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TEACHER COGNITION ABOUT TECHNOLOGY-MEDIATED EFL INSTRUCTION IN THE THAI TERTIARY CONTEXT

A thesis presented in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

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Thitirat Suwannasom

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ABSTRACT

Drawing on theories of teacher cognition and sociocultural frameworks, this study investigates Thai university English lecturers’ cognition about integrating Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in English language instruction and writing instruction in Thai tertiary contexts. A more specific goal is to investigate technology-using teachers’ personal principles and practices in their teaching contexts. The study was guided by the following research questions: What is the nature of Thai tertiary teacher cognition about the use of technology in EFL instruction? What is the nature of Thai tertiary teacher cognition about the use of technology in EFL writing instruction? How do Thai tertiary teachers perceive their practices and roles in relation to their technology-mediated EFL instruction in particular settings? In Thai tertiary education, what are the sociocultural aspects that shape teacher cognition and practice about technology-mediated EFL teaching? A teacher cognition questionnaire was designed and administered to 47 Thai EFL lecturers in seven public universities; semi-structured interviews and scenario-based tasks were conducted with seven lecturers; unstructured interviews and observations were carried out with three teachers who used technology in their classroom teaching in order to gain a better understanding of their situated perceptions about the use of technology in particular teaching and learning contexts. The results reveal that university EFL teachers’ views of technology are highly shaped by both their teaching environment and individual beliefs about English language learning. When teachers apply technology in their instruction, they also apply their personal principles or maxims that guide their practices. In addition, a number of sociocultural aspects emerged in teachers’ views about technology use in their EFL teaching contexts giving rise to theoretical implications about how teacher cognition is conceptualised. Some of the major implications for practice include: the need to encourage EFL teachers to reflect on their teaching principles relevant to their working contexts; the value of providing teachers with models of technology use in tertiary EFL teaching; and the maximisation of the use of available technology to support local practices. Implications for methodology include the use of multiple context-specific instruments and methods to elicit teachers’ underlying beliefs and perspectives about technology-mediated teaching.
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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABSTRACT</td>
<td>iii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</td>
<td>v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TABLE OF CONTENTS</td>
<td>vii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIST OF TABLES</td>
<td>xiii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIST OF FIGURES</td>
<td>xiii</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study .................................................. 1
1.2 English language instruction in Thai EFL contexts ..................... 2
   1.2.1 English language instruction and the potential of ICT in Thai EFL contexts .................................................. 2
   1.2.2 EFL writing in the Thai tertiary context and electronic literacy 5
1.3 ICT integration in the Thai tertiary context ............................ 6
1.4 The research problem .................................................................. 10
1.5 Purpose and research questions .............................................. 12
1.6 Methodology overview ............................................................ 12
1.7 Significance of the study ...................................................... 13
1.8 Definition of terms ................................................................... 13
1.9 Overview of chapters .................................................................. 15

