

**Male femininity in Thai among men who identify
with non-normative male roles**

Pavadee Saisuwan

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School of Languages, Linguistics and Film

Queen Mary University of London

Declaration

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Abstract

This study investigates the construction and presentation of gender identity among men who identify with non-normative male roles in Thailand, including both *kathoey* - male-to-female transgenders - and gay men. *Kathoey* and gay men are marginalised from normative conceptualisations of gender and sexuality in Thailand. The goal of this study is to identify how Thai non-normative men use language to position themselves within the Thai sex/gender inventory and to describe how language participates more broadly in the indexation of gender identity.

Data were drawn from the eight months of ethnographic fieldwork in Bangkok. During this time, fourteen Thai non-normative men were observed and recorded in a variety of interactional contexts, including individual sociolinguistic interviews and unstructured casual encounters with friends and work colleagues. This study focuses on two linguistic variables – vowel lengthening and self-reference terms. Analyses indicate that vowel lengthening is used by *kathoey* and gay men as part of stance-taking. At the interactional level, it intensifies the force of the epistemic and affective stances. Through its repetitive use, the interactional meanings become established as an index of affected and entertaining personalities, and male femininity. These characteristics match the stereotypes of *kathoey* and gay men in Thai society, and hence provide the ideological link for vowel lengthening to become associated with *kathoey* and gay men. Self-reference terms are used by *kathoey* and gay men both to construct gender and avoid presenting gender. Analyses demonstrate the significance of speech context, which determines and delimits the possible self-reference options. Several social factors, not only gender, have to be taken into account for the selection of appropriate self-reference.

The findings are significant as they show how Thai non-normative men draw upon the linguistic resources available to all Thai speakers and make use of particular linguistic features for their own gender purposes.

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Transcription conventions

Thai speech shown in this thesis has been romanised by the Thai Romanisation Programme developed by Wirote Aroonmanakun, Department of Linguistics, Chulalongkorn University.

The transcription convention used in this thesis is based on the transcription system developed by Jefferson (2004).

Brackets	[text]	The beginning and the end of overlapping utterances
Equal signs	=	Latching – the absence of discernible silence
Timed pause	(number)	Silence in tenths of a second.
Micropause	(.)	A hearable pause, usually less than 0.2 seconds
Hyphen	-	An abrupt interruption within an utterance
Underline	<u>text</u>	Emphasis – a greater emphasis is shown by a longer underline
Parentheses	(text)	An utterance not clearly heard clearly by the transcriber
Empty parentheses	()	An utterance heard but not recognised by the transcriber

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Chapter 1

Introduction

The relation between language and society has been central to research in sociolinguistics and, for many researchers, gender has been one of the most interesting social factors to study. This thesis is interested in the relation between language and gender. It focuses on Thai men who identify with non-normative male roles including both *kathoey* – male-to-female transgenders – and gay men. This group of speakers is considered non-normative in Thai society as they do not fit into normative categories of men and women. This thesis, therefore, seeks to explore how Thai non-normative men use language for gender indexation.

The aim of this chapter is to provide the background and the motivation for the thesis. Situating this study in the field of language and gender, I begin the chapter with the overview of how language has been studied in relation to gender in sociolinguistics. Then, I delve into the issue of stereotypes and the heterogeneity of Thai non-normative men. I discuss how *kathoey* and gay men are typically perceived and portrayed in Thai society, how such stereotypes do not take into account the heterogeneity of Thai non-normative men in reality and how previous linguistic research has been influenced by the stereotypes but has failed to capture the heterogeneity. These issues lead me to explain the research gaps which this thesis aims to fill. In the last parts of the chapter, I provide the research questions and the outline of the thesis.

1.1 Language and gender

The sex or gender of speakers has been studied as a social factor associated with speakers' ways of using language for a long time. Sociolinguistic research focusing on language and gender started out during the 1960s and 1970s (e.g. Wolfram 1969, Trudgill 1972). During that time, sociolinguistic studies saw the speaker's sex as an independent factor determining his/her use of certain linguistic variants. Sex, i.e. being male or female, was taken as a demographic category deriving naturally from speakers' biological traits. One of the most influential studies which sought to explain the relationship between the speaker's sex and his/her language use is Trudgill's (1972) study of the *-in/-ing* variation (e.g. *walkin/walking*) in Norwich, England. Trudgill (1972) found that female speakers used the *-ing* variant, which is the standard and prestige form, significantly more frequently than male

speakers, who commonly used the *in* variant, the form typically used also by working class speakers. Trudgill (1972) explained this pattern of distribution across male and female speakers in relation to differences in the power and status of men and women in society. Women, he suggested, were seen as being socially inferior to men. They were, therefore, more insecure and more attentive to how they talked. That is, women took the use of the standard or prestige form more seriously as a way of signalling their social status. Men, in contrast, had other ways of indicating their status, and, hence, were less aware of their speech. Women's awareness of their language use and attentiveness to standard or prestige forms contributed to women's leading role in language change. Labov (1990) claims that women use the standard forms more frequently than men in the case of stable linguistic variables and incoming forms participating in change from above, i.e. Principle I and Ia. That is, women are more conscious of standard forms. If an incoming linguistic variant is perceived with prestige and standardness, women tend to adopt the incoming form and lead the change towards the form.

The view of female speakers' ways of using language as a reflection of their social status in the society also appears in other studies. Lakoff (1973) described the way women talk, i.e. "woman's language" as consisting of, for example, empty adjectives, tag questions, super-polite forms, weaker expletives and precise colour naming. Lakoff (1973) argued that women's speech was expected to include these features, which indicate women's uncertainty and trivialisation, and serve to put women in a powerless and inferior position compared to men. Zimmerman & West (1975) examined cross-sex conversations, and found a marked asymmetry between male and female speakers in terms of interruptions and overlaps. Male speakers produced interruptions and overlaps significantly more frequently than female speakers. Zimmerman & West (1975) explained this phenomenon as a result of men's denial of women's equal status as conversational partners. Male speakers' frequent interruptions and overlaps in cross-sex conversations were taken by Zimmerman & West (1975) as an indicator of male dominance, which does not only exist in the society in general, but also participates in conversational structures of male and female speakers. Similarly, Eckert (1989) argued that women's tendency to use more of the conservative variants can be explained as a way women claim their membership of the communities they are in, and that linguistic differences between men and women are a result of differences in power in society.

The type of traditional sociolinguistic research explained above aimed to find correlations between the speaker's sex and his/her linguistic variants. The correlation is seen as a direct

and one-to-one correspondence. That is, certain linguistic variants are directly associated with male or female speakers. The speaker's sex influences an inclination towards particular variants. In other words, the speaker's sex is a social category which determines and can be indexed by certain linguistic variants. Research in this trajectory is in the form of quantitative large-scale surveys, which makes it possible to arrive at the generalisation of distributional patterns of linguistic variants across male and female speakers. It also allows studies of different communities to be replicated (Cheshire 2002). Therefore, taking sex as an uncomplicated demographic category fulfils the goal of discovering correlations between and generalisation of the speaker's sex and the use of certain linguistic variants.

Despite the generalised pattern of distribution across male and female speakers found in these studies, the research trajectory discussed above does not account for some issues. For example, Labov (1990) mentioned certain cases where men lead the language change, including vowel centralisation in Martha's Vineyard (Labov 1963). In addition, O'Barr & Atkins (1980) examined testimonies in courtrooms of both male and female witnesses and found that the use of linguistic features categorised by Lakoff (1973) as "woman's language" was not necessarily linked to female speakers. Rather, these features signified the powerlessness of the speakers as shown through the way witnesses who are more familiar with the courtroom environment and more confident with the content of the testimony use "woman's language" less frequently. Similarly, Eckert (1989) argued against a direct correlation between linguistic variants and the speaker's sex in the way that certain variants are seen as sex markers. Instead, Eckert (1989) drew the attention to gender as a social construction established through social practices. She discussed the findings from her study of adolescents in Belten High in Detroit, and illustrated the interaction between gender and local social categories of jocks and burnouts, in relation to phonological variation. While certain variables positively correlated with both gender and social category, some showed only a gender difference, and some others showed significant category difference only among girls. Based on these findings, Eckert (1989) argued that gender should be examined in relation to other social factors.

Like Eckert (1989), sociolinguistic researchers then turned from the demographic category of sex to the socially constructed category of gender. Following Eckert (1989), Eckert & McConnell-Ginet (1992) argued that both language and gender are mutually constructed through social practices. Gender is not a fixed category, but rather it is constructed through practices in a community (Eckert & McConnell-Ginet 1992, Bergvall 1999). That is, linguistic forms and features do not have meanings in themselves. They do not directly correlate with

the speaker's sex, either. Instead, it is the practices of the speakers which give meanings to linguistic variants, and make the variants emerge as significant in a community. It is, therefore, important to study language and gender in the context of a particular community as such an approach of "looking locally" (Eckert & McConnell-Ginet 1992) allows us not only to see how linguistic variants have gained their social meanings in a community, but also to investigate the interaction between gender and other social factors in relation to linguistic variation (Eckert & McConnell-Ginet 1992, Bergvall 1999). In other words, this trajectory of research focuses on how speakers "do" or "perform" their gender (Butler 1990, Livia & Hall 1997) using language as a tool for gender construction. Holmes (1997), for example, examined the speech of men and women through the social constructionist approach. She found that masculinity and femininity were constructed through several pragmatic devices and discourse strategies. That is, the speakers did not use certain pragmatic devices and discourse strategies because they were men or women. Instead, Holmes (1997) argued that they used the linguistic devices as a means of constructing their masculinity or femininity.

The constructionist approach allows gender to be studied in a more subtle and dynamic fashion. Gender is not taken as a static demographic category of speakers directly correlated with linguistic variants. Rather, it is constructed and indirectly indexed by linguistic variants. Ochs (1992) proposed that the relationship between language and gender can be direct or indirect. Certain linguistic forms, such as personal pronouns, are directly linked to the gender of the speaker. More commonly, language relates to gender indirectly through other social meanings. Language provides linguistic resources for speakers to directly index stances, acts or activities, which in turn constitute and indirectly index gender. The constitutive indirect indexical relationship between language and gender makes it possible to see the non-exclusive characteristic of linguistic tools. That is, a linguistic form or feature is not exclusively used by one gender category, but can be used by different gender categories and also can be associated with other kinds of social meanings apart from gender. In this view of the indirect indexical relationship between language and gender, language is a resource shared among speakers. The speakers then make use of particular linguistic tools to index certain social meanings in their practices, and thereby construct their gender through such practices.

For example, the use of tag questions in English was traditionally analysed as part of "woman's language" (Lakoff 1973). Lakoff (1973) sees tag questions as a midway between an assertive statement and a question showing the lack of full confidence of the speaker. She argues that women use tag questions more frequently than men and that women are

more likely to show uncertainty in their speech. Tag questions then reflect women's subordinate position comparing to men and are an index of women. Despite being labelled "woman's language" (Lakoff 1973), tag questions are in fact not directly associated with femininity as traditionally perceived to be the case. A number of later studies (e.g. Holmes 1982 and 1995, Cameron, McAlinden & O'Leary 1989, Moore & Podesva 2009) have shown that tag questions have several conversational functions facilitating conversations and interpersonal relationships, and projecting a persona which constitutes to a macro-social category. They are thus not necessarily directly associated with femininity. However, the association can be made through an indirect link. That is, from the constructionist perspective, tag questions are a linguistic tool indexing the lack of confidence, which is a characteristic associated with women as the subordinate gender group comparing to men.

The social constructionist approach discussed above demonstrates that gender and identity more generally are not pre-existing. They rather emerge through social practices. Bucholtz & Hall (2005) referred to this as the emergence principle and noted that, in linguistic research, the emergence of identity is easier to recognise in speakers who do not identify with normative categories. Research on transgenders and language in the past has tended to focus on how transgenders talk (based on the norms of men and women's speech) in order to pass as normative men and women (Kulick 1999). However, several studies have shown the linguistic creativity (Kulick 1999) of speakers of non-normative genders who make use of shared linguistic resources for gender purposes, such as African American drag queens (Barrett 1995, 1997), *hijras* in India (Hall & O'Donovan 1996, Hall 1997, 2002), *leiti* in Tonga (Besnier 2002, 2003, 2004), Chinese gay men (Wong 2005), and American gay men (Podesva et al. 2001, Podesva 2007, 2011).

Hijras, for example, are male-to-female transgenders in India who position themselves as an in-between gender through the use of both masculine and feminine markings in Hindi (Hall & O'Donovan 1996). Language use is one of the things *hijras* have to learn as part of their socialisation when joining *hijras* communities. Hindi consists of masculine and feminine markings, which are not exclusively used by *hijras*. Gender marking, however, is used by *hijras* as a tool for conveying social meanings at the interactional level, and for constructing their *hijras* identity. That is, masculine marking is used by *hijras* to indicate distance between interlocutors, while feminine marking signifies solidarity and the equal status of the interlocutors among them. Podesva (2007) examined the speech of an American gay man who makes use of falsetto to signify expressiveness in interaction. He argues against the interpretation of the linguistic feature as the way his participant performed gayness just

because it is used by a gay man. Instead, he argues that falsetto can be taken as an indicator of gayness through its association with expressiveness, which is ideologically linked to non-normative practices among men. Therefore, the gay identity in this case is constructed through linguistic practices at the phonetic level.

This thesis focuses on the linguistic practices of Thai men who identify with non-normative male roles in Thai society. *Kathoey* and gay men are considered non-normative gender categories in Thai society as they do not fully conform to the norms of masculinity or femininity. In terms of language, this group of speakers are typically assumed to talk like women due to their non-masculine characteristics. This study aims to investigate their gender identities and linguistic practices, however, in their own right. That is, their linguistic practices are not taken as a deviant version of masculine and feminine linguistic norms, but rather as tools for gender construction more generally. Aligning with other previous research in this trajectory as previously discussed, the goal of this thesis is to find out what *kathoey* and gay men do with their language use which contributes to their gender identities which emerge in interaction. Examining their linguistic practices from this perspective allows us to see how their non-normative gender is constituted and constructed through the linguistic practices available to all speakers.

1.2 Stereotypes and heterogeneity of Thai non-normative men

Kathoey and gay men are considered non-normative in Thai society. They do not perform the male roles ascribed to men in the society. *Kathoey* is a gender category which has a Buddhist origin. It is cultural category which has been part of the system of sex, gender and sexuality in Thai society. The category of *gay* arrived in Thai society later but has gained a position in the system along with *kathoey*. Both *kathoey* and gay men are ubiquitous in Thai society, which has a “tolerant but unaccepting” (Jackson 1999) attitude towards non-normative men. Detailed discussions of *kathoey* and gay men will be provided in Chapter 2. In this section, I will only mention certain points and discuss them briefly in order to illustrate my points on the stereotypes and heterogeneity of non-normative men in Thai society.

Kathoey are stereotypically and simplistically defined as male-to-female transgenders who were born biologically male but who came to adopt feminine behaviour later in life, and who seek out romantic attachments with “heterosexual” men. *Kathoey* work to portray themselves as feminine, and for some as “ordinary women.” They are therefore male-bodied individuals who are associated with femininity. The category of gay men in Thai

society is constructed as opposed to *kathoey* (Jackson 1995, 1997a). Gay men are associated with masculine expressions and only share with *kathoey* a sexual attraction to the male body. Therefore, stereotypically *kathoey* and gay men express their gender in completely opposite directions. Stereotypical *kathoey* are those who have clear feminine expression such as feminine clothes, make-up, hairstyle, affected gestures and language use. They do not have to undergo sex reassignment surgery or look completely like a woman, for example like those who participate in *kathoey* beauty contests. The key characteristics of *kathoey* are their male body and their visible feminine expression. Stereotypical gay men are, in contrast to *kathoey*, those who present themselves as masculine and do not show their homosexuality through explicit feminine expression, like *kathoey* do.

