shot when he _____ on a motorcycle.

- A. was riding
- B. was ridden
- C. rode
- D. had ridden

24. It is clear that the general quality of living will improve _____ people's education levels are higher.

- A. as
- B. one time
- C. during
- D. in addition to

25. Pluto is the furthest planet from the sun. It is the last planet _____.

- A. discovered
- B. had been discovering
- C. has been discovered
- D. have been discovered

26. If you _____ in the rain, you _____ a cold.

- A. walk / may get
- B. walked / got
- C. walk / will get
- D. are walking / will get

27. The book, _____ all the chapters in the first section, is boring.

- A. including
- B. includes
- C. included
- D. include

28. The distance from Songkhla to Bangkok is about 950 kilometers, it's so _____.

- A. tire
- B. tiring
- C. tried
- D. tries

29. She can lift that heavy box _____ she is the smallest compared to her friends.

- A. and
- B. although
- C. because
- D. but

30. Don't put your belonging down on the floor or you _____ it.

- A. will be losing
- B. can lose
- C. lose
- D. lost

31. They are going to apply for the Master's Degree _____ they finish their Bachelor's Degree.

- A. while
- B. before
- C. although
- D. as soon as

32. Kate calls her husband at his office and asks him if they can have dinner out.

He says: _____

- A. Yes, shall we eat out?
- B. I haven't decided yet.
- C. I've never thought about it.
- D. Great idea! Shall we go to a Japanese restaurant?

33. The production of the factory was serious _____ by the strike.

- A. affect
- B. affected
- C. to affect
- D. affecting

34. In this chapter, there are _____ complex instrument examples to help researchers conduct a qualified research.

- A. much
- B. many
- C. any
- D. a

35. A new television program teaches children _____ positively.

- A. thinking
- B. thought
- C. to think
- D. thinks

36. _____ the 2010 World Cup, the team from Spain was the champion over the 156 countries.

- A. In
- B. It was in
- C. Be in
- D. It being in

37. Even if the unemployment rate _____ sharply, the drop may still be temporary.

- A. will drop
- B. dropping
- C. have dropped
- D. drops

38. Mirrors made of shiny metal _____ by the Egyptians in the ancient time.
A. were used B. was used
C. had used D. have used
39. The elephant population has declined rapidly because many of the animals are killed each year. _____ we try to make a lot campaigns to help them.
A. As a consequence B. As a result
C. As considering D. As soon as
40. When parents allow _____ children to spend many hours watching television, the children are not likely to be physically fit.
A. his B. her
C. them D. their

Part II: Vocabulary

41. At this stage of the process, the gold is melted and then shaped into a new form.
A. pressed B. weighed
C. exploded D. liquefied
42. Some scholars are worrying that the candidate's past could jeopardize her chances of winning the prime minister.
A. degrade B. violate
C. endanger D. harm
43. Under the present administration, the government begins to collect a fee from all passengers going through the immigration.
A. charge B. price
C. interest D. payment

44. The doctor warns that drinking too much alcohol would only aggravate the drinkers' poor condition.

- | | |
|-----------|-------------|
| A. lower | B. worsen |
| C. lessen | D. decrease |

45. Computers are used in every fields of work especially in engineering because they produce accurate calculation.

- | | |
|---------|-----------|
| A. real | B. closet |
| C. true | D. exact |

46. It occasionally takes a long time to work on my mathematics assignment.

- | | |
|--------------|--------------|
| A. hardly | B. usually |
| C. sometimes | D. generally |

47. Most people said that the chances for Barak Obama to be elected were rather bleak.

- | | |
|-------------|-----------------|
| A. not easy | B. not good |
| C. not bad | D. not possible |

48. The original owner purchased this house last year before we moved here.

- | | |
|-----------|-------------|
| A. bought | B. ordered |
| C. sold | D. reserved |

49. When we make this kind of object, the stones will be crushed right after that.

- | | |
|-------------|-------------|
| A. excluded | B. examined |
| C. rounded | D. broken |

50. The practice we usually do on many farms may impede the speed at which the rubber trees eventually grow.

- | | |
|------------|------------|
| A. hinder | B. nourish |
| C. promote | D. broaden |

51. Passengers may not carry bulky belonging aboard on the air craft.
- A. harmful B. dangerous
C. large D. heavy
52. The fertile farmland in certain areas of Thailand is among the best in the world.
- A. dense B. sterile
C. barren D. rich
53. Even the best detectors in the USA remain mystified by the latest murders.
- A. confused B. convinced
C. familiarized D. enlightened
54. Perhaps, a well-written resume is one of the items that can likely enhance one's chances of getting a job.
- A. help B. improve
C. provide D. find
55. In a particular case, it is often difficult to know what would be suitable.
- A. easy B. easier
C. proper D. alternative
56. The Chaopraya River is a very beautiful river in Thailand. It flows from the north to the central of the country.
- A. locates B. circulates
C. moves D. floods
57. In the history class, the teacher mentioned many people's names.
- A. called B. wrote
C. said D. spelled

58. The price as well as the quality of service will make people want to go to use the service again and again.

A. but

B. or

C. so

D. and

59. At this point, Mr. Brown called in Ms. Rebecca to supervise the excavation.

A. control

B. postpone

C. oversee

D. overlook

60. The natural beverages are very essential for both who is healthy and unhealthy.

A. food

B. drinks

C. sweets

D. fruits

*******Thank you very much for your kind attention*******

APPENDIX B

Contextualized pragmatic judgment test

Direction: Please read the conversation in each situation and then judge whether the last sentence of each item is appropriate to speak in a particular situation. If it is appropriate, please answer **Yes**. But if it is NOT appropriate, please answer **No** and write down your own sentences you think appropriate.