## CHAPTER 2: TEACHER COGNITION AND TECHNOLOGY-MEDIATED LANGUAGE TEACHING

2.1 Teacher cognition and language instruction .................................. 17
   2.1.1 Teacher cognition: definition, components, and characteristics 18
   2.1.2 Teacher beliefs and knowledge in language instruction ............ 20
      2.1.2.1 The interrelationship between beliefs and knowledge ........ 20
      2.1.2.2 The interrelationship among beliefs, knowledge, and practices 22
   2.1.3 The impact of teaching contexts on teacher beliefs and practices 24
      2.1.3.1 Teachers’ situated practice ............................................. 25
   2.1.4 Teachers’ beliefs, knowledge, and practices in EFL language writing instruction ...................................................... 26
2.1.4.1 Teachers’ knowledge and approaches in EFL writing instruction
2.1.4.2 Teaching contexts and EFL writing instruction
2.1.5 Research on teacher beliefs and knowledge about language teaching
  2.1.5.1 The normative approach
  2.1.5.2 The metacognitive approach
  2.1.5.3 The contextual approach
  2.1.5.4 Summary of teachers beliefs research approaches
2.2 Network-based language teaching and sociocultural perspectives
  2.2.1 Electronic literacy and second language instruction
  2.2.2 Approaches to network-based language teaching
  2.2.3 Sociocultural perspectives and network-based language instruction
    2.2.3.1 Social Learning
    2.2.3.2 Zone of proximal development (ZPD)
    2.2.3.3 Scaffolding
  2.2.4 Activity theory and technology integration in classroom
2.3 Teachers and technology use in language classrooms
  2.3.1 Types of technology uses in language classroom
  2.3.2 Technology tools and language learning and teaching opportunities
  2.3.3 Technology uses in EFL writing instruction
2.4 Teacher practice and roles in using technology in language instruction
  2.4.1 Teachers’ technology practice in language instruction
  2.4.2 Teachers’ role and skills in technology-mediated language instruction
2.5 Factors influencing technology integration in language instruction
  2.5.1 Teachers’ positive attitudes and attributes towards technology
  2.5.2 Students’ characteristics and instructional conditions
  2.5.3 Perceived usefulness of technology in classroom instruction
  2.5.4 Barriers to technology adoption in language classrooms
2.6 Summary

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN
3.1 Introduction
3.2 Research setting and participants
  3.2.1 Research setting
3.2.2 Participants ......................................................... 72
3.3 Theoretical frameworks: Teacher cognition and sociocultural framework .. 76
3.4 Research methodology and design: Mixed-method approaches ............... 76
3.5 Data collection procedures ........................................ 78
3.6 Instruments .......................................................... 79
  3.6.1 Questionnaire .................................................... 81
  3.6.2 Interviews ........................................................ 85
    3.6.2.1 Semi-structured interviews ................................. 85
    3.6.2.2 Unstructured interviews .................................. 88
  3.6.3 Participant observations ....................................... 89
  3.6.4 Research journal ............................................... 91
3.7 Data analysis ........................................................ 93
  3.7.1 Quantitative data analysis .................................... 93
  3.7.2 Qualitative data Analysis ..................................... 93
3.8 Ethical consideration ................................................. 95
3.9 Issues of trustworthiness and generalisability .................................. 96
3.10 Summary ............................................................ 98

CHAPTER 4: TEACHER COGNITION ABOUT TECHNOLOGY IN THAI EFL INSTRUCTION
4.1 Participant demographics ............................................. 99
4.2 Participants’ use of technology and beliefs about EFL instruction ............ 99
  4.2.1 Participants’ use of technology in EFL instruction .................. 99
  4.2.2 Participants’ beliefs about technology in EFL instruction ............ 101
4.3 Participants’ perceptions of technology use in EFL instruction: advantages and barriers ......................................................... 103
  4.3.1 Advantages of technology for teachers and EFL teaching ............. 101
  4.3.2 Advantages of technology for students and EFL learning ............. 106
  4.3.3 Barriers to technology integration in EFL instruction ............... 107
    4.3.3.1 Students’ characteristics .................................. 108
    4.3.3.2 Lack of computer facilities ................................. 109
    4.3.3.3 Lack of supportive contextual elements ...................... 111
4.4 Perceptions of the best ways to integrate technology in
Thai tertiary EFL instruction................................................................. 113

4.4.1 Focus on students’ language learning objectives.......................... 113
4.4.2 Focus on integrated skills............................................................ 114
4.4.3 Focus on interactions................................................................. 115
4.4.4 Focus on pedagogy and adjustment in attitudes............................ 116

4.5 Summary.......................................................................................... 117

CHAPTER 5: TEACHER COGNITION ABOUT THAI WEB-BASED EFL
WRITING INSTRUCTION

5.1 Teachers’ beliefs about EFL writing instruction............................... 119

5.1.1 Beliefs about student behaviours in EFL writing instruction............ 119
5.1.2 Beliefs about teacher behaviours in EFL writing instruction............ 120