However, in reality, the distinction between *kathoey* and gay men is not always clear-cut and it is not always possible to tell them apart. Not all *kathoey* clearly express their femininity and even among those who do, they do not express it to the same extent or in every situation. For example, some undergo sex reassignment surgery, live fully like women and call for society's acceptance of them as "ordinary women." Some only take hormonal pills to have a feminine appearance but do not have any bodily operations and still assert their *kathoey* identity. Some only adopt feminine styles in certain contexts and appear relatively masculine generally. Similarly, gay men do not always or necessarily look completely masculine. Masculinity among Thai gay men tends to be maintained more consistently at the level of appearance including clothing, hairstyle and body shape. However, it is common to see Thai gay men who have affected gestures and language use. *Kathoey* and gay men may present themselves as more feminine in informal situations with friends, but as more masculine in formal situations such as in a classroom or a workplace. In other words, both *kathoey* and gay men can *ok sao* 'show femininity' or *aep man* 'pretend to be masculine' to different degrees depending on the contexts. It is not unusual to come across *gay sao* or *kathoey aep man*. Therefore, although *kathoey* and gay men are stereotypically perceived in certain ways, the extent to which they express their masculinity and femininity can be very diverse along the continuum between stereotypical *kathoey* and stereotypical gay men. This illustrates the heterogeneity and individuality of gender performance. The issue has been addressed by Zimman (2009) who points out the 'live and let live' attitude his transgendered participants' had towards the disclosure of their transgender identity. That is, not all transgenders are obliged to disclose their transgender if they choose not to, or do not feel comfortable doing so. Some of them may not want to be openly transgender or consider being transgender a significant part of their identity. The

participants in Zimman's (2009) study demonstrated the importance they placed on individuality in terms of gender performance among transgenders: even within the same category of transgenders, every individual is free to perform their gender in the way they want to.

Moreover, I have also noticed that some non-normative men only identify themselves and their non-normativity broadly as "not real men" or "men who like other men" rather than choosing to identify with either *kathoey* or gay men. That is, they overlook the discrepancy in gender performance and instead focus on the shared characteristic of being sexually attracted to people with the same male body, which makes them not "real" or "ordinary" men. This illustrates how gender and sexuality have become conflated in Thai society, as discussed by Valentine (2003). He found that while one of his participants saw gender and sexuality as necessarily separate, another one did not consider the distinction significant and identified with various gendered and sexual labels as he believed there was no single identity category which can fully describe the participant's identity. Valentine's (2003) demonstrated how gender and sexuality tend to be conceptualised as completely separate yielding identity categories which refer to either gendered or sexual experiences. He argues that the linguistic expression of desire enables a fuller investigation of gendered and sexual experiences, which are not necessarily separate, and are in fact related in complicated ways.

Kathoey and gay men are stereotypically portrayed and perceived as having humorous and entertaining personalities. They are typically associated with straightforward and aggressive verbal expression, and explicit emotional expression. Particular social classes and occupations are also associated with *kathoey* and gay men. *Kathoey* are typically associated with jobs in the fields of beauty and entertainment such as make-up artists, make-up sales assistants, hairdressers and hairstylists. *Kathoey* from the working classes are seen as not being highly educated (relatively speaking) and tend to be involved in night life, sex work and prostitution. However, in reality, there are a number of *kathoey* who work in other fields of occupation. It is true that they may have limited opportunities and have to make more effort to become accepted and successful in an organisation. It is more difficult and less likely for *kathoey*, especially those who look very feminine, to hold a high or important position in an organisation. However, it is becoming more common nowadays for *kathoey* to have high-ranking jobs such as university lecturers. *Kathoey* are becoming more accepted in different areas of jobs apart from those they are typically associated with. Gay men are not particularly associated with limited areas of jobs in the way *kathoey* are due to their

maintenance of their masculine expression. Stereotypical gay men tend to be associated with urban lifestyle and the middle classes.

The discussion in this section has delved into the stereotypes and the heterogeneity of *kathoey* and gay men in Thai society. Thai non-normative men tend to be perceived in certain ways by society. They are usually portrayed in the media as a homogeneous group of people with the same kinds of gender expression, personalities and occupations. In reality, *kathoey* and gay men are a heterogeneous group of people with a great deal of diversity between them. In the next section, I describe the stereotypes of *kathoey* and gay men in terms of their linguistic practices. I further discuss the contrast between the stereotypes and the heterogeneity of *kathoey* and gay men in reality in relation to linguistic research. I do this by reviewing how previous linguistic research has reproduced the stereotypes, and how the heterogeneity of *kathoey* and gay men can be expressed in language more generally.

1.3 Research gaps

The previous discussion on the stereotypes of *kathoey* and gay men leads to the stereotypical perception of their linguistic practices both in popular understandings and in academic research. This section will demonstrate how studies on Thai non-normative men's linguistic practices are influenced and limited by such stereotypes, how the heterogeneity in reality has not been fully investigated in previous linguistic research on *kathoey* and gay men's linguistic practices, and how this thesis fills in the research gaps.

Kathoey and gay men are associated with certain ways of speaking and using language. *Kathoey's* speech is popularly perceived as having affected and overly feminine characteristics. It can also be seen as the imitation of women's speech. It is argued that *kathoey* use feminine forms of first-person pronouns and polite final particles consistently (Winter 2003). *Kathoey* and gay men are commonly perceived as being very creative in their language use, which is claimed to be a characteristic of queer language (Kulick 1999). They are perceived as having their own set of vocabulary, i.e. "*kathoey* and gay men's language," which includes expressions referring to sexual feelings, sexual activities and genitals. They can be completely new expressions, or existing expressions which are given new meanings by *kathoey* and gay men. "*Kathoey* and gay men's language" is assumed to be created and exclusively used by *kathoey* and gay men to communicate and signify solidarity among themselves. However, in reality, the expressions perceived as "*kathoey* and gay men's language" are actually not exclusively used by non-normative men. It is common for

expressions created and initially used among *kathoey* and gay men to spread out and become popular among Thai speakers in general. This confirms the characteristic of language as shared resources among speakers. Even though *kathoey* and gay men are one of the groups of speakers thought to invent new linguistic expressions in the language, they are not the owners of the expressions as such, and the expressions can be used by all Thai speakers.

The conceptualisation of *kathoey* and gay men owning and exclusively using “*kathoey* and gay men’s language” is prevalent and influential not only in popular perception as discussed above, but also in academic research. Nuntiwatwipa (2004), for example, examined the speech of gay men and found that they use “gay language” at three levels of sounds, words, and idioms. He categorises all linguistic features which deviate from the general speech norm and are used by his gay participants as “gay language.” He argues that gay men use “gay language” as an in-group linguistic device to show group membership and gay identity. However, a lot of linguistic forms and features Nuntiwatwipa (2004) claims as “gay’s language” are in fact certainly used by Thai speakers in general. Such linguistic forms and features are, for example, English words, slang, impolite words and taboo expressions. His analysis demonstrates the influence of the perceptions discussed above, which is that *kathoey* and gay men possess certain linguistic forms and features which they exclusively use to signify their gender identity. *Kathoey* and gay men’s linguistic practices are assumed to directly link to their gender identity.

In addition, the speech of *kathoey* and gay men was examined in Thai linguistic research as a deviant or mixed version of men and women’s speech. Kongtrakool (1996) compared the use of first-person pronouns and polite final particles of male, female and effeminate male speakers. Kongtrakool found that effeminate male speakers use male pronouns more than female and gender-neutral ones, and the percentage of use of gender-neutral pronouns is higher among effeminate male speakers than that among male and female speakers. Kongtrakool (1996) argues that such practices are the consequence of disapproving attitude of Thai society towards non-normative men, which leads the speakers to conceal their “sexual deviance” through language. The way Kongtrakool (1996) frames his study and analyses his data shows the view of men and women’s speech as the norm, which *kathoey* and gay’s speech may or may not conform to. *Kathoey* and gay men’s linguistic practices are investigated regarding their alignment to, and deviance from, either men or women’s speech, not as their linguistic practices on their own. Also, like in Nuntiwatwipa (2004), linguistic forms used by non-normative men in Kongtrakool (1996), i.e. the use of masculine,

feminine and gender-neutral forms, are taken as a direct index of their non-normative gender identity.

Building on previous research, this thesis looks at *kathoey* and gay men's linguistic practices from another perspective. In contrast to the stereotypical perception, here linguistic forms and features used by Thai non-normative men are seen as part of the shared linguistic resources (Podesva et al. 2001) for all Thai speakers, not as linguistic tools exclusively "belonging" to Thai non-normative men. Therefore, the thesis is not limited to the lexical level or a set of vocabulary which is popularly perceived as *kathoey* and gay men's own way of speaking. As linguistic forms and features are shared by all speakers, the association between the linguistic practices and gender identity of *kathoey* and gay men is not necessarily a direct indexical relationship, but is rather an indirect indexical relationship (Ochs 1992). Their linguistic practices are seen as a way of constituting their identities, which emerge in interaction (Bucholtz & Hall 2005), rather than as deviant forms of men and women's speech. They are part of non-normative men's gender practices which can also interact with other social factors. Linguistic forms and features are used in particular ways by Thai non-normative men, allowing their gender identity to be constructed and emerge in interaction. Those particular linguistic forms and features are then available to become associated with their gender identity through indirect indexical relationships. In other words, *kathoey* and gay men's particular ways of using their shared linguistic tools constitute part of their gender identity.

Thai has no inflectional morphology. That is, linguistic forms do not change in accord with number, gender, tense, etc. The language does not have grammatical gender. The sex of human and other living creatures is not signified through grammar. The indication of sex and gender through language is limited to only certain linguistic tools, and the two most obvious ones are personal pronouns and polite final particles. Thai has an elaborate system of personal pronouns where a number of social factors have to be taken into account for the selection of an appropriate pronoun for a particular context (Cooke 1965, Palakornkul 1972, Iwasaki & Ingkaphirom 2005). The sex and the gender of the speaker, of the addressee or of the referent, are one of the factors determining the choice of pronouns¹. For example, the first-person pronoun *phom* is available for male speakers while female speakers may use *dichan* or *nu* to refer to themselves. Some first-person pronouns such as *chan*, *rao* and *ku* do not specify the speaker's sex, and hence are available for both sexes. Second-person and

¹ Personal pronouns are described and discussed in detail in Chapter 5. I explain the system briefly here only to demonstrate how pronouns serve to signify gender in Thai.

third-person pronouns in Thai are mostly shared by both sexes. Only a few forms are associated with a particular speaker's sex such as the third-person pronoun *thoe* which can refer only to a female person. In order to select an appropriate pronoun, the sex and the gender of the speaker, of the addressee or of the referent, are considered alongside other social factors such as relative age and formality of situations. First-person pronouns serve to signify the sex and the gender of the speaker. First-person pronouns for male and female speakers are typically associated with masculinity and femininity, respectively, and hence function as direct indexes of the gender categories.

Another linguistic tool in Thai which functions as a direct index of sex and gender is the polite final particle. The most common polite final particles in Thai used frequently in everyday conversation are *khrap*, *kha* /khâ?/ and *kha* /khá?/. The first one is available for male speakers while the other two are for female speakers. Polite final particles are grammatically optional. They contain discourse and sociolinguistic meanings but do not have any effect on the content of an utterance. They only signify politeness and indicate the speaker's sex or gender. The polite final particle for male speakers, *khrap*, is used in both declarative and interrogative utterances. For female speakers, /khâ?/ is for declarative utterances while /khá?/ is for interrogative utterances. In these examples, the particles are shown in braces.

First-person personal pronouns and polite final particles are typically taken as direct indexes of the speaker's sex and gender. Male speakers are associated with masculinity, and female speakers with femininity. Therefore, forms for male speakers and female speakers are perceived as being linked to masculinity and femininity, respectively. Masculine forms are typically perceived as exclusively used by men and feminine forms by women. That is, masculine forms "belong" to men and feminine forms to women. However, sometimes first-person pronouns and polite final particles can be used by speakers who do not "own" the forms for certain interactional purposes. For example, an adult woman may use the masculine polite final particle when speaking to a young boy and this could make her sound friendly. A man may use feminine polite final particles when speaking to his female partner to emphasise his affection. Therefore, first-person pronouns and polite final particles in Thai are perceived as directly indexing the maleness/masculinity or femaleness/femininity of the speaker, even though they can be used by speakers who are not the anticipated users of the forms. That is, they are direct indexes of the speaker's gender identification (masculinity/femininity) in a particular context, but not always of the speaker's sex

(maleness/femaleness). This, again, illustrates that although certain linguistic forms are associated with a particular sex/gender, they can be used by speakers of another sex/gender for interactional purposes. Linguistic features or forms do not “belong” to a particular group of speakers. They tend to be associated with a particular group of speaker but are actually shared resources for all speakers of a language. Masculine and feminine linguistic forms can be used by non-normative genders as well as normative ones.

Apart from personal pronouns and polite final particles, which are linguistic tools typically associated with the gender identity of speakers in Thai, another interesting linguistic feature is vowel lengthening. Based on my own experience, I have noticed that *kathoey* and gay men tend to lengthen their vowels at the end of an utterance to emphasise their statement or emotion. It is part of their affected behaviour which I frequently noticed especially among public figures such as singers, DJs, and actors, who identify as *kathoey* or gay men. To the best of my knowledge, vowel lengthening has been examined as part of a variety of language in two studies. Nuntiwatwipa (2004), as previously discussed, found the use of vowel lengthening in the speech of gay men, and argues that it is used as part of “gay’s language” to signify emphasis, sarcasm and teasing. Vowel lengthening is categorised as part of “internet language” in Panyametheekul (2005), where vowel lengthening in online chat rooms was represented by the repetition of letters and served to create the speech-like atmosphere in the online chat environment. Vowel lengthening will be discussed more thoroughly in Chapter 4 where I provide the analysis of the variable.

The discussion above has shown that although non-normative men in Thai society are typically perceived as a homogeneous group associated with a particular way of gender and linguistic expression, they are in fact very diverse. Their gender and linguistic expression does not only work as a group, but also works at the individual level and depends on the contexts they are in. The dynamic within the category of non-normative men is complicated. The linguistic tools available in Thai can be used by *kathoey* and gay men to emphasise their heterogeneity. This thesis hence aims to explore the way *kathoey* and gay men make use of the linguistic tools available and construct their gender identity taking the heterogeneity among them into account.

1.4 Research questions

As discussed in the previous section, this thesis aims to fill in the research gaps in Thai sociolinguistics research, particularly focusing on Thai men who identify with non-normative

male roles. It investigates *kathoey* and gay men and their linguistic practices, particularly the relationship between their linguistic performance and gender identification. The thesis seeks to resolve the following questions:

- How do Thai *kathoey* and gay men identify or categorize themselves? How do they position themselves in the Thai system of sex, gender and sexuality?
- How does language participate in their gender indexation?
- How does their linguistic performance vary according to situations? What are the kinds of self or persona they project in various situations through linguistic means?
- Apart from their gender, what are other social factors which influence *kathoey* and gay men's use of linguistic tools for gender purposes?

In this thesis, I examine natural interactions of Thai *kathoey* and gay men in various situations. "Natural interactions" is not a simple concept which can be described straightforwardly. I am aware that speakers may behave linguistically differently in different contexts depending on interlocutors or physical settings. Speakers may feel more comfortable in one situation than in another resulting in differences in speech which may be considered as resulting in how natural speakers are in a particular context. However, differences in linguistic behaviours do not necessarily mean that speakers behave more spontaneously in one context and do not behave so in another. Rather, linguistic behaviours in different contexts differ because speakers have to tailor their speech so that it is appropriate for a particular situation. For example, a speaker may speak more carefully in a context not because he/she behaves unnaturally, but because careful speech is "natural" for that particular context. From this perspective, there is no speech style in one context which is more natural than that in another as each context differs from each other. Therefore, in this thesis, I do not aim to judge which speech style in which context is better for the study because it is more natural. Using the term "natural interactions" here, I intend to describe the data included for the analysis as interactions in non-experimental environment. Although the interactions during the interviews were directed to certain extent in terms of topics of conversation, the participants were not forced or asked to say a particular word or utterance. For that reason, I describe the data collected as "natural interactions" without the intention to categorise speech in different interactional contexts based on the speakers' "naturalness."

As will be discussed in detail in Chapter 3, the data were collected through several techniques of ethnography. Their linguistic practices were analysed in social and

interactional contexts where they occurred in order to find out whether and how language is used for gender purposes. There has been linguistic research which focuses on Thai non-normative genders' use of language (e.g. Kongtrakool 1996, Nuntiwatwipa 2004, Butsabokkaew 2010, Saisuwan 2016), and research in other fields which focuses on Thai non-normative men and uses the method of ethnography (e.g. Pramote Na Ayutthaya 2003, Wuen 2007). However, to the best of my knowledge, there has never been a Thai linguistic study which uses the method of ethnography to handle Thai non-normative genders and their use of language for gender work. Therefore, this thesis fills in the empirical gap in Thai linguistic research by bringing linguistics and ethnography together. The method allows different types of data from different contexts to be included in the study. The variety of the data makes it possible to see the diversity of the participants and their gender presentation, including their linguistic practices, in different situations. The participants are examined in their social contexts, but their individuality is also taken into account for the investigation of their linguistic practices. In addition, the participants in this thesis are diverse in their gender presentation including those who do not conform to the stereotypical image of *kathoey* and gay men in Thai society, for example, in terms of their appearance and occupation. The diversity of the participants brings a variety to the dataset and illustrates the heterogeneity of non-normative men in Thai society in general. The study, I anticipate, makes a contribution to the understanding of the linguistic performance of Thai non-normative gender and of the Thai system of sex, gender and sexuality more broadly. Also, it is expected to contribute to the trajectory of sociolinguistic research arguing for the linguistic construction of identity and the emergence of identities in interaction.