1. Peter is a university student. He goes to see his lecturer at his office. When he arrives, his lecturer is busy.

Peter: (knock on the door)

Lecturer: Yes come in

Peter: Hello, Mr. Gordon. I'm wondering if you have a minute.

Lecturer: Erm... I'm afraid not. Could you come back later?

Peter: *OK. I will be back here tomorrow morning at 8/*

Is Peter's response appropriate? Yes No

Your version _____

2. In a class, it is Anna's day to give her talk in class but she is not ready.

Lecturer: Thank you Steven, that was very interesting. Anna, it's your turn to give your talk.

Anna: *I can't do it today, but I will do it next week. .*

Is Anna's response appropriate? Yes No

Your version _____

3. Peter and George are classmates. George is going to the library. Peter asks him to return a library book.

George: Well, I'll see you later. I've got to the library to return a library book.

Peter: *Oh, if you are going to the library, can you please return my book too?*

Is Peter's response appropriate? Yes No

Your version _____

4. Peter and George are classmates. Peter and George meet before class. They want to do something before class starts.

George: Hey, we have 15 minutes before the next class.
What shall we do?

Peter: *Let's go to the snack bar.*

Is Peter's response appropriate? Yes No

Your version _____

5. Anna has borrowed a book from a classmate, Maria. Maria needs it back, but Anna has forgotten to return it.

Maria: Do you have the book I gave you last week?

Anna: *Oh. I'm really sorry but I was in a rush this morning and I didn't bring it today.*

Is Anna's response appropriate? Yes No

Your version _____

6. Maria and Anna are friends. Maria invites Anna to her house but Anna cannot come

Maria: Anna, would you like to come over this afternoon?

Anna: *I'm sorry, I'd like to come but I have a difficult history test tomorrow.*

Is Anna's response appropriate? Yes No

Your version _____

7. Peter and George are classmates. Peter is going to George's house. He is quite late.

Peter: Hi George.

George: Hi Peter. I've been waiting for over half an hour for you. Weren't we supposed to meet at 4?

Peter: *I couldn't come earlier. And anyway, we don't have to hurry anywhere.*

Is Peter's response appropriate? Yes No

Your version _____

8. Peter and George are classmates. George invites Peter to his home, but Peter cannot come.

George: Peter, would you like to come over to me tonight?

Peter: *I'm sorry. I just can't I'm very tired. I couldn't sleep last night.*

Is Peter's response appropriate? Yes No

Your version _____

9. Anna goes to the cafeteria to have something to eat.

Anna: I would like a cup of chocolate, please?

Shop assistant: Of course. Would you like some bread either?

Anna: *No, I don't want it.*

Is Anna's response appropriate? Yes No

Your version _____

10. In a class, the lecturer asks Peter to help with the plans for the class trip.

Lecturer: OK. So we'll go by bus. Who live lives near the bus station? Peter, could you check the bus schedule for us on the way home tonight?

Peter: *No, I can't tonight. Sorry*

Is Peter's response appropriate? Yes No

Your version _____

11. Anna is a university student. She is working on a research project, and going to ask her lecturer to answer a questionnaire for her. She knocks on the office door.

Anna: (knock on the door)

Lecturer: Yes, come in.

Anna: *Hello. My name is Anna Kovacs. If you don't mind, I would like you to fill this in for me.*

Is Anna's response appropriate? Yes No

Your version _____

12. In the library, Maria talks to a librarian to reserve a textbook.

Maria: I'd like to borrow the new version psychology textbook that I reserved yesterday.

Librarian: Oh I'm sorry. The book you mentioned is not returned to the library yet. Do you mind coming again tomorrow?

Maria: *Well, that's ok.*

Is Maria's response appropriate? Yes No

Your version _____

13. In the lecturer's office, Anna has borrowed a book from her lecturer. Her lecturer needs it back, but Anna has forgotten to return it.

Lecturer: Anna, have you brought back the book I gave you yesterday?

Anna: *Oh. I'm very sorry. I completely forgot. Can I give it to you tomorrow?*

Is Anna's response appropriate? Yes No

Your version _____

14. In a university's cafeteria, Peter goes to the snack bar to get something to eat before class

Shop keeper: May I help you?

Peter: *Would you be so kind as to give me a sandwich and a yogurt please?*

Is Peter's response appropriate? Yes No

Your version _____

15. In a lecturer's office, Peter goes there and asks his teacher for a book.

Peter: Excuse me, Mr. Smiths?

Lecturer: Yes?