5.2 Teachers’ beliefs about web-based EFL writing instruction............... 122

5.2.1 Beliefs about web-based writing in EFL instruction....................... 122
5.2.2 Students’ web-based EFL writing activities.................................. 124
5.2.3 Teachers’ practices in web-based EFL writing instruction............... 126

5.3 Teachers’ perspectives on web-based EFL writing instruction scenarios... 127

5.4 Perspectives on structural scenarios............................................... 131

5.4.1 Structural scenario 1: Siripen....................................................... 132
5.4.2 Structural scenario 2: Tassanee.................................................... 133
5.4.3 Structural scenario 3: Pipat......................................................... 136

5.5 Perspectives on cognitive scenarios............................................... 138

5.5.1 Cognitive scenario 1: Rattana.................................................... 138
5.5.2 Cognitive scenario 2: Wuthichai................................................ 140
5.5.3 Cognitive scenario 3: Chanchai.................................................. 142

5.6 Perspectives on sociocognitive scenarios....................................... 145

5.6.1 Sociocognitive scenario 1: Wanwisa.......................................... 145
5.6.2 Sociocognitive scenario 2: Jintana............................................. 147
5.6.3 Sociocognitive scenario 3: Arunya............................................... 150

5.7 Summary of perspectives on web-based EFL writing instruction scenarios.. 153

5.8 Summary.......................................................................................... 155
7.3.3 Teachers’ roles in technology-mediated EFL instruction

7.4 Sociocultural aspects of technology-mediated EFL instruction in Thai tertiary EFL contexts

7.5 Conclusion

7.6 Implications

7.6.1 Theoretical implications

7.6.2 Implications for practice

7.6.3 Implications for research methodology

7.7 Limitations of the study

7.8 Recommendation for future research

7.9 Final Remarks

REFERENCES

APPENDIX A

Approval Request Letter

APPENDIX B

Questionnaire

APPENDIX C

Interview Guide

APPENDIX D

Examples of classroom activity

APPENDIX E

Research Journal Extracts

APPENDIX F

Ethical Approval Letter

APPENDIX G

Survey Participants’ Information Sheet

APPENDIX H

Interview Participants’ Information Sheet

APPENDIX I

Participants’ Responses to the Questionnaire

APPENDIX J

Interview Summary Examples
LIST OF TABLES

Table 3.1 Research instruments and objectives ................................. 80
Table 3.2 Classification of principles and activities in web-based writing instruction scenarios .......................................................... 86
Table 3.3 Examples of emerging categories from the analysis of open ended answers and interviews ................................................. 94
Table 4.1 Perceived barriers to technology integration in EFL instruction .... 108
Table 5.1 Mean scores and standard deviations of web-based writing instruction scenarios .......................................................... 128
Table 5.2 A summary of participants’ perspectives about web-based EFL writing scenarios .......................................................... 153
Table 6.1 Key teachers’ background and technology uses in EFL instruction.... 158

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2.1 Elements and processes in language teacher cognition ................ 19
Figure 2.2 Activity systems .................................................................. 46
Figure 2.3 Skills pyramid ..................................................................... 59
Figure 3.1 Concurrent transformative design .......................................... 77
Figure 3.2 Data collection procedures .................................................... 79
Figure 4.1 Percentages of technology use in tertiary EFL instruction.......... 100
Figure 4.2 Percentages of selected beliefs statements about technology use in EFL instruction ......................................................... 102
Figure 5.1 Percentages of beliefs about student behaviours in EFL writing instruction .......................................................... 120
Figure 5.2 Percentages of beliefs about teacher behaviours in EFL writing instruction .......................................................... 121
Figure 5.3 Percentages of beliefs about web-based writing in EFL instruction... 123
Figure 5.4 Mean scores for students’ web-based writing behaviours............ 125
Figure 5.5 Mean scores for teachers’ practices in EFL writing instruction...... 126
Figure 5.6 Mean scores for each type of scenario ....................................... 129
Figure 6.1 Examples of Ajarn Anchalee’s students’ online journal............. 176
Figure 7.1 Sociocultural domains of teacher cognition about technology-mediated EFL instruction in the Thai tertiary context .................. 193