1.5 Outline of the thesis

In the following chapters, I will provide the background of Thai *kathoey* and gay men, describe the methods used for data collection and discuss the two linguistic variables examined in the thesis. Chapter 2 focuses on Thai men who identify with non-normative male roles. The chapter begins with a general description of normative gender roles in Thai society. I describe how Thai normative men and women are expected to behave differently under the patriarchal system in Thai society. The category of *kathoey* emerges as part of the triadic system of sexes/genders originating from Buddhism. The term was used in the past as a generic term referring to all kinds of non-normative genders but with the arrival of the term *gay*, the definition of *kathoey* has become narrower and now tends to include only male-to-female transgenders. The distinction between gender and sexuality has become

more widely recognised as indicated by the system of three sexes/genders and that of four sexualities, although the boundary between gender and sexuality is not always clear. Also included in the chapter is a discussion of *kathoey* and gay men's status and position in contemporary Thai context, both from the popular and the academic points of view. Linguistic research in Thai focusing on *kathoey* and gay men's linguistic practices is described, alongside research on transgenders and homosexuals in other cultures.

Chapter 3 describes the ethnographical approach, the methodology employed in the thesis. I begin the chapter with general information about ethnography before moving on to explain how I gained access to my participants using the "friend of a friend" technique. Then, I describe my participants, which consist of three friendship groups and five individual participants. I provide details of the participants including their background, occupation, personality, appearance and gender expression. I explain how I got into contact with the participants, what kind of relationship I had with them, how I presented myself to them and how I got along with them. The process of data collection comprising participant observation, interviews and self-recordings is discussed. In the last section of the chapter, I provide the general background of each data collection technique, discuss how the techniques contribute to the entire dataset used in this thesis, and explain the details of each technique.

Chapter 4 discusses vowel lengthening, one of the linguistic variables analysed in the thesis. I begin my discussion with the background of phonemic vowel length in Thai and how vowel lengthening has been studied in previous research. Then, I explain how I selected and coded the particular parts of the data from the entire dataset for the analysis. I begin the analysis by discussing the distribution of vowel lengthening in the data. Vowel lengthening is then analysed through the model of stance-taking (Du Bois 2007). I describe the model before discussing how vowel lengthening is used as a tool for enhancing the act of stance-taking. I argue that vowel lengthening has become associated with the gender identity of non-normative men through its repetitive use for stance-taking in interaction, and through the ideological link between the interactional functions and stereotypical perception of non-normative men in Thai society.

The discussion in Chapter 5 focuses on the other linguistic variable – self-reference terms. In the chapter, I describe the system of self-reference terms in Thai, and the process of data selection and coding. The first part of the analysis concentrates on the use of self-reference terms in the interview data. I present the analysis of the overall use of self-reference terms,

the comparison across friendship groups, and offer further discussions of certain self-reference terms. The second part of the analysis looks at self-reference terms used in self-recordings. The data obtained from self-recordings were made by participants in a variety of contexts outside of the interviews conducted as part of the research. The dynamics of the interactional contexts in the self-recordings is different from that in interviews, and hence contributes to a more complete analysis of the participants' use of self-reference terms. The analysis reveals that the participants may focus on a particular kind of self or persona in certain contexts, and hence do not always use the self-reference terms they were predicted to use. Gender is only one of the factors determining the choice of self-reference terms; other social factors such as the relative age of interlocutors have to be taken into consideration for the selection of self-reference terms. The analysis illustrates that self-reference terms participate in both the indexation of gender and the avoidance of gender indexation.

In the final chapter, I conclude the thesis by providing an overview of the results and summarising the key findings in the analyses. I discuss how the data and the analyses have shed light on *kathoey* and gay men's gender identification in relation to the Thai system of sex, gender and sexuality. I further look at how language participates in gender indexation for Thai men who identify with non-normative male roles, considering individual variation among the participants and the relation between vowel lengthening and self-reference terms. I end the thesis with a discussion of its contribution to the study of gender and sexuality, of language and identity, and of Thai sociolinguistics more broadly.

Chapter 2

Thai men who identify with non-normative male roles

In academic research, gender and sexuality are distinct attributes. They are both sources of social difference but are independent of one another. Gender does not determine sexuality or vice versa. Although gender is “structurally equivalent to but ontologically distinct from” sexuality (Valentine 2007: 59), sex, gender and sexuality are assumed to be related, leading to “a *conflation* of different aspects of human lives” (Valentine 2007: 61, original emphasis). Many transgenders identify themselves as homosexuals, while being aware of the differences between transgender identity and homosexuality (Valentine 2003). However, one’s public performance of gender does not have to correspond to one’s actual sexual desires. One may perform normative masculinity or femininity as expected by society while having homosexual desires. Although often taken as related categories, “transgender” and “homosexual” identities originated from different sources: transgender identity from “gender” and homosexual identity from “sexuality” (Valentine 2003). Homosexuality used to be taken as “a failure of *gendered* identity and desire” (Valentine 2003: 133, original emphasis), i.e. homosexual men were considered to be feminine and homosexual women masculine.

As in many societies, gender and sexuality in Thai society are often conflated although Thai people nowadays become more aware of the distinction between the two concepts. In this chapter, the Thai system of sex, gender and sexuality is discussed with a particular focus on Thai men who identify with non-normative male roles including both *kathoey* and gay men. The chapter begins with the description of normative gender roles in Thai society. Then the discussion moves on to the system of three sexes/genders which is influenced by Buddhist ideology and shapes how *kathoey* is positioned in Thai culture. After that, the relationship between gender and sexuality is discussed with regard to the emergence of the *gay* concept, the Thai system of four sexualities, and the unclear distinction between gender and sexuality. The final sections of the chapter include the status of *kathoey* and gay men in contemporary Thai context, and research on transgenders and homosexuals in other cultures.

2.1 Normative gender roles in Thai society

In the contemporary Thai context, men and women play different roles in the society. To be considered normatively masculine or feminine, people are expected to conform to different sets of norms. This results in different gender images and gender roles. The norms for masculinity and femininity are widespread in the society and have been established in Thai society for a long time. Boys and girls are taught both at home and at school how to behave according to their gender. The norms are also shown and accentuated through media such as television series and films. Although some of the norms have gone through some changes or are less visible these days, gender norms exist at all levels in Thai society, and play an important role in determining the way men and women behave.

Taywaditep et al. (1997) discuss different ideal gender images and gender roles of Thai men and women as follows. Ideal Thai women are believed to play the role of the mother-nurturer as a way of gaining power. They are responsible for taking care of their children and the whole family. In terms of conduct, idealised Thai women labelled as *kunlasatri* are “proficient and sophisticated in household duties; graceful, pleasant, yet unassuming in [their] appearance and social manners; and conservative in [their] sexuality.” They are expected to conform to this code of conduct, which allows them to maintain their honour and pride. The image of the ideal Thai man involves both a secular and a monastic role (Van Esterik 1982 cited in Taywaditep et al. 1997). The secular role is stereotypically linked to the performances of “authority, courage, self-assurance, physical and emotional strengths, and sexual prowess” leading to the secular image of ideal Thai men or *chaichatri*. The secular image has also become associated with certain vices such as smoking, drinking and gambling. It is more widely tolerated for men to get involved in these vices as they are part of the gender image of Thai men, while there is no room for women to be involved in such activities and still be considered as *kunlasatri*. This suggests the patriarchy in the society. Thai society seems to provide more freedom and opportunities for men, not only in secular contexts, but also in monastic contexts. These vices are in contrast to the Buddhist monastic role of Thai men. All Thai men are expected to become a monk for at least a short period of time as a rite of passage in life. According to Taywaditep et al. (1997), this monastic role cannot be played by women.

Nevertheless, today women can potentially become monks despite the conflicted opinions of people in Thai society. Recently there has been an attempt to promote the female counterpart of Buddhist monks. Being ordained in Sri Lanka in 2003, Dhammananda became

the first bhikkhuni, a female Buddhist monk, in Thailand. She has been playing an important role in calling for the permission for Thai women to be ordained as bhikkhuni and the recognition of bhikkhuni especially as equivalent to male Buddhist monks or bhikkhu. She also leads the Network of Thai Bhikkhuni Sangha, which works to support Thai bhikkhuni. However, bhikkhuni in Thailand are significantly less common than male monks. The number of bhikkhuni in Thailand is very small. Songdhammakalyani Monastery is the only temple for bhikkhuni. In addition, the status of bhikkhuni in Thailand is a controversial issue. Dhammananda claims that the ordination of women is allowed in Buddhism. Still, a lot of people question the rules in the *Vinayapitaka* regarding the Buddha's permission for women's ordination. Buddhist organisations in Thailand including *the Sangha Supreme Council* and *the Buddhism Protection Centre of Thailand* do not approve bhikkhuni in the country, either. Apart from being bhikkhuni, women can participate in the monastic sphere by becoming a nun or *mae chi*. However, according to Pipat (2007), the status of nun is not legally recognised, and becoming a nun is not considered a rite of passage, a good deed or an honourable thing to do for parents, but instead it is considered to be an escape from the secular world for women. Also, nuns are required to follow only eight rules while bhikkhu and bhikkhuni are to follow 227 and 311 rules, respectively. Therefore, nuns hold a significantly inferior position comparing to bhikkhu and bhikkhuni, the categories which are at the same level of the Buddhist hierarchy. Despite the difference between bhikkhuni and nuns, both categories reflect the inferior status of women and the difficulties women have to encounter in order to participate in the Thai monastic sphere.

Corresponding to the ideal images of men and women, the different roles and expectations are reflected in marriage. According to Taywaditep et al. (1997), husbands are traditionally responsible for earning income for the whole family. They are the ostensible leader of the family and is in charge of decision making. Wives traditionally do not work outside the house and hence do not earn money. Their role is to support their husbands and maintain the well-being of their children and the family. Such traditional roles of husbands and wives again indicate the dominant patriarchal values of Thai society where men are viewed as superior. Husbands dominate or even abuse their wives (Romanow 2012). Nevertheless, while wives do not earn any money for the family and big family decisions depend on husbands, wives usually deal with how the family spends money for everyday life (Pyne 1994, Thorbek 1988 cited in Taywaditep et al. 1997) and are hence in charge of household finances in that sense. In addition, it is very common these days for wives to work outside of

their house. The traditional roles are not strictly maintained while the society is changing towards modernism and capitalism.

According to Taywaditep et al. (1997), the effects of patriarchy also appear in the differences in traditional sexual behaviours of men and women. Public expression of affection is considered inappropriate in Thai society. Traditionally, romantic relationships between men and women cannot involve sex before marriage as premarital sex is forbidden by Thai custom especially for women. Men can possibly have premarital sex as it is seen as part of their learning process in order to get some sexual experience (Taywaditep et al. 1997), but young Thai women cannot do the same. This traditional gender norm was very powerful in the past. It was instilled into young women from when they were girls. Women who engaged in premarital sex were considered “bad” or “easy” women. They were called *phuying chai-ngai* ‘woman with an easy heart’ or *phuying chaitaek* ‘woman with broken mind/heart’ (Taywaditep et al. 1997). Whether a woman engaged in premarital sex or not was the benchmark for a woman to be considered a “good” or “bad” woman (Taywaditep et al. 1997). The norm which says that good women have to maintain their virginity is evident in several Thai expressions such as *huang nua huang tua* or *rak nuan sa-nguan tua* ‘preserve your body,’ *od priaw wai kin wan* ‘don’t eat the sour one, wait for the sweet one,’ and *ching sook kon ham* ‘take it as ripe when it is unripe.’ This illustrates the double standard of Thai men and women (Taywaditep et al. 1997). Thai men are freer than women in terms of socially acceptable sexual opportunities. The double standard also appears in popular understandings of sexual desire. According to Ford & Kittisuksathit (1994), young Thai men and women perceive sexual desire as belonging to men. Having sex is seen as a gain for men but a loss for women. This perception is evident in various expressions referring to the act of having sexual intercourse such as *dai* ‘take’ and *cho khaidaeng* ‘poke the yolk’ for men, and *sia tua* ‘lose body’ for women. One of the most notorious cases of premarital sex in Thai society is that of Kathaleeya McIntosh, a well-known Thai actress and television host. In 2005, she was suspected of becoming pregnant before she was married, a rumour which she repeatedly denied. She finally, however, admitted that the rumour was true. Her admission was a source of massive disappointment across Thai society, as she had been previously idealised as a princess figure due to the roles she often played in television series and her stereotypically beautiful physical appearance. She was blamed for both her premarital relationship and her denial of it, and, as a result, is not as well-received today as she was in the past.

According to Jackson (1995), social changes including urbanisation, socio-economic growth and the influence from Western thinking have altered Thai attitudes about having sex. People have more freedom in choosing a partner, women's preservation of virginity before marriage is less important, and the first sexual intercourse occurs earlier in life for both men and women (Jackson 1995). Consequently, the traditional norm of forbidden premarital sex discussed above tends not to be followed these days by young Thai men and women. Discussions of sex among unmarried couples are now very commonly found on webboards popular among Thai people such as *pantip.com*. There are also webboard participants who ask whether they are weird if they want to keep their virginity until they get married. Such conversations indicate the changing norm. In addition, during the past ten years several actors and actresses have admitted their premarital sex indirectly when the women became pregnant. This as well gradually influences people's attitude as people seem to be more sympathetic and forgiving to the couples who were involved in premarital sex than they were in the past comparing to, for example, the case of Kathaleeya McIntosh discussed earlier. However, premarital sex receive mixed reactions especially from different generations. That is, while the younger generations see premarital sex as normal, the older generations still tend to consider it wrong. Also, premarital sex remains a social taboo in Thai society. For example, young Thai men and women mention in online communities that they feel embarrassed when buying condoms. People do not normally talk about their own premarital sex but rather keep it private. This is because premarital is still a topic for gossip and a cause of a bad reputation for those who engage in it, and this can even extend to their families. This is shown clearly in the case of actors and actresses who admitted that they had premarital sex and the women became pregnant. They apologised to their families and fans as they realised they were "wrong" based on the Thai traditional norm. Moreover, "good" characters in Thai television series or films are still portrayed as those who refrain from premarital sex, sometimes in contrast to "evil" characters who enjoy sex outside marriage freely.

In Thailand, as pointed out by Jackson (1995) and Sinnott (2004), the concepts of sex, gender and sexuality are expressed through one term: *phet*. The boundary between sex, gender and sexuality is claimed by the previous literature to be unclear and unrecognised linguistically. Normative masculinity and femininity are often understood to be about biological sex i.e. male and female. That is, a male-bodied person is expected to be masculine, and a female-bodied person to be feminine. Conforming to masculine and feminine norms, male-bodied and female-bodied individuals are taken as heterosexual.

Those who do not conform to the gender role associated with their body are then non-normative and taken as homosexual. *Kathoey* and gay men, which are the focus of this study, are considered non-normative and homosexual in Thai society. Both are male-bodied individuals who gain sexual gratification from other male-bodied individuals. They do not conform to the masculine norm as expected for male-bodied individuals. Considered non-normatively masculine, Thai *kathoey* and gay men are associated with femininity. According to Jackson (1998), male homosexuals in Thai society are seen as having a woman's mind and sexual desires in a man's body, i.e. psychological hermaphroditism (Jackson 1995). In the following sections, Thai *kathoey* and gay men will be discussed in more details regarding their origin and their position as non-normative gender in Thai society.

2.2 Thai system of three sexes/genders

As discussed in the previous section, in Thai society, like most western societies, there is an expectation that most people will conform to the norms of either masculinity or femininity, and the two are seen as the opposite poles. *Kathoey* and gay men, being male-bodied individuals who do not conform to the masculine norm, lie between the two poles from the binary perspective of masculinity and femininity. However, the traditional conceptualisation of sex and gender in Thai society is influenced by Buddhism. In this section, the triadic system of sex/gender in Thai society will be described, including the Buddhist account of "third sex/gender," and how it influences the system of sex/gender in contemporary Thai context, and the definition of *kathoey*.