Peter: *Could I possibly borrow this book for the weekend if you don't need it?*

Is Peter's response appropriate? Yes No

Your version _____

16. Anna is a university student. She is walking into a bookshop when she knocks over some books.

Anna: (knocks over some books) *Oh no! I'm sorry! I will pick them up.*

Is Anna's reaction appropriate? Yes No

Your version _____

*****Thank you very much for your kind attention*****

APPENDIX C

Appropriate Answers for the Contextualized Pragmatic Judgment Test

1. Answer: NO

Appropriate answers

Yes, when would be a good time for you?

Would you have time for me tomorrow at 8?

2. Answer: NO

Appropriate answers

I'm sorry, but I'm not ready today. Would it be okay if I present next week?

3. Answer: YES

Appropriate answers

4. Answer: YES

Appropriate answers

5. Answer: YES

Appropriate answers

6. Answer: YES

Appropriate answers

7. Answer: NO

Appropriate answers

I'm sorry, I couldn't come earlier. And anyway, we don't have to hurry anywhere, do we?

8. Answer: YES

Appropriate answers

9. Answer: NO

Appropriate answer:

No, thank you, just the chocolate.

10. Answer: NO

Appropriate answer: *I'm sorry. I can't tonight. Can I do this tomorrow?*

11. Answer: NO

Appropriate answer: *Excuse me, Mr. Smith. You know, I'm working on a research project and have a questionnaire that I would like to ask you to fill in. Do you have time now?*

12. Answer: NO

Appropriate answer: *Sure, it's no problem.
Are you sure that the book will be here then? Could you call me so that I don't have to make another unnecessary trip?*

13. Answer: YES

Appropriate answer:

14. Answer: NO

Appropriate answer: *Could I have a sandwich and a yogurt please?
Yes, a sandwich and yogurt, please.*

15. Answer: YES

Appropriate answer:

16. Answer: YES

Appropriate answer:

APPENDIX D

Questionnaire (Thai version)

กรุณาทำเครื่องหมาย / ในช่อง หรือ ที่ท่านต้องการและกรณารออธิบายในทุกข้อที่เว้นไว้

1. เพศ ชาย หญิง
2. อายุ _____ ปี
3. ศึกษาภาษาอังกฤษมาแล้ว _____ ปี
4. มีความสนใจในภาษาอังกฤษ มาก ปานกลาง น้อย
5. ด้านการศึกษาภาษาอังกฤษ
 - ระดับ ประถมศึกษาศึกษาที่ _____
 - ระดับ มัธยมศึกษาตอนต้นศึกษาที่ _____
 - ระดับ มัธยมศึกษาตอนปลายศึกษาที่ _____
 - เคยเรียนพิเศษด้านภาษาอังกฤษหรือไม่
 - เคย (หากเคยเรียน โปรดระบุระดับชั้นที่เคยเรียนพิเศษ)
 - ประถมศึกษา
 - มัธยมศึกษาตอนต้น
 - มัธยมศึกษาตอนปลาย
 - มหาวิทยาลัย
 - ไม่เคย
 - เคยร่วมกิจกรรมเสริมการเรียนรู้ทางภาษาอังกฤษบ้างหรือไม่
 - เคย (โปรดระบุกิจกรรม) _____
 -
 - ไม่เคย
 - ครอบครัวมีส่วนในการเสริมทักษะทางภาษาอังกฤษหรือไม่
 - มี (โปรดยกตัวอย่างกิจกรรม) _____
 -
 - ไม่มี

- ผ่านการเรียนวิชา 890-901 Fundamental English Speaking and Listening มาแล้วหรือไม่

- ผ่านมาแล้ว _____ ระดับคะแนน _____
- ยังไม่ได้ลงทะเบียนในรายวิชานี้
- ได้รับการยกเว้น

- ผ่านการเรียนวิชา 890-902 Fundamental English Reading and Writing มาแล้วหรือไม่

- ผ่านมาแล้ว _____ ระดับคะแนน _____
- ยังไม่ได้ลงทะเบียนในรายวิชานี้
- ได้รับการยกเว้น

6. ประสพการณ์ด้านการใช้ภาษาอังกฤษ

- นักศึกษามีประสพการณ์การเรียน -ใช้ภาษาอังกฤษในต่างประเทศหรือไม่

- ไม่เคย
- เคย จำนวนการเรียน -ใช้ภาษาอังกฤษ ณ ต่างประเทศ _____ ครั้ง
(โปรดระบุว่าเคยทำกิจกรรมอะไร ณ ที่ใด)

ครั้งที่ 1 _____

ครั้งที่ 2 _____

ครั้งที่ 3 _____

ครั้งที่ 4 _____

ครั้งที่ 5 _____

VITAE

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List of Publication and Proceeding

Rattanaprasert, T., & Aksornjarung, P. (2011). The Study of Relationship between the Learners' Knowledge about Grammar and Vocabulary and Pragmatic Competence: A Case Study of 1st year Medical Students [Abstract]. *Proceedings of the 3rd International Conference on Humanities and Social Sciences*, Thailand: Prince of Songkla University (p.3).