2.2.1 Buddhist account of "third sex/gender"

In 2011, 94.6% of the Thai population aged over thirteen years were Buddhist (National Statistical Office 2012). Buddhism underpins numerous aspects of life in Thailand, including the Thai conceptualisation of sex, gender and sexuality. In numerous Buddhist sources, we find references to a "third sex/gender" (e.g., the *Vinayapitaka*, *Pathamamulamuli*). The Buddhist account of "third sex/gender" provides the basis for the contemporary understanding of *kathoey*. The Buddhist tripartite system, as pointed out by Totman (2003), is different from the Christian account of the origin of humanity, in which male and female, Adam and Eve, were created by God. The Christian account is believed to give rise to the Western binary thinking (e.g. Foucault 1978, Boswell 1980). The Buddhist tripartite system, in contrast, leads to the system of three sexes of *phuchai* 'male,' *phuying* 'female,' and *kathoey* 'transvestite/transsexual/hermaphrodite' in Thai culture (Morris 1994).

In the *Vinayapitaka*, the section which describes the rule for monks in the *Tripitaka*, the Buddhist scriptures, male homosexuals and transgenders are referred to as *ubhatobyanjanaka* and *pandaka*. The following discussion is based on Jackson (1998) which examines the influence of Theravada Buddhism, the main school of Buddhism in Thailand, towards Thai male homosexuality and transgenderism. In the *Vinayapitaka*, four gender categories are mentioned: male, female, *ubhatobyanjanaka* and *pandaka*. *Ubhatobyanjanaka* is defined as hermaphrodite based on physiological characteristics as those having the genitals and characteristics of both male and female (Rhys Davids & Stede 1975, Ratchaworamuni 1984, Khamhuno 1989 cited in Jackson 1998). Khamhuno (1989) refers to *ubhatobyanjanaka* as *kathoey thae* 'true *kathoey*' or hermaphrodite. Methangkun (1986 cited in Jackson 1998) defines the term slightly differently considering both physiological and psychological factors. For Methangkun (1986), an *ubhatobyanjanaka* has either a male or a female genital, and is attracted to those with the same type of genital. *Pandaka* is defined more diversely. Its definitions are based on behavioural and psychological features. Rhys Davids & Stede (1975) defines *pandaka* as a eunuch. Punyanuphap (1982 cited in Jackson 1998) associates *pandaka* with *kathoey* defining the term as a man who is attracted to another man and sees himself as a woman. Methangkun (1986) and Khamhuno (1989) define *pandaka* more broadly. Methangkun's (1986) definition refers to men who fail to show their masculinity and women their femininity, while Khamhuno's definition includes all those who have abnormal sexual feelings. Both *ubhatobyanjanaka* and *pandaka* are described in the *Vinayapitaka* and in other sections of the *Tripitaka* as spiritually and ritually inferior to men. The inferiority of *ubhatobyanjanaka* and *pandaka* suggests the non-equal status of *kathoey* as the third sex/gender in the tripartite system of sex and gender in contemporary Thai context, which will be discussed later in this section.

According to Jackson (1998), *ubhatobyanjanaka* and *pandaka* are gender types, as opposed to sexuality types, and are denoted by the term *kathoey* in contemporary Thai context, where *kathoey* includes both physical and psychological aspects, and homosexuality as part of its meaning. That is, according to Jackson (1998), the term *kathoey* signifies the dimensions of sex, gender and sexuality, and homosexuality is seen as a matter of gender in Thai context. Jackson (1998) claims that the mix of *ubhatobyanjanaka*, *pandaka* and *kathoey* shows the continuum of sex/gender categorisation with purely physical characteristics on one end, psychological characteristics on the other, and psycho-physical characteristics in between. Homosexuality is considered in Buddhism as predetermined by one's karma of

sexual misconduct in previous lives (Jackson 1995, 1998). According to Buddhist beliefs, everything one does, either good or bad, is one's karma. Both good and bad karma determine states and situations in one's life. One's good deeds are rewarded while one is also punished for his/her bad deeds. The reason why one was born is that one still has karma. One then has to be reborn until one's karma is all gone. Any bad or undesirable states or situations in the current life are believed to be a result of one's bad deeds in previous lives. Homosexuality is considered one of the undesirable states. Various types of sexual misconduct in past lives are believed to be the cause of one's homosexuality in the current life: committing adultery, being a prostitute, sexually interfering with one's children or being sexually irresponsible (Methangkun 1986: 120-121 cited in Jackson 1998). These sexual misdeeds in previous lives which cause one's homosexuality in the current life are exclusively heterosexual misdeeds (Methangkun 1986 cited in Jackson 1998). Accordingly, homosexual activities in the current life do not accumulate future karma. Homosexuality is not seen as sinful but only a way to pay for one's heterosexual misconduct in previous lives.

Apart from the appearance of the "third sex/gender" in the *Tripitaka*, which is the main canons of scriptures in Buddhism, the conceptualisation of three sexes/genders also appears in the northern Thai Buddhist mythology (*Pathamamulamuli*) (e.g. Morris 1994, 2000, Costa & Matzner 2007). According to the *Pathamamulamuli*, three types of beings were created at the origin of humanity – *phuchai* 'male,' *phuying* 'female' and *kathoey* 'transvestite/transsexual/hermaphrodite.' According to Morris (1994), in *Pathamamulamuli*, *kathoey* occupies the third point in a triad and has the same ontological status as male and female. This corresponds to Totman's (2003) claim that *kathoey* is not a variant of either male or female. Although the relationship between the *Pathamamulamuli* and the acceptance of *kathoey* in Thai society is questioned for several reasons, including the popularity of the mythology among Northern Thais (Costa & Matzner 2007), the triadic conceptualisation in Buddhism discussed above allows *kathoey* to occupy a position as a historical and cultural category, and to be seen as a "third sex/gender" in Thai society, the conceptualisation which is still valid today.

2.2.2 The definition of *kathoey*

The term *kathoey* was originally defined from a biological perspective, and used to refer to hermaphrodites, people who have the characteristics of both sexes (Jackson 1997a, 2004a). Etymologically, the term once had a broad definition including all kinds of non-normative

genders. That is, a person who was not fully a man or a woman was categorised as *kathoey*. In the mid-1960s, the category of *kathoey* was split into various sub-categories in order to express different groups of non-normative genders (Jackson 2000). The sub-categories listed by Jackson (2000: 409-410) are as follows:

Kathoey thae: a true hermaphrodite

Kathoey thiam: a pseudo-hermaphrodite or a cross-dressing man

Kathoey sao: a cross-dressing young woman

Kathoey num: a masculine young homosexual man

Kathoey phuchai: a masculine adult homosexual man

Kathoey praphet song: a man who prefers males but does not cross-dress or act effeminately

As discussed earlier, Jackson (1998) claims that the term *kathoey* includes both physical and psychological aspects in its meaning. It was used as a generic term for two Buddhist gender types *ubhatobyanjanaka* and *pandaka*. Homosexuality, seen as the result of gender, is assumed to be one of the characteristics of *ubhatobyanjanaka*, *pandaka* and *kathoey* (Jackson 1998). These terms above show the innovative range of terminology used to describe gender diversity at the time. These sub-categories show that sex, gender and sexuality were all included in the term *kathoey*. *Kathoey thae* was defined based on biological features. *Kathoey thiam* and *kathoey sao* were defined from sex and gender perspective. *Kathoey num*, *kathoey phuchai* and *kathoey praphet song* referred to specific characteristics covering sex, gender and sexuality in their definition. These different types of *kathoey* show that even though it is a sex/gender category, homosexuality is recognised to be part of its characteristic. This illustrates the conflation of sex, gender and sexuality in Thai society, and leaves us with unclear boundaries between being *kathoey* and being homosexual. While sex is derived from biological features, gender is shown through one's public performance. Sexuality, in contrast, is a private issue and involves one's sexual desires. That is, in public we can see one's gender but not one's sexuality. In Thai culture (and many other cultures), normative genders are typically associated with heterosexuality, while non-normative genders such as *kathoey* are associated with homosexuality. The relation between gender and sexuality in general and in different cultures will be discussed later in the chapter.

Another thing we can see from the sub-categories is the influence of the triadic system. A sex/gender which could not be straightforwardly classified as either man or woman was put

in the gender category of *kathoey*. The categorisation of all kinds of non-normative genders as *kathoey* relies very much on the tripartite system, and shows that the system of three is still valid. However, *kathoey* do not have the same status as men and women in Thai culture. Morris (1994: 24) argues that the Buddhist belief of three sexes/genders is “an imaginary possibility” but in reality, they are not seen as equal. *Kathoey* is not an independent category but is “a man who appropriates female form without becoming a woman and without ceasing to be a man” (Morris 1994: 25). Even though *kathoey* is referred to as *phuying praphet song* ‘second type of woman’ in contemporary Thai society, *kathoey* tends to be considered as a category of male rather than female. According to Morris (1994), the male body provides the “potential” to develop one’s gender and become masculine or feminine. One’s gender can be constructed through public performance while one’s sex remains the same from birth. Morris (1994) argues that this results from the patriarchal ideology in Thai society, where the male body is seen as superior to the female one in terms of the possibility to cross the gender boundary from being masculine to feminine. *Kathoey* is thus a male who crosses the gender boundary into femininity.

These various categories referring to different types of *kathoey* were short-lived. *Kathoey num*, *kathoey phuchai* and *kathoey praphet song* were outdated by the late 1960s and were replaced by the term *gay* which entered Thai language around 1965 (Jackson 2000). The meaning of the term *kathoey* has become narrower after several other concepts for non-normative genders emerged in Thai society, the issue to be discussed later in the chapter. Nowadays *kathoey* generally refers exclusively to male-to-female transgendered individuals who were born male but later adopted feminine characteristics. They are attracted to people of the same male body. The term includes both those who have undergone a sex reassignment surgery and those who have not. The term *kathoey* can be considered derogatory by some people, and can also be referred to by the terms *tut* and *phuying praphet song* ‘the second type of woman.’ The term *tut* is derived from a heterosexual male transvestite American character called *Tootsie* in the Dustin Hoffman film with the same title in 1982 (Jackson 1995, 2004a). According to Jackson (1995: 224), by referring to *kathoey* with the latter term, *kathoey* are placed in opposition to men and represent “the negation of manhood.” *Kathoey* are also sometimes referred to as *phet thi sam* ‘the third sex/gender’ although, as argued in (Jackson 1997a: 171), they are more frequently viewed as “a variety of male, not female” rather than “a genuine intermediate category.” The term *phet thi sam* ‘the third sex/gender’ tends to be used nowadays as a collective term for all non-normative genders. *Kathoey* usually prefer to be seen by the society as “ordinary

women,” but in reality, people tend to see them as an “unreal type of woman.” In terms of self-identification, half of the *kathoey* participants in Winter (2006a) identify themselves as “woman” while the other half identify themselves either as *phuying praphet song* or *kathoey*.

The sub-categories of *kathoey* were not only replaced by the term *gay*, but also by other terms referring to female homosexuals. According to Jackson (2000), by the early 1970s, those sub-categories of *kathoey* referring to masculine homosexual women were replaced by the terms *lesbian* and *dai* (English *dyke*), both derived from English. These two terms were relabelled again in the second half of the 1970s by another English-derived term *tom boy*. The term was shortened to *tom* and is still used today to refer to masculine homosexual women. In the early 1980s, the new category of feminine homosexual women *di* (English *lady*) appeared. The term refers to the feminine partners of *toms*. According to Jackson (2004a), as the English term *lady* is understood by Thai people to mean “gentlewoman,” feminine homosexual women who refer to themselves as *di* are indicating their alignment with high-class, socially respectable, forms of femininity. It also shows their efforts to make female homosexuality more acceptable and to dissociate it from the term *lesbian* which, they believe, has accrued negative connotations related to female homosexual pornography (Jackson 2000).

Despite the general description of the term *kathoey* discussed above, the definition of *kathoey* is not stable and can vary from one person to another. The categories of *kathoey* and *gay* men are usually conflated with no clear boundary between them. The discussion in the next section will describe how the *gay* category emerged in Thai society, its relation to the more traditional category of *kathoey*, and the system of gender and sexuality in Thai culture more generally.

2.3 Gender and sexuality in Thai society

In the previous section, the Thai system of three sexes/genders was discussed in relation to the Buddhist influence on the conceptualisation. Sexuality has been part of the system, but only in an implicit way. That is, sexuality is assumed to be based on gender. The concept of *gay*, which emerged later than *kathoey* in the society, makes it possible to signify a category of homosexuality which is not associated with femininity. Also, apart from the traditional Thai system of three sexes/genders, Morris (1994) proposes that there is another system of four sexualities which is prominent in Thai society. This system arose out of the influence of the Western thinking and was introduced to Thai society more recently. It puts desire for

same-sex or opposite-sex body as central to the system, in contrast to the system of three sexes/genders which focuses on how one performs in public. In this section, the emergence of the *gay* concept in Thai society will be discussed, followed by descriptions of the four sexualities, and the unclear distinction between gender and sexuality.

2.3.1 The emergence of the *gay* concept

As previously discussed, the term *kathoey* used to be an umbrella term for all non-normative genders. It was modified by various terms, as shown earlier, in order to specify a particular kind of non-normative gender. According to Jackson (1997a), the term *gay* started to replace terms referring to masculine types of *kathoey* in the late 1960s and this is when 'gayness' emerged as a new form of male homosexual identity in Thai society (Jackson 1995). Morris (1994) argues that gay and lesbian identities are Western products in Thai society and are considered rather recent identities. The terms *gay* and *lesbian* are both borrowed from English into Thai. According to Jackson (2004a: 218), those identifying with non-normative genders who feel that they do not fit in the traditional system of "man" – *kathoey* – or "woman" turn to English in order to label themselves. However, these identities also contain local features which make them slightly different from those in Western societies (Jackson 1995).

In the mid-1980s, Thai society went through considerable social and economic changes and this was when young gay men and lesbians started to "come out" (Jackson 1995: 262). The following discussion regarding the emergence of gay identities in Thailand is based on Jackson's works (1995, 1997a, 1999). In the mid-1980s, commercial gay-oriented business such as bars, discos, saunas and publications, expanded rapidly. Until the late 1980s, gay men were initially drawn mainly from the educated middle or upper classes and were living in urban areas. In the 1990s, gay identities became more common among the working class people in the countryside. In gay sex businesses, those from the middle or upper classes tend to be customers while those from the working class are sex workers. Also, gay men from the middle or upper classes were not open about their gay identity and tried to cover it up. Also, in the mid-1980s, homosexual men, especially gay men, were victimised by the media as the source of HIV/AIDS in the country. This, however, led to a more extensive public discussion of homosexuality in Thailand, and to a greater acceptance of gay men in the 1990s.

As discussed earlier, for Thai people, gender and sexuality tend to be assumed to correspond to one another. Male homosexuals (male-bodied individuals who are attracted

to other male-bodied individuals) are typically associated with non-masculinity and hence femininity. However, as shown in the sub-categories of *kathoey* (Jackson 2000), that is not always the case. Male homosexuals do not have to be feminine, but as *kathoey* was the only term available to refer to male homosexuality, all types of male homosexuality were labelled as *kathoey*, and all homosexual men were assumed to be feminine and sexually passive (Jackson 1995). And the notion of *gay*, when entering Thai culture, was not put into the same category of *kathoey*, but was seen to be a separate category from the start. The *gay* concept allows masculine-identified Thai homosexual men to distinguish themselves from feminine-identified *kathoey*. The identity of gay men lies between the two polar opposites of “feminine” men (*kathoey*) and “masculine” men, i.e. the *kathoey*-gay-man model (Jackson 1995, 1997a). The category of *gay* is therefore an alternative term for Thai homosexual men, a category which does not replace the traditional category of *kathoey* but labels the existing unnamed category (Jackson 1995, 1997a).

Jackson (1995) argues that the concept of gay in Thai society comes from the West, but it is localised in several ways, and therefore is specific to Thai society in certain aspects. The emergence of the term *gay* gives rise to the *gay/kathoey* opposition in the construction of gay identity in Thailand, as opposed to the *gay/straight* and *gay/heterosexual man* oppositions in the West (Jackson 1995, 1997a). Thai *kathoey* and gay men are both male homosexuals. The difference arises in their gender. While *kathoey* are feminine-identified, gay men are masculine-identified and reject the feminine features traditionally associated with *kathoey*. In other words, the masculine/non-masculine opposition is still central to male sex/gender identity in Thailand (Jackson 1995, 1997a). Therefore, according to Jackson (1995), while gayness in the West is the realm of sexuality, it is more about gender identity in Thai society. Gayness allows Thai homosexual men to relate homosexuality to masculinity by indicating their masculine gender identification, as opposed to the femininity identified by *kathoey* (Jackson 1995). Jackson (1995) explains that gayness in Thai society does not encounter legal or religious sanctions; hence, it is a cultural non-political movement aiming to be affiliated with men rather than homosexuals.

This gender difference between *kathoey* and gay men can be explained through the issue of public and private life (Jackson 2004b). One’s gender performance in public does not have to correspond to one’s private sexual practices, even though people assume it does. While *kathoey* usually express their femininity outwardly, gay men tend to keep their sexuality private and express their masculinity in public. Thai gay men can live a “double life” – a heterosexual public life and a private homosexual life – without being accused of deceiving

other people and this is a “cultural phenomenon” distinct to Thailand (Jackson 1997a: 188). The public performance of masculinity is important for Thai homosexual men as it reduces the chances of social sanction (Jackson 1997a). Gay men can pass as normative men if they maintain their masculinity in public. In contrast, because of their visible feminine performances, *kathoey* face stronger condemnation (Jackson 1995). People tend to show their dissatisfaction towards *kathoey* for their gender inappropriateness rather than towards suspected gay men. *Kathoey* are thus more stigmatised than the gay men who adopt a normative masculine gender role.

By the early 1970s, the *gay* category came to be split into two sub-categories - *gay king* (sexually active) and *gay queen* (sexually passive) (Jackson 2000). The English terms, *king* and *queen* were borrowed in order to be able to express a particular kind of gay identity more accurately. This shows another way gayness is localised in Thai society. The distinction between *gay king* and *gay queen* is based on sexual roles, and, according to Jackson (1997a: 179), in Thai society, sexual roles are important in distinguishing “complete men” from men who are not “complete.” “Complete men” are heterosexual men playing an active sexual role while those playing a passive sexual role are less than a “complete man” (Jackson 1997a). Although the distinction between *gay king* and *gay queen* is based on sexual practice, a *gay king* playing an active role is “presumed masculine” while a *gay queen* playing a passive role is “presumed feminine” (Jackson 1996). Also, because of the effeminacy performed, *gay queen* and *kathoey* can be conflated and are not easy to distinguish. The distinction between *gay king* and *gay queen*, and the associated gender presentation is another piece of evidence which shows that in Thai society gender and sexuality are assumed to correspond to each other. An active sexual role is associated with masculinity while a passive sexual role is associated with femininity. In addition, the distinction between *gay king* and *gay queen* demonstrates the adaptation and localisation of the Western-derived concept of *gay*. It shows the power of traditional conceptions of sexuality from a gender-based perspective (Jackson 1996). Even within the same group of masculine-identified male homosexuals, a gender distinction is made between their different sexual roles, either active or passive.

The emergence of the *gay* category shows the awareness of the distinctions between sex, gender and sexuality in Thai society, even though these three concepts are to some extent still assumed to correspond to each other. The next section describes further the

relationship between sex, gender and sexuality with regard to the system of four sexualities in Thai cultures.

2.3.2 The system of four sexualities

In Thai culture, men and women are typically expected to behave in ways that are normatively associated with maleness and femaleness, respectively. There is a set of stereotypical or normative traits to which men and women are expected to conform so as to express their gender - masculinity and femininity, respectively – and to be considered normatively masculine or feminine in a society. Such normative traits are based on the biological aspect of maleness and femaleness. Being men and women is a social construct which is based on a biological construct of being male and female. Apart from normative men and women, non-normative gender categories can be referred to as “transgender.” The term is associated with “visible gender variance” and “overtness” (Valentine 2007: 64). While gender is a social construction formed in public, sexuality is of the private domain (Valentine 2007). It involves “fantasy, desire, repression, pleasure, fear, and the unconscious” (Kulick 2000).

In Thai society, as elsewhere, public performance is important for categorising people’s genders. In the Thai system of three, consisting of male, female and *kathoey*, biological sexes and the associated gender performance are key for the categorisation while erotic desire remains private. It is not mentioned as part of the system. Instead, it is assumed based on gender (Costa & Matzner 2007). Normative performance is assumed to indicate heterosexuality while non-normative performance is assumed to signify homosexuality. A normative gender performance is more accepted than a non-normative one. Those who perform the gender role of masculinity or femininity associated with their sex are considered normative while those who do not are seen as non-normative or marginal. The Western system, however, focuses more on the body than the Thai system does. According to Thai perception, the body only gives the potential for one’s construction of gender (Morris 1994). It does not define one’s being. As a result of patriarchy, the male body allows two genders – man and *kathoey* – while the female body only allows one gender, which is woman. In contrast, the body and erotic desire for a same-sex body or an opposite-sex body are important to one’s identity from a Western perspective. People can be categorised based on their sexual object choice. This gives rise to the binary system of heterosexuality and homosexuality in Western societies. This binary system has been absorbed into Thai society relatively recently, yielding the system of four sexualities.

The Thai system of four sexualities is “a set of nested and overlapping binarism” (Morris 1994: 28). In the system of three sexes/genders, a male body can be associated with masculinity or *kathoey*, and sexuality is assumed to be related to sex/gender or left unmentioned. But in the Thai system of four sexualities, sexuality is central to the categorisation in this newer system, which is influenced by Western conceptions of sexuality. Maleness is not superior in the sense that more genders or sexualities are allowed to develop from a male body. Maleness and femaleness can be “either realised or transgressed in sexual practice” (Morris 1994: 28). That is, male bodies and female bodies both allow two types of sexualities – *rak tang phet* ‘heterosexuality’ and *rak ruam phet* ‘homosexuality.’ The four possible sexualities, therefore, consist of male heterosexuality, female heterosexuality, male homosexuality and female homosexuality. Male homosexuals - male-bodied individuals who seek out same-sex sexual partners - consist of *kathoey* (feminine-identified individuals) and gay men (masculine-identified individuals). Female homosexuals or lesbians – female-bodied individuals who seek out same-sex sexual partners – consist of *tom* (“masculine” female homosexuals) and *di* (“feminine” female homosexuals).

Morris (1994: 19) argues that the two systems of sex, gender and sexuality in Thailand are “different and mutually irreconcilable systems that cohabit in a single social field.” The system of three sexes/genders is the traditional system that is drawn from patriarchy and a Buddhist classification of humanity, while the system of four sexualities brings in recent elements from the Western model on sexual binarism. Both systems work together to explain the influences of sex, gender and sexuality in Thailand. The modern conception of sexuality from the West does not just add a new way of perceiving things into the traditional system but it interacts with the traditional system. The combination of local and Western perspectives in understanding these identities can be seen as a form of syncretism, a notion discussed in Kulick (1992). Syncretism is seen as a “structure of the conjuncture” (Sahlins 1985 cited in Kulick 1992). The conjuncture occurs when a traditional category in one culture is reproduced and reinterpreted under the influence of another culture, and the meaning of the category is changed as a result of the conjuncture. Syncretism then arises when a local concept of one society is brought together with a related concept from another society. The two ways of understanding interact with each other. The interaction affects the way the concept is perceived. The concept is then understood in new combinatorial way.

The more recent system of four sexualities recognises the possibility of one’s sexuality not corresponding to one’s gender performance. Men who are masculine-identified and

perform their masculinity can be either heterosexual or homosexual (gay men). Similarly, some homosexual women may perform their masculinity (*tom*) such as through cross-dressing. However, they may perform their femininity and pass as normative heterosexual women (*di*). Therefore, one's sexuality cannot be inferred through one's public performance of gender. The system of four sexualities does not replace the system of three sexes/genders but rather coexists with it in Thai society as mutually irreconcilable systems (Morris 1994). Sexuality becomes a visible part in the classification. The system shows the awareness of the distinctions between sex, gender and sexuality. Morris (1994) argues that the system breaks down the split between private and public domains, and brings homosexuality into the public domain of identity.

2.3.3 The unclear distinction between gender and sexuality

In Thai culture, gender and sexuality could always be understood as public and private domains of life, respectively. People present their gender in a certain way in public but keep their sexuality as private regardless of their gender.

The issue of public and private domains of life is a type of logic governing the practices of Thai people regarding gender, sexuality and also other aspects of life more generally. According to Jackson (2003, 2004b), for Thai people, *phapphot* or *phaplak* 'image' shown in the public sphere is very important. The truth in the private domain may be one thing while the public image may be different. The two domains do not necessarily correspond to each other while the discrepancy is not seen as contradictory. This means that what is presented in public is not necessarily the truth. Jackson (2004b) exemplifies his argument with the issues of the Thai monarchy, polygyny and prostitution. The truth about these issues are taboos in Thai society and not supposed to be discussed or revealed in public as such practice would affect the "image" of an individual and/or the country. Another example is premarital sex. As discussed earlier, premarital sex was traditionally strictly forbidden in the past in Thai society. Even though it becomes much more common now, it is a taboo. That is, premarital sex among unmarried couple is supposed to be kept in the private domain, whereas on the surface level, both in individual behaviours and in media, the abstinence from sex before marriage is presented as the "good" Thai convention. Therefore, unlike the Western world, where the surface expression is taken as the reflection of the true inner self, Thailand presents its "alternative modernity" through the separation of public and private domains (Jackson 2004b: 184). That is, the image presented in public is controlled, both at

the individual and national level, and is not necessarily the truth, while the inner self or the actual situation is kept in the private domain.

Relating to the distinction between public and private domains, gender is significant for Thai people, and in fact more significant than sexuality as it concerns the presentation of self in the public realm. It is gender, and not sexuality, which is an influential component in modern Thai identities administered by the national regime (Jackson 2003). According to Jackson (2003), Thailand was disturbed by Western imperialism in the nineteenth century, the situation which drove the country to “civilise” itself to conform to the Western norm leading to the Siamese gender revolution. The revolution involved the clear gender distinction between men and women such as their clothes and hairstyles. This included the new norm of feminine beauty which in turn influenced the status of *kathoey*. That is, despite their male body, *kathoey* who successfully presented themselves in accordance with the “civilised” feminine norm of beauty gained the status of “female beauty queens” leading to the ubiquity and the increasing tolerance of *kathoey* in Thai society (Jackson 2003).

The fact that public “image” and the truth in the private domain may be different but not taken as contradictory can be explained and justified by the concept of contextual sensitivity or *kalathaesa* ‘time and place’ (Van Esterik 1999). Different images presented in different contexts reflect how one knows how to behave appropriately in a particular situation. Therefore, different presentations are “multiple forms of “truth”” (Jackson 2004b: 202). Context sensitivity is a key to understanding how Thai people distinguish between gender and sexuality. Relating to the notion of gender appropriateness (Cameron & Kulick 2003), Thai people tend to associate heterosexuality with gender-appropriate performance. Men and women who behave in a gender-appropriate way displaying their masculinity and femininity, respectively, are more likely to be accepted or perceived as normative and heterosexual whether they are heterosexual or homosexual. This means that in fact one’s public gender performance does not always indicate one’s sexuality which is kept private.

The public gender and private sexuality are relevant to the categorisation of non-normative genders and homosexuals. *Kathoey* and *tom* are similar in their visible performance of femininity and masculinity, respectively. But their gender performance does not correspond to that ascribed to their body. In contrast, gay men and *di* are defined based on their private domain of sexuality. They are less noticeable and can pass as normative in public. They are also less likely to be viewed as “gender inverted,” a concept that would lead to society’s perception of them as homosexual (Sinnott 2004). Despite the similarities mentioned,

Sinnott (2004) argues that the identity of *di* is derived from the fact that they are in a relationship with *tom*, whereas gay men construct their identity by separating themselves from *kathoey*.

As a context-sensitive society, public gender performances in Thai society do not have to always be consistent and cannot be taken as the one and only identity. They may vary according to context. A person can choose to perform the public gender he/she considers appropriate for a particular situation. The selection of the right gender performance may lead to more positive social evaluations from others and better opportunities. Therefore, gender in Thailand is context-sensitive (Van Esterik 1999). It is influenced or even determined by contexts. Van Esterik (1999) argues that, because of the context-sensitivity, multiple gender identities in Thai society are possible. Gendered selves are “transformable, temporary, and aesthetically pleasing” but one’s actual self is “hidden and ultimately unknowable” (Van Esterik 1999: 278). For example, *kathoey* may perform their gender as masculine in formal situations (Winter 2002) such as job interviews and graduation ceremonies, while showing their non-masculinity openly with friends. Similarly, Duangwises (2010) argues that Thai gay men have a multiple and situated identity depending on contexts. Gender and sexual roles are not necessarily stable among Thai gay men. It is possible to have active feminine gay men and passive masculine gay men (Duangwises 2010). In other words, one varies his/her performance of gender according to context while sexual desire remains private and unknown to others.

Despite putting *kathoey* and gay men as separate categories, Morris (1994) and Jackson (1995) both mention the possible overlapping boundary between the two categories. Based on my own observation, the distinction between *kathoey* and gay men such as that made by Morris (1994) and Jackson (e.g. 1995, 1997a, 2000, 2004a) is not always clear-cut. One of the reasons is the issue of context sensitivity (Van Esterik 1999) discussed above where public gender performance can vary depending on situations. In addition to that, in reality, not every *kathoey* is feminine and not every gay man is masculine, either. Some *kathoey* do not live a feminine life or try to feminise themselves. *Kathoey* do not necessarily wear make-up or have feminine hairstyle. They can wear masculine clothes and still identify themselves as *kathoey*. Similarly, gay men in Thai society wear masculine clothes and have masculine hairstyle, but femininity is sometimes shown through their gestures. Some gay men once identify and present themselves as *kathoey* but change their identification as they become older. That is, gender identification can change over time. This is partly due to the stigmatisation of femininity among men mentioned earlier. *Kathoey* who show very visible

femininity tend to face the problem of social stigmatisation especially when they reach adulthood and try to find a good job. Some of them find their femininity is a problem when looking for a partner. They find themselves undesirable as “heterosexual” men prefer “real” women, and masculine “homosexual” men prefer other masculine “homosexual” men. Therefore, making themselves more masculine can make their life easier for several reasons. From this point of view, *kathoey* and gay men are not two completely distinct categories, but rather a continuum. Stereotypical *kathoey* and stereotypical gay men are different and more noticeable. Stereotypical *kathoey* express femininity clearly and some of them, such as those participating in transgender beauty contests, may pass as women. Stereotypical gay men look masculine and are seen as men. It is the stereotypical *kathoey* and gay men which are described by Jackson (e.g. 1995, 1997a, 2000, 2004a). However, *kathoey* and gay men who are less stereotypical lie between the two stereotypical ones. Their identification is also flexible and is influenced by various social factors.

Under the binary view of sex and sexuality, *kathoey*, like gay men, are male homosexuals as they were born male and are attracted to people of the same-sex. However, ten Brummelhuis (1999), Jackson (1999) and Winter (2002, 2003) argue that *kathoey* are not homosexual. Jackson (1999: 238-239) argues that *kathoey* were born in the wrong body. They are “a woman inside a male body” and therefore have the “normal” heterosexual female desire. Ten Brummelhuis (1999) conflates gender and sexuality and argues that the feminine role played by *kathoey* justifies the homosexuality of the “men” who are *kathoey*’s partners. According to ten Brummelhuis (1999), the feminine role adopted by *kathoey* is preferred in the society where homosexuality is not accepted as it brings more social acceptance to men who are masculine homosexuals by making them look normative. This way of conceptualising *kathoey* is seen as being influenced by the Western perspective of gender dichotomy (ten Brummelhuis 1999) in which masculinity and femininity are two polar opposites. Relating gender to sexuality, the feminine role played by male-bodied individuals leads to the perception of *kathoey* as homosexual. As homosexuality is generally accepted in Thailand and *kathoey*’s partners do not look like non-normative homosexual men, ten Brummelhuis (1999) proposes that *kathoey* should be seen as heterosexual, a view which emphasises the distinction between gender and sexuality. Non-normative genders tend to be associated with homosexuality. However, in reality, normative gender, like that performed by *kathoey*’s partners, may conceal one’s homosexuality from public notice. At the same time, *kathoey*’s non-normative performance can be perceived as linked to heterosexuality. Similar to ten Brummelhuis (1999) and Jackson (1999), Winter (2002)

argues that *kathoey* tend to see the relationship with their partners as a heterosexual relationship. According to Winter (2003), *kathoey* will see their relationship as a homosexual one only when they are attracted to other *kathoey* and this illustrates the same-sex relationship based on the system of three sexes/genders.

As discussed earlier, among male homosexual gay men, the distinction is made between *gay king* and *gay queen* based on sexual roles. The distinction also assumes differences in gender performance corresponding to sexual roles. However, a *gay king* is not necessarily masculine and a *gay queen* is not necessarily feminine. Masculinity and femininity among gay men do not determine whether they are *gay king* or *gay queen*, either. It is possible to have a gay couple of two masculine or two feminine male-bodied individuals. In such cases, the distinction between *gay king* and *gay queen* is not adequate to describe the relationship between homosexuals. Jackson (1995) acknowledges such cases where *gay kings* and *gay queens* do not perform their ascribed gender. Jackson (1995) also mentions the issue of sexual versatility – male homosexuals may alternate between the active sexual role and the passive one, yielding the category of *gay quing* which combines *gay king* and *gay queen* – and that the distinction between *gay king* and *gay queen* has started to crumble since then.

In the past few years, a new distinction has begun to emerge – the distinction between *ruk* (sexually active) and *rap* (sexually passive). This more recent distinction focuses only on sexual roles and does not assume any particular kind of gender performance attached to each category. Therefore, it serves as a means to refer to the fluid gender categories acknowledged by Morris (1994) and Jackson (1995). The distinction also allows all types of male homosexuals to pair up more easily regardless of gender. The distinction between *ruk* and *rap* is applied to not only male homosexuals, but also female homosexuals. As discussed earlier, a *tom* is assumed to be masculine while a *di* is assumed to be feminine. However, as is the case for male homosexuals, it is possible to have a lesbian couple of two masculine or two feminine female-bodied individuals. The concepts of *tom* and *di* then do not fit such situations due to their restrictions on the associated gender performance. Therefore, the distinction between *ruk* and *rap* also serves to distinguish female homosexuals based on sexual roles and regardless of gender. In addition, the distinction shows that sexuality has recently become more important in categorisation in the Thai system of sex, gender and sexuality. People are more aware of the distinction between gender and sexuality, and the non-necessity of the two to correspond to each other.

As pointed out by several scholars (e.g. Jackson 1995, Sinnott 2004), the boundary between sex, gender and sexuality is not clear and not recognised linguistically in Thai as the three concepts are expressed through one term: *phet*. Although *phet* has been the only term in Thai which expresses the concepts of sex, gender and sexuality, recently the distinction among the concepts, and especially between gender and sexuality, has become more recognised among Thai people. Such recognition is also expressed linguistically. According to Singhakowinta (2010), new terms were coined by Thai feminist scholars in the 2000s as equivalents for gender and sexuality. The linguistic distinction has been drawn between *phet saphap* or *phet saphawa* 'gender' (*saphap* and *saphawa* 'conditions') and *phet withi* 'sexuality' (*withi* 'way/direction'). These recent terms are not yet fully recognised in Thai mainstream discourse (Singhakowinta 2010) and tend to be used more commonly among academics and activists. However, they have started to become more popular among the general public too during the past few years. In addition, terms which have been used to denote gender non-normativity and homosexuality such as *pharuetikam biangben thang phet* 'gender deviance,' *rak ruam phet* 'homosexuality' and the term *kathoeay* itself, have derogatory connotation for some people. New terms have recently emerged as more appropriate or politically correct ways of referring to the "third sex" or non-normative genders. Apart from *phet thi sam* 'third sex' which has been used for a long time, more recent terms include *phet thangleak* 'alternative sex/gender' and *phu thi mi khwam laklai thang phet* 'people with sexual/gender diversity.'

2.4 Kathoeay and gay men in contemporary Thai context

Kathoeay and gay men are ubiquitous in Thai society. This section discusses their status in the Thai context - how they are perceived, to what extent they are tolerated, and what social attitudes towards them are. The discussion includes both popular understanding of *kathoeay* and gay men among the Thai public, and academic research on *kathoeay* and gay men in Thai society and their linguistic practices.

2.4.1 Popular understanding of *kathoeay* and gay men

The term *kathoeay* is commonly referred to as *tut* and *phuying praphet song* 'the second type of woman,' and usually translated into English as *ladyboy*. Other terms which can be used to refer to *kathoeay* are, for example, *satri kham phet* or *phuying kham phet* 'transfemale,' and *chai thi mee chitchai pen ying* 'man with woman's mind.' *Kathoeay* occupy "a marginal but recognised position in Thai society" (Jackson 1995: 189). Although there is no legal sanction

against *kathoey* and homosexuality in general, there is no legal recognition for *kathoey* who have undergone sex reassignment surgery. As discussed earlier, *kathoey* in Thailand are very diverse. Some *kathoey* only cross-dress occasionally. To people who they do not know personally or are not close to, they might look like a man. The way they talk in formal situations might be similar to the way “ordinary” men do as well. Only when one spends time with them for a while and knows them better can one perhaps recognise that they are *kathoey*. In these cases, *kathoey* do not perform their non-normative gender in certain contexts. Some *kathoey* cross-dress regularly, take female hormones and undergo breast implant surgery. Some undergo sex reassignment surgery.

Kathoey tend to have limited possibilities for finding a “proper” job. Their jobs are primarily limited to the fields of beauty and entertainment. *Kathoey* from working class or rural background tend to engage in sex work and prostitution (Jackson 1995). Jackson (1997a: 173) claimed that *kathoey* play the role of a “safe” sexual outlet for unmarried young men in Thai society where, as discussed earlier, premarital sex is forbidden. Having a sexual experience with *kathoey* is less risky for young men than having sex with young women whose reputations would be destroyed if their engagement in premarital sex were discovered. However, as discussed earlier, this traditional norm of premarital sex being forbidden is not firmly established in Thai society anymore. As a result, this role of *kathoey* may have become unnecessary. Thai men and women in younger generations tend to view premarital sex as normal and possible. Thai young men, therefore, do not need *kathoey* for premarital sexual experience. *Kathoey* are still involved in prostitution and commercial sex business, which is part of the country’s tourism industry. However, they do not necessarily serve as a “safe” sexual outlet for unmarried young men. Despite certain limitations, more opportunities have started to become available for *kathoey*. For instance, a Thai airline, P.C. Air, has begun accepting *kathoey* for the position of flight attendant (Thai-Eyes 2011).

The term *gay* used in Thai is borrowed from English but is localised as discussed earlier. Gay men can also be referred to with a more general term *chai rak chai* ‘men who have sex with men’ (MSM, literally ‘men love men’) even though the scope of the term includes *kathoey*. Stereotypically, Thai gay men distance themselves from *kathoey* by identifying with masculinity. They are generally less visible than *kathoey*. However, gay men who have effeminate characteristics are very common in Thai society. The stereotypical image of Thai gay men involves certain characteristics or activities which are considered unusual for “normal” men. Generally, gay men are perceived as those who take very good care of their

body and appearance. They are expected to dress smartly and look spotless. Gay men's lifestyle, especially of those in urban areas, is associated with gyms and exercises. Gyms can be another place for gay men to meet. A highly masculine appearance, especially a muscular body is also associated with the image of gay men. Similar to *kathoey*, gay men are associated with prostitution, the sex industry and nightlife. In urban areas, especially Bangkok, there are plenty of nightclubs and bars particularly for gay men. Silom Soi 2 and Silom Soi 4 are popular areas in Bangkok for nightlife particularly for gay men. They are popular not only among local people but also among foreigners and tourists.

In spite of all the difficulties and negative stereotypical traits associated with *kathoey* and gay men, they are relatively tolerated and prevalent compared to their non-normative gender counterparts in other societies. Two *kathoey* cabaret theatres are very popular as tourist attractions - *Tiffany Show* and *Alcazar Cabaret*. These two cabaret theatres also hold annual *kathoey* beauty contests, which receive attention nationwide. Separate toilets for *kathoey* are provided in some schools and universities (Beech 2008). Moreover, organisations have been established to support *kathoey*. The *Thai Transgender Alliance* aims to improve *kathoey's* quality of life in all aspects, to provide useful information about *kathoey* and to promote society's understanding of *kathoey* and their rights. The *TransFemale Association of Thailand* views *kathoey* from a different perspective. While Thai society in general views *kathoey* as different, not disordered (Winter 2003), the association views them as victims of Gender Identity Disorder (GID). According to this view, *kathoey* are women in the wrong body and they need to be "cured" by means of sex reassignment surgery. *Kathoey* are called *transsexual females* by the association, which has goals similar to the *Thai Transgender Alliance* of improving transsexual females' quality of life. There are also organisations which work to support gay men. *Bangkok Rainbow* has the goal of decreasing and preventing HIV/AIDS among gay men. *Rainbow Sky Association of Thailand* promotes equality, unity, understanding, and legal rights for gay men.

Many *kathoey* are well-known throughout the country such as Parinya Charoenphol (boxer), Ornnapa Kritsadee (model, make-up artist), Treechada Petcharat (model, actress), Yollada Suanyot (model, activist, politician), Nanthita Kampiranon (singer, actress), Ekkachai Euasangkhomset (DJ, television show host), Niti Chaichitathorn (television show host, actor), and Madame Mod (television show host, actor). Similarly, several public figures have come out as gay men. Seri Wongmontha (scholar, political activist, radio and television show host) was among the first ones to come out as a gay man during the 1980s when gay men were not accepted in Thai society. Other gay public figures are Natee Teerarojjanapongs (activist),

Winai Suksawaeng (DJ), Wutthithorn Milinthachinda (television show host), Pongsak Rattanaphong (singer) and Anuchyd Sapanphong (actor). Moreover, a number of mainstream films have been created with *kathoey* and gay men as main characters such as *Satri Lek* "The Iron Ladies," *Beautiful Boxer*, *Phrang Chomphu: Kathoey Prachanban* "Saving Private Tootsie," *Wai Buem Cheer Krahuem Lok* "Cheerleader Queens," *Phleng Sutthai* "The Last Song," *Ho Tao Taek* "Haunting Me," *Tat Su Fut* "Kung Fu Tootsie," *Plon Na Ya* "Spicy Beauty Queen in Bangkok," *Kaeng Chani Kap I-Aep* "Metrosexual," *Rak Haeng Siam* "The Love of Siam," *Phuean ... Ku Rak Mueng Wa* "Bangkok Love Story," *Koi Thoe Gay* "Ghost Station" and *Home: Khwamrak Khwamsuk Khwamsongcham* "Home: Love, Happiness, Memories." Most of the roles of *kathoey* and gay men in Thai films portray the stereotypical perception people in the society have of *kathoey* and gay men.

Kathoey and gay men in Thai society are popularly associated with being overly confident, overly expressive and overly feminine. They are perceived as having strong emotions and expressing their emotions explicitly, straightforwardly and affectedly, especially sexual attraction and desire. *Kathoey* are usually stereotyped in media as being involving in sexual liberty and prostitution (Jackson 1997a, 1998). They are also seen as "loud-mouthed, aggressive or lewd" (Jackson 1999: 230) but performances of this overly expressive and affected personality is also seen as being humorous. *Kathoey* and gay men are stereotypically portrayed and perceived as having fun, humorous and entertaining personalities. Hence, they are expected by the society to be so. Such an expectation is prevalent in the society and is shown especially clearly in Thai films and other types of media where *kathoey* or gay characters conform to the stereotypes. For example, in 2011, a Thai travelling television show called *Thoey Thiao Thai*, literally translated as 'kathoey travel Thailand,' started broadcasting. The show is hosted by three *kathoey*, and hence the title of the show. One of the outstanding characteristics of the show is the sense of humour and the fun personality of the hosts which make the show very entertaining. It thus receives a huge amount of popularity since the beginning.

Research in Thai media has confirmed the prevalence of such stereotypes of *kathoey* and gay men (e.g. Kotcharat 1999, Saetia 2007, Mongkolwatee 2009, Boonyakulsrirung 2010, Pongpanit 2011, Singhakowinta 2011). In Thai television dramas, Kotcharat (1999) finds that most characters who are *kathoey* and gay men are presented as feminine. However, the feminine characteristics selected to be presented, including being loud and aggressive, are the negative ones based on the norms of society. Even though the characters of *kathoey* and gay men are not important in a television drama in terms of story line, meaning they do

not affect a story, they add colour to a story and without them a story is not as entertaining and is more likely to be unsuccessful (Saetia 2007). *Kathoey* and gay men are also perceived by the audience of television dramas as having problems in dealing with their emotions (Samrong 2009). In addition, a lot of Thai comedy films have *kathoey* and gay men as main characters, and portray them as jokey characters amusing the audience. They are a source of humour in films. Characters of *kathoey* and gay men create humour through their “abnormalities” which include their explicit expression of sexual feelings and craving for sex, and their overly feminine behaviours such as affected gestures and colourful feminine clothes (Mongkolwatee 2009, Boonyakulsrirung 2010, Pongpanit 2011, Singhakowinta 2011). Their gender transgression and poor social manners are employed for humorous purposes and as a selling point in Thai films leading to the success of the films (Saetia 2007, Singhakowinta 2010, 2011).

The public’s perception of *kathoey* and gay men is highly influenced by the media, which tends to portray Thai non-normative men as a homogeneous group with certain stereotypical traits. Such stereotypical portrayal of *kathoey* and gay men in the media is so prominent that all *kathoey* and gay men are usually assumed (or expected) to behave like those characters in the media. Anecdotally, most *kathoey* and gay men I know conform to such stereotypes. In my opinion, it is difficult to say whether they try to behave in a way which conforms to the stereotypes, or whether their personalities in fact match the stereotypes. However, based on my own experience, the stereotypes are generally true but are only part of the story. In reality, there are those who do not have the characteristics typically associated with *kathoey* and gay men. Also, even amongst those who do, their personalities are not homogenous and can be expressed differently depending on the situations they are in and the people they are interacting with.

The discussion above has shown that *kathoey* and gay men are ubiquitous in Thai society, and this indicates the generally tolerant atmosphere in Thailand, which is argued to be due to the influence of Buddhism (Morris 1994, Taywaditep et al. 1997-2001, Jackson 1998, Totman 2003). Being born as a male homosexual is viewed as a result of one’s karmic debts of sexual misconduct in a past life. They are “the products of immorality” (Jackson 1998). It is, therefore, predetermined and inevitable. According to this view, male homosexuals have already faced suffering in hell, the place where people who have done bad deeds are severely punished as a result of their karma (Prasok 1989 cited in Jackson 1998). Therefore, they should be treated with sympathy, compassion and tolerance.

However, Jackson (1995) argues that *kathoey* are actually perceived more negatively in the contemporary Thai context. Similarly, Totman (2003) claims that Thai society's attitude towards *kathoey* is now changing in an opposite direction to Western societies. According to Totman (2003), Thailand is currently trying to Westernise itself towards modernity and cosmopolitanism. The development is highly influenced by international business and tourism. Despite the Westernisation, the country's perception of modernity is different from that of Western countries. While western societies tend to be more tolerant toward transgendered people, *kathoey*, particularly those in the sex industry, seems to be more marginalised in Thai society since they are seen as incompatible with the new image of the country as modern and cosmopolitan, and thus are undesirable. Totman (2003) argues that *kathoey* are actually part of the country's cultural heritage but they are not valued and are even seen as an embarrassment. They are seen as the unclean part of the country which should be suppressed in order to achieve the new image of a modern country.

Additionally, Singhakowinta (2010) argues that Thai society still does not accept homosexuality despite the increasing visibility of *kathoey* and gay men in Thai mainstream media. Singhakowinta (2010) agrees with Van Esterik (1999) and Duangwises (2010), which have been discussed earlier, on the significance of contextual sensitivity, which means that *kathoey* and gay men may present their gender identity differently across different contexts. According to Singhakowinta (2010), non-normative gender and sexual expressions of *kathoey* and gay men do not conform to the norm of appropriateness of time and place, i.e. *kalathaesa*, which determines how one is expected to behave in order to be considered socially appropriate in certain contexts. The media often reproduces the negative image of *kathoey* and gay men such as being overly feminine, which emphasises their inappropriate behaviours. The discursive construction of *kathoey* and gay men's inappropriateness, according to Singhakowinta (2010), shows that they are in fact not accepted in Thai society despite the proliferation of *kathoey* and gay men in the media, and even though Thailand tends to be seen as a tolerant society with no religious or legal sanction against gay men, and has even been described as a "gay paradise" (Jackson 1999: 226). The notion of contextual sensitivity explains why *kathoey* and gay men who are more masculine tend to encounter less difficulty in society. They are generally tolerated if they manage to maintain their masculinity, which is considered appropriate based on *kalathaesa*, although suspected homosexuality can be the topics for gossip and condemnation. In other words, the more conforming *kathoey* and gay men are to *kalathaesa*, the more likely they are tolerated and subsequently accepted (Singhakowinta 2010).

Despite my description of the popular understanding of *kathoey* and gay men as separate groups, I do not intend to argue for a clear-cut boundary between the two. As discussed earlier in this chapter, *kathoey* and gay men are considered non-normative in Thai society. Their gender performance can change over time and depending on contexts. Although stereotypical *kathoey* and stereotypical gay men are perceived as relatively clearly distinct from one another, they are often grouped into the same category of non-normative masculinity. The conflation of *kathoey* and gay men in Thai society exists not only in popular discourse but also in academic research. In the next section, research on *kathoey* and gay men will be discussed. *Kathoey* and gay men are classified as distinct categories in some research, while as the same category in some other research.

2.4.2 Research on *kathoey* and gay men

Kathoey and gay men in Thailand have been studied in various aspects and fields. One of the main themes in Thai research on male homosexuality and transgenderism is the definition of *kathoey* from medical, psychological and Buddhist perspectives (Jackson 1997b). Studies focusing on *kathoey* include those providing general information on the current situations of *kathoey*, those reporting *kathoey*'s self-perception and those discussing their gender identity from different perspectives.

The current situation of *kathoey* in Thai society is discussed, for example, in Winter's studies (2002, 2003). He discusses the influence of Buddhism on the society's perception of *kathoey* and *kathoey*'s self-perception, an issue also discussed elsewhere (Morris 1994, Taywaditep et al. 1997-2001, Jackson 1998, Totman 2003). Winter (2002) also discusses the difficulties in *kathoey*'s lives, pointing out, for example, that although they may be able to express themselves in public, they are usually required to perform masculinity in formal situations, i.e. to be "gender-appropriate" (Cameron & Kulick 2003: 50). Also, *kathoey*, even those who have undergone the sex reassignment surgery, are still legally recognised as male (Winter 2002). In terms of Thai people's perceptions of *kathoey*, Winter (2003) claims that Thai people are more inclined to hold a radical psychological view rather than a physical view, the dominant view towards transgenders in the West. The radical psychological view gives priority to gender and an individual's mental state while the physical view focuses on body one was born with. In line with the radical psychological view, *kathoey* are taken as female or a third sex by non-transgendered Thai people, and being *kathoey* is seen as a difference, not a psychological disorder in need of therapy (Winter 2003). In addition, *kathoey* are also argued to be sexually harassed. Sankatiprapa (2007) argues that *kathoey* are sexually used

in Thai society and still remain quiet about the harassment as a way of gaining a position in the society. Thai society is a hetero-patriarchal society and *kathoey* do not fit into it because of their gender identity. Agreeing to sexual harassment allows them to fit into the society as female.

Studies based on *kathoey*'s reports of their own self-perceptions provide insights into various aspects of their *kathoey* lives and experiences. Winter & Udomsak (2002) investigated *kathoey*'s self-perception in relation to gender stereotypical traits. In the study, *kathoey* participants were given a range of adjectives associated with either maleness or femaleness. They were asked to choose the adjectives which best described them, both in terms of their ideal self and their actual self. The study found that *kathoey*, perhaps unsurprisingly, chose the stereotypically feminine traits. However, interestingly, their ideal selves were reported to be less linked to stereotypical femaleness than their actual selves were. The traits *kathoey* participants claimed they wanted to acquire included stereotypically female, stereotypically male and non-stereotypical traits. At the same time, the results also indicate the aspiration of the *kathoey* participants to lose stereotypically female traits. Winter & Udomsak (2002) claim that this illustrates *kathoey*'s resistance to the ideal image of gender stereotypes. Instead, the authors claim that *kathoey* want to create their own ideal self that does not conform to stereotypes.

Winter (2006a, 2006b) also carried out research in which five aspects of *kathoey* were explored through questionnaire responses: demographics, transition histories, identities, perceived attitudes of others towards transgenderism and beliefs about the origin of their transgenderism. The *kathoey* participants claimed to have started to develop a transgender identity early in their lives. The transition methods involved the use of feminine linguistic forms, adopting feminine appearance and undergoing surgery. Most of the participants reported that they had a woman's mind and that they wish they could be women. Nearly all of the participants reported that they are exclusively attracted to men. In terms of the social attitudes towards transgenders, the participants reported the existence of tolerant or even accepting attitudes in society, including a generally positive attitude from their parents. Most of the *kathoey* participants believed that innate biology, friends, parents, siblings, relatives and the karmic consequence from a previous life were responsible for their being transgender.

From the viewpoint of the social sciences, Pramote Na Ayutthaya (2003) investigates the lives of *kathoey* in a cabaret theatre focusing on their identities and considering *kathoey* as

a subculture with their own value system. The researcher was a cabaret performer there while conducting the research using the methods of participant observation and interviews. The cabaret theatre was described as a family-like community. Sexual teasing was very common in the cabaret theatre. Telling sexual stories was also a common activity among the performers, contrasting with the general view in Thai society which considers sex to be an inappropriate conversational topic. Different types of *kathoey* performers were chosen for different roles in the performance. Performers who were more skilful, beautiful or senior than others were given the more important and outstanding roles. Several case studies of *kathoey* performers were included in the study in order to illustrate *kathoey*'s lives outside the context of the cabaret theatre. The researcher claims that feminine appearance is an important tool for *kathoey* cabaret performers. The cabaret theatre is a place which gives *kathoey* an opportunity to earn their livings and to support their families and be accepted by them. The researcher also argues that *kathoey* perform different identities depending on the context. In the context of the cabaret theatre, they are not only cabaret performers, but also make-up artists, hair dressers and models. Outside the cabaret context, they are portrayed in the media in an exaggerated and unrealistic way. In reality, they are like other good sons or daughters who support their family financially.

The *kathoey* identity in the cabaret context is explored from the perspective of communication theory in Burakhon (2007). The cabaret show in this study was taken as a two-way communication in the ritualistic model. Burakhon (2007) sees the *kathoey* identity construction in the show as a process of communication between the *kathoey* cabaret performers and the audience in that cabaret context. The audience, who are categorised into male, female and male homosexual, are considered to be the decoders of the *kathoey* identities constructed by the performers. The audience, Burakhon (2007) argues, decodes *kathoey* identities under four themes: the definition of "*kathoey*" and "cabaret show," physical appearance, action and emotion. The analyses reveal different directions of decoding in three groups of audience. Male audiences decode the *kathoey* identity in a discriminative way against *kathoey*. *Kathoey* are seen by them as "others" and as inferior to men. Female audiences see *kathoey* more in terms of an alliance, although the discriminative attitude can still be seen. The way male homosexual audiences decode the *kathoey* identity shows an inclusive "us" tendency, indicating a shared experience of identity between *kathoey* performers and male homosexual audiences.

The *kathoey*'s identity in the context of a cabaret theatre is also examined by Wuen (2007) who conducted an ethnographic study of two transsexual beauty contests in Thailand. The

contests started out for as commercial ventures but have now become important opportunities for the ritualised performance of femininity for *kathoey*. It is through the contests that *kathoey* can gain acceptance and social mobility in Thai society (cf. Besnier 2002, 2003). To be successful in the contests, the *kathoey* contestants have to subvert masculinity and perform femininity, which includes feminine physical appearance, linguistic forms, names and, preferably, voice. In other words, they are expected to perform the appropriate image of ideal Thai femininity. Therefore, a contradiction arises. On one hand, the contests give *kathoey* agency, an opportunity to express and empower themselves in public. On the other hand, the acceptance or the power gained depends on how much they can conform to an idealised version of femininity. The results revealed that behaviours such as overtly sexualised behaviours and attention-seeking gestures are accepted only as part of *kathoey's* everyday life, but, since these are not felt to be ideal feminine traits, they are not acceptable as part of *kathoey's* on-stage behaviour. Wuen (2007) also argues that *kathoey* do not occupy the third gender space but they extend the boundaries of the male/female binary, which they are part of.

Thungsiri (2008) investigated *kathoey* identity in an educational context. The study discusses four main issues: the self-definition of the *kathoey* students and the attitudes towards *kathoey* from their parents, teachers and friends, the cause and motivation of being *kathoey*, the ways the *kathoey* students deal with the surrounding interaction at the school, and gender inequality. The results reveal that *kathoey* students define themselves as a third sex/gender, not either male or female. The attitudes of parents, teachers and friends towards *kathoey* are essentially divided into positive and negative attitudes. The sexual feeling towards boys is reported to be indicative of the students' *kathoey* identity. Their *kathoey* identity is also motivated by their parents and school's encouragement of female performance. Yet, the family at the same time pressure the students into quitting being *kathoey* as *kathoey* kids are seen as the family's failure. The school tends to be a more comfortable place for the *kathoey* students, even though gender inequality exists in schools. In order to deal with the surrounding reaction to them, the *kathoey* students think positively of themselves, accept their inferiority and try to be nice to others to compensate for their perceived abnormality.

Like *kathoey*, there is a lot of research investigating Thai gay men from different perspectives. Research has been done on the position and image of Thai gay men as presented, perceived or constructed by gay men themselves, and as presented in the media. Gay men and gayness have also been studied as factors influencing some behaviours and

activities both among gay men themselves and among other people who are not gay men. Duangwises (2010) argues that gay movement in Thailand, unlike in Western countries, does not aim for legal changes to help reduce discrimination. Analysing two types of gay movement - safe sex and HIV/AIDS prevention campaigns and pride parades in Thailand - Duangwises (2010) finds that Thai gay men call for their position in the public sphere to be accepted as “good gays” and “normal” people. That is, in safe sex and HIV/AIDS prevention campaigns, gay men construct themselves as a group of people who do good things and are responsible for society, and who negotiate their position as “good gays.” In pride parades, Thai gay men present their normalised gay identity as part of Thai culture. They can preserve Thai culture and tradition, like “normal” Thai people can, and show their Thai identity in the pride parade. Joining pride parades, gay men also identify with an international gay identity which involves gay rights and social equality. Similar to Duangwises (2010), Singhakowinta (2010) claims that male homosexuals in Thailand do not call for legal actions in their social movement. In his study, Singhakowinta (2010) investigated male homosexuals in Thai public discourses including academic literature, popular resources, and ethnographic interviews. He found that, unlike those LGBT movements in the West, Thai male homosexuals do not challenge the heteronormativity in Thailand. Rather, they call for the society’s acceptance and try to integrate themselves into the heteronormative sphere.

Gay identity in Thailand has also been studied in relation to a number of behaviours and activities investigated in different fields. For example, Teerarojjanapongs (2008) examined political interests among Thai gay men in Chiang Mai, a city in the northern part of Thailand which has a large number of gay men and gay businesses. He found that Thai gay men in Chiang Mai have a moderate level of interest in Thai politics and mostly receive information about Thai politics from television. They participated in political activities mostly through voting and through the gay movement. Putta-As (2008) examined the selection of clothes and clothing designs of Thai gay men in night clubs in Chiang Mai and analysed how this group of Thai gay men presented their gay identity through clothes. The analyses revealed that clothes worn by this particular group of Thai gay men were decorated with sparkling items and included graphic styles showing curves, movements, and flowers. Thai gay men have also been seen as a distinct group of consumers in several studies. For instance, Siangsuebchat (2009) focused on the lifestyle of Thai gay men for the purpose of developing a web portal suitable for usage among gay men, and found that gay men use internet websites mainly to find information about health, and to communicate with friends. Inna

(2011) studied the relationship between the consumption of media and attitudes to homosexuality among Thai gay men. The findings revealed that gay magazines influence the attitude of gay readers in terms of their decision to come out in society, and their activities as a group. Techaprasert (2013) investigated tourist behaviours of gay men in Khon Kaen, one of the major provinces in north-eastern Thailand. He found that the group of gay men he studied travel for both leisure and business. They tend to plan their trips in advance by themselves and mostly travel on their own.

In addition, there are a number of studies which include both *kathoey* and gay men, take *kathoey* and Thai gay men as the same category, or focus on *chai rak chai* 'men who have sex with men (MSM)' or male homosexuals without specifying whether only *kathoey*, only gay men or both are included in a particular study. For example, studies from the medical perspective mainly focus on the factors causing HIV/AIDS, the prevention of the disease, safe sex and the use of condom. These include studies by Beyrer, Eiumtrakul, Celentano, Nelson, Ruckphaopunt & Khamboonruang (1995) and Chariyalertsak, Kosachunhanan, Saokhieo, Songsupa, Wongthanee, Chariyalertsak et al. (2011). *Chai rak chai* and male homosexuals in Thailand are also a topic of interest in criminology. Studies in this field, such as Bunkunern (2005), Chaumchaay (2005), Pintobtang (2011) and Wattanakul (2011), examine the life and behaviours of male homosexual prisoners, including their adaptation to life in prison, their sexual behaviours and the problem faced in custody by male homosexuals.

There is also plenty of research on the presentation of *kathoey* and gay men in Thai films. Mongkolwatee (2009), for example, studied the presentation of male homosexuals in Thai films in 2007. The analyses revealed that male homosexual characters in the films are from various occupations, reflecting the diversity among Thai male homosexuals in reality. Male homosexual characters tend to have affected and aggressive behaviours. They serve to add more humour and fun to films through their non-normative behaviours such as affected gestures, colourful clothes, and sexual harassment. Singhakowinta (2011) looked at the use of non-normative behaviours among male homosexuals as a tool for creating humour, and found that it was claimed to be a selling point for the films. Mongkolwatee (2009) argues that there are three ways of including male homosexuals in films. The first one is to have male homosexuals as main characters and aiming to tell a story of male homosexuals in Thai society. The second way is to have male homosexual characters as a means of attracting people's attention without aiming to convey any message about male homosexuals in Thailand. The other way is to have male homosexuals as supporting characters or extras

only to create humour and fun in the films without aiming to convey any messages about male homosexuals.

Similarly to Singhakowinta (2010), Pongpanit (2011) found that in Thai comedy films, *kathoeys* were presented as conventionally perceived by Thai society. That is, *kathoeys* characters in the films were overly feminine, loud and sexually obsessive. The comedy films also presented a contrast between masculinity and effeminacy. Such presentation made *kathoeys* characters appear ridiculous, which led to humour based on the stereotypes and stigmas the society put on *kathoeys*. Heteronormativity was prioritised while *kathoeys* and gay men, who did not follow the norm, were presented as abnormal and marginalised. Their abnormality was the source of humour. The dominance of heteronormativity in Thai society did not only appear in Thai comedy films, but also in the other two genres Pongpanit (2011) examined. According to Pongpanit (2011), despite differences in the plot and the ending, Thai films of tragedy, drama and comedy portrayed *kathoeys* and gay men as a group of people who were marginalised by the heteronormativity held by the majority of people in Thai society. In the tragedy films, difficulties in expressing non-normative genders and maintaining same-sex relationships were the cause of the tragedy. The films in the drama genre similarly showed *kathoeys* and gay men involved in unsuccessful love and relationships, but these had less tragic endings than the tragedy films. In the tragedy films and the drama films, the expression of non-normative genders and sexualities were only allowable in certain contexts. The films cast *kathoeys* and gay men as sexually “other.” The focus of the tragedy films and the drama films was on difficulties in life as *kathoeys* or gay men and the impossibility for them to find true love or have a successful relationship. In short, the message which was sent out from Thai films of the tragedy, drama and comedy genres was that *kathoeys* and gay men were abnormal, inferior and hence unaccepted by Thai society.

2.4.3 Research on *kathoeys* and gay men’s linguistic practices

None of the studies mentioned above discusses the issue of language use among *kathoeys* and gay men, and there are, in fact, only a few studies focusing on this issue in Thai. Winter (2003) argues that language is not a good indicator of *kathoeys* identity as *kathoeys* always use feminine pronouns and particles and they adopt feminine linguistic patterns at an early age. However, this is not what is found in Kongtrakool (1996), a comparative study of first-person pronouns and polite final particles used by male, female and effeminate male speakers. Speakers’ use of first-person pronouns and polite final particles was analysed

quantitatively based on questionnaire responses, and the study revealed that, regarding pronouns, effeminate male speakers used masculine pronouns more than feminine and gender-neutral ones. This is interpreted as being a result of the disapproving attitude of Thai society towards effeminate male speakers which forces them into using masculine pronouns because they are biologically male. The educational context was also taken into account as the speakers were all university students. They were framed in a context where it is more appropriate to present themselves as corresponding to their biological sex. Percentage of the use of gender-neutral pronouns was found to be higher among effeminate male speakers than male and female speakers. Using gender-neutral pronouns is interpreted as a solution to the problem of choosing either masculine or feminine pronouns. It allows effeminate male speakers to conceal their “sexual deviance.” In addition, the choice of first-person pronouns made by male, female and effeminate male speakers also depends on the relationship between a speaker and a listener and their degree of intimacy. The effeminate male speakers will use more feminine and gender-neutral pronouns when speaking to parents or intimates than when speaking to teachers or non-intimates.

Even in the case where *kathoey* use feminine linguistic forms, it is not necessary that they use it in the same way or for the same purpose as women do. That is, *kathoey* do not simply imitate women in speech as is anecdotally believed to be the case. In my study (Saisuwan 2016), a feminine pronoun was found to be used differently by *kathoey* and women. In the study, I investigated and compared the use of first-person personal reference terms in Thai in online webboards for *kathoey* and women. The results revealed that *kathoey* and women both use feminine pronouns but not always in the same extent or for the same purpose. The first-person pronoun *dichan* in Thai is typically categorised as a feminine pronoun. The pronoun indexes formality and is used restrictively in formal situations such as job interviews or news reports. While the pronoun is typically associated with femininity and women, it is used infrequently in webboards for women but highly frequently in webboards for *kathoey*. The analyses indicated that women use *dichan* for the interactional purpose of taking an emphatic stance. They made use of the pronoun’s association with formality and showed their seriousness or assertiveness through the use of the pronoun, especially in contrast to their more frequent use of other self-reference terms. In contrast, *kathoey* used the pronoun *dichan* highly frequently without any particular interactional goal in the way women used the pronoun. I argue in the study that *dichan* is used repetitively by *kathoey* participants in the webboards and becomes their habitual way of referring to themselves. For *kathoey*, the pronoun becomes less associated with formality and is used for the gender

purpose of indexing femininity. That is, through the repeated use, *kathoey* reanalyse the typically formal pronoun *dichan* as their informal feminine pronoun.

Nuntiwatwipa (2004) studied “gay language” in Thai, which is seen as a style of speech exclusive to gay men. The data analysed in the study were interviews and casual conversations collected from groups of three to seven gay men (forty in total). The analyses revealed insights about gay men’s use of language at three levels – sounds, words, and expressions. Gay men alter, eliminate, or insert consonants, vowels and tones. This is partly to avoid impolite words, but also to express or emphasise a particular tone of voice. For the word level, they used slang, foreign words and taboos. At the level of expressions, gay men were found to assign new meanings to existing expressions, create new expressions as a parody of existing ones, and innovate completely new expressions. Nuntiwatwipa (2004) argues that gay men use “gay language” as an in-group device for communicating among themselves, showing group membership and expressing gay identity and power.

Butsabokkaew (2010) examined linguistic devices in online text written by Thai gay men. The analyses revealed eight linguistic strategies including lexical selection, presupposition manipulation, presupposition denial, nominalisation, metaphors, passive construction, claim and rhetorical questions. These linguistic devices show the way gay men presented themselves in the texts, as follows. Gay men presented themselves as “normal” people, not those who suffer from a disease. Most of them were masculine, and were not obsessed with sex. Gay men lived in fear; those who disclosed their gayness were considered brave. They were generous to other and needed love. However, gay men also presented themselves in a completely different ways as being abnormal, sinful, and obsessed with sex.

The research on Thai *kathoey* and gay men reviewed in this section has shown that *kathoey* and gay men are a prominent theme of research among Thai academics across many fields. Despite looking at *kathoey* and gay men from different perspectives, these studies more or less show that *kathoey* and gay men are not yet fully accepted in Thai society as “normal,” and are treated as “other” or a group which has to be treated separately. Such situations of marginalised genders are by no means specific to Thailand, and can be found in other cultures.

2.5 Research on transgenders and homosexuals in other cultures

Apart from *kathoey* and gay men in Thailand, the experiences of transgenders and homosexuals in other cultures have also been studied. Examples of previous studies discussed here are those in *hijras* in India, *travestis* in Brazil, and *leiti* in Tonga.

Lives of *hijras*, male-to-female transgenders in India, are described and discussed insightfully in several studies such as Nanda (1990), Hall (1997, 2005) and Hall & O'Donovan (1996). *Hijras* are described as an alternative gender category in India, a status reflected in the English translation of *hijras* as either "eunuch" or "hermaphrodite" (Nanda 1990). Nanda (1990) argues that *hijras* are the in-between, neither man nor woman. *Hijra* is one of the primary sexual identities in India along with "man" and "woman" (Hall 2005). The system of sex in India is similar to the tripartite system of man, woman and *kathoey* in Thailand, and both *hijras* and *kathoey* seem to occupy a similar position of third sex in the systems. The difference arises in the emphasis on the anatomical characteristics of *hijras*. While the focus of *kathoey* identity in the contemporary Thai context is on outward feminine gender performance, the central criteria for being *hijra* seem to lie in physical characteristics. According to Nanda (1990), the key ones are castration and the absence of menstruation, and only those who have been castrated are considered "real" *hijras* and are qualified to perform the ritual roles traditionally associated with *hijras*. When boys recognise themselves as *hijras*, they move out of their homes and live instead with a *hijra* community. They then have to learn how to live a life fully as *hijras*. Most of them live their lives by performing for marriages and at the birth of children. This ritual performance is the traditional role of *hijras* as they are believed, according to Hinduism, to be linked to divine power. They have the power both to bless and curse families. Cursing with sexual insults is directed to the audience who are non-*hijras* as a tool for *hijras* to gain respect and money for their ritual performance. But it is also used by a *hijra* to a *hijra* as an expression of solidarity (Hall 1997). *Hijras* have husbands as a source of psychological well-being. Like *kathoey*'s partners, *hijras*' partners are "heterosexual" male-bodied individuals who play an active sexual role (Hall 2005).

As a result of globalisation, Hindi, the language *hijras* use, is associated with "traditional transgender sexuality" while English is associated with "a cosmopolitan gay sexuality" (Hall 2005: 127). Learning to live a *hijra* life includes, among other things, mastering their distinctive linguistic performance and acquiring some aspects of a feminine style of language. Hall & O'Donovan (1996) found that *hijras* use both masculine and feminine

markings in Hindi but with different social meanings. Masculine marking is likely to be used to show distance with superior or subordinate referents while feminine marking is likely to be used to show solidarity or familiarity with a referent with equal status. *Hijras* also have to change their name from a masculine name to a feminine one. They only use their masculine names to show anger.

While *kathoeys* and *hijras* are part of a tripartite system, the identity of *travestis*, male-to-female transgenders in Brazil, is based on a binary of sexual roles. Kulick (1998) conducted an ethnographic study of *travestis* in Salvador, Brazil, and his work provides an insightful description of their lives. *Travestis* are usually from poor backgrounds. Similar to *hijras*, when boys realise that they are different from other boys and that they are attracted to men, they leave home and begin to live their lives as *travestis*. *Travestis* typically work as professional prostitutes. Living as *travestis*, similar to *kathoeys* and *hijras*, they feminise themselves in various ways – adopting feminine names, feminine appearance and adopting feminine linguistic forms. They employ female hormones and industrial silicone in order to look more feminine. The feminine appearance plays an important role in their job as prostitutes as a feminine body is desirable in the business. The feminine appearance also satisfies *travestis* in terms of their own desire to be feminine. However, *travestis* do not view themselves as women. Unlike *hijras*, *travestis* do not undergo any anatomical process in order to change their sex and be considered *travestis*. Due to Christian beliefs, *travestis* believe one's sex cannot be changed. Their view on gendered subjectivity can be classed as constructive essentialism. They believe that one's sex depends on the genitals one was born with, which cannot be changed. Although one's sex cannot be changed, one's gender can be changed to the extent that is allowed by different activities performed by one's given genitals. While female genitals only allow for passive sexual activity, male genitals can play both active and passive roles, which makes different genders possible for males. Playing both active and passive sexual roles, *travestis* see themselves as homosexuals. Kulick (1998) argues that the gender of *travestis* relies on a binary system based on sexuality. Same-sex preference means same gender. Based on this sexuality binary, women and *travestis* share the same sexual preference – a passive sexual role – which puts them in the same gender category. This explains why *travestis* do not identify themselves as women or want to be women. As with other male-to-female transgenders, *travestis* have boyfriends who play a role in making them “feel like a woman.” In order to achieve that feeling, *travestis'* boyfriends have to look very masculine and play a penetrative sexual role. *Travestis* provide economic support to their boyfriends. In addition to the above, the discrimination against

travestis is quite aggressive. Violence by the police against *travestis* on the street is very common.

Transgendered Tongan men, *fakaleiti* or *leiti*, strive to achieve acceptance by aligning with the prestige of the English language in Tongan society. *Leiti*'s lives are examined in a series of ethnographic studies done by Besnier (2002, 2003, 2004). *Leiti* are male-to-female Tongan transgenders. They are stereotypically linked to feminine appearance, behaviours, occupations and activities. *Leiti* do not fit easily in Tongan society where gender is realised in the form of a dyad. The three oppositions of gender relationship described in Philips (2003 cited in Besnier 2004) are the sister-brother relationship, the husband-wife relationship and the sweetheart-sweetheart relationship. *Leiti* do not conform to the sweetheart-sweetheart relationship as it is described as a relationship between members of the opposite sex. The sexual relationships *leiti* have are with "straight" men, those who do not identify themselves as *leiti*. Revealing their relationship with "straight" men would cause a bad reputation for their partners and also for their sisters. Letting the public know about their romantic relationship violates the sister-brother relationship as the brother is expected to guard the sister (Besnier 2004). Also, *leiti* cannot achieve a husband-wife relationship. Therefore, *leiti* are marginalised by the dyadic organisation of Tongan society.

The influence of globalisation can be seen in the public construction of *leiti* identity, i.e. a beauty pageant, as discussed by Besnier (2002, 2003). Although the pageant is a local event, the atmosphere is full of "extra-locality." The name of the pageant itself, "Miss Galaxy," suggests cosmopolitanism. The contestants are required to appear on stage wearing the national costumes of other foreign countries to which the contestants have no connection. Importantly, the dominant language of the pageant is English, not Tongan, the local language. *Leiti* employ English as part of their gender identity. English is "a symbolic escape hatch out of social marginality" for them (Besnier 2003: 296), and this is possible because English is a high prestige language in Tonga. Similar to the role of English in India (Hall 2005), English in Tonga is associated with modernity and cosmopolitanism, in opposition to the local language, Tongan. Speaking English is not only a choice of language but is also a way of identifying oneself with privilege, modernity and cosmopolitanism. *Leiti* use English in order to identify themselves with the valued characteristics associated with the language. English allows them to be perceived as connected to the outside world. The term *leiti* itself is an English borrowing derived from *lady*. *Leiti* try their best to speak English no matter how fluent they are. They are expected to be more fluent in English than non-transgendered Tongan men. *Leiti*'s orientation to the English language can clearly be seen in the annual *leiti*

beauty pageant. This event allows *leiti* to construct and perform their feminine identities to the public. English is the dominant language of the pageant and is used throughout the event. The *leiti* contestants are expected to speak English fluently and people make fun of their mistakes when speaking English, as well as making fun of them if they speak Tongan because it shows their inability to speak English. English therefore plays an important role for *leiti* in constructing their gender identity and in escaping social marginality by identifying themselves with the prestigious characteristics of modernity and cosmopolitanism associated with English.

In spite of their different cultural, historical or religious backgrounds, these previous studies agree on some theoretical issues. They seem to agree on the distinction between sex, gender and sexuality. Body, public performance and sexual role are seen as separate but related to each other. And these three aspects are the criteria for categorising transgenders and homosexuals. However, the criteria are different from society to society. These three experiential aspects are distinctive but relate to and influence each other. For example, what one does to one's body is significant for one's gender identity as *hijras*. Emasculation is an essential physical process one has to undergo in order to become a "real" *hijra*. Although *hijras* are described as an alternative gender category, feminine performance alone is not adequate. The body of their partners is also significant in identifying *hijras* since they only take "heterosexual" male-bodied individuals as their partners. Similarly, Tongan *leiti* only have sexual relationships with "straight" men. Furthermore, it is not only the physiological changes that *leiti* make to their bodies, but the kind of activity they do with their bodies that define them with a particular category. *Hijras* play a passive sexual role while their partners play an active one. *Travestis* can play both active and passive roles and it is this ability to play passive sexual roles that differentiates them from non-*travesti* male-bodied heterosexuals who do not play a passive sexual role. And this sexual passivity identifies them as belonging to the same gender as women.

In addition, studies discussed here show the way language participates in the construction of non-normative gender categories in other cultures. Gender marking in Hindi is an important linguistic tool for *hijras* in signifying a close or distant relation between the speaker and the audience. *Leiti* use English in order to raise the levels of acceptance of Tongan society towards them by aligning with the prestigious features associated with the language. These examples illustrate how different linguistic tools available in different languages can be used by speakers as a means of performing their gender identity.

This chapter has discussed the position of Thai men who identify with non-normative male roles including both *kathoey* and gay men. The discussion includes normative genders in Thai society, the Buddhist influence on the system of three sexes/genders, the emergence of *kathoey* and gay men, and their position in contemporary Thai context as a non-normative category. With this background information, this study aims to examine Thai non-normative men in terms of their language use, and its relation to their gender identity. *Kathoey* and gay men in Thailand occupy the position of non-normative gender category similar to *hijras* in India, *travestis* in Brazil, and *leiti* in Tonga. As previously discussed, *kathoey* and gay men have been the research interests in various fields including those focusing on the position or role of *kathoey* and gay men in Thai society. However, only a few studies focus on their linguistic practices. Similar to research on *hijras* and their use of language (Hall & O'Donovan 1996), in this thesis I explore the linguistic strategies that Thai *kathoey* and gay men use in constructing and presenting their gendered self. The thesis aims to find out how this group of non-normative men positions itself in the realm of sex, gender and sexuality in Thai society, and how linguistic tools available in Thai help facilitate gender indexation.

Chapter 3

Methodology

This study investigates the linguistics practices of *kathoey* and gay men in Thailand. I focus on the linguistic aspect of *kathoey* and gay men's identities while also taking the situational and social contexts into consideration. I concentrate specifically on the role of language in *kathoey* and gay men's presentations of self by seeking to resolve the questions of how *kathoey* and gay men identify or categorize themselves using linguistic tools, how their linguistic performance of gender identities varies according to different situations, and what social factors influence *kathoey* and gay men's performance of identities, as evidenced through their linguistic practice.

Research on *kathoey* and gay men's linguistic practices is interesting both theoretically and empirically. In terms of theory, it is interesting to explore the ways in which *kathoey* and gay men use gendered linguistic resources to position themselves as people who do not fit into the category of normative genders in Thai society. Traditionally in sociolinguistics, gender was studied as a social factor which correlated with linguistic variables (e.g. Wolfram 1969, Trudgill 1972, Eckert 1989) alongside other social factors such as social class and age. The goal of these studies was to find a systematic pattern of correlation between social factors and linguistic variation. They focused on macro-level demographic social categories and typically viewed gender as a fixed social category which resulted in certain linguistic variants or ways of speaking. Thai sociolinguistic research focusing on the correlation between language and gender of speaker has been following this direction of research. However, more contemporary 'third wave' sociolinguistic studies focus on the role of language as stylistic practice (Eckert 2012). Sociolinguistic research which approaches variation from this perspective does not limit the scope of variation only in terms of vernacular or standard forms, but rather views linguistic variation as a means of achieving distinctiveness (Eckert 2012). That is, language is used as a tool or resource for creating social differentiation, i.e. linguistic differentiation (Irvine & Gal 2000). Unlike the more traditional sociolinguistics studies, this third wave approach sees social identities and categories as flexible, operating more on local and individual levels. From this perspective, linguistic variation is a resource from which speakers can select and make use of certain linguistic features or variants in their own ways. That is, linguistic variants can be reinterpreted by different groups of speakers as constituting to different personas or "ideologically related meanings" in an

indexical field of a linguistic variant (Eckert 2008: 454). This direction of studying variation examines gender in a bottom-up fashion. That is, gender is not viewed as a demographic factor which influences or even generates particular ways of speaking or use of certain variants, but rather speakers are able to employ linguistic variation to constitute certain social meanings associated with gender. In this view of gender, the linguistic features used by a particular gender category are not seen as belonging to or exclusively used by that particular gender (e.g. Lakoff's (1973) notion of "woman's language"), but are seen as resources which can be used in a particular way to index gender. Sociolinguistic studies investigating gender in this trajectory include those conducted by Barrett (1995, 1997) on African American drag queens, Hall & O'Donovan (1996) and Hall (1997, 2002) on *hijras* in India, Wong (2005) on the semantic change of a lexical item related to gay men in China, and Podesva et al. (2001) and Podesva (2007, 2011) on phonetic variation among American gay men. Focusing on the relationship between language and gender among Thai men who identify with non-normative male roles, this present thesis aligns with studies in this trajectory and sees gender as a social construction, i.e. as something people "do" or "perform" (Butler 1990, Livia & Hall 1997), and sees language as a tool which is used in this construction.

Using naturally occurring data also helps fill an empirical gap in Thai research on *kathoey* and gay men. To date there is only one linguistic study in Thai which focuses on natural interactional data produced by *kathoey* and gay men. Examining natural data makes it possible to see how *kathoey* and gay men behave linguistically in interaction and how their linguistic performance serves to constitute their self-identification. In order to obtain naturally occurring data and analyse the data in light of the interactional, social and cultural contexts, I chose ethnographic methods which allow me to gain insights into the target groups of people. This method led me not only to the interactional data, but also into the participants' world. The analyses and interpretation of the data, therefore, are based on the contexts of the data and the participants' perspective.

In the first section of the chapter, I provide an overview of ethnography and review its use in linguistics. Then I explain the use of ethnography in this study and provide details of the participants, how I approached and gained access to them, how I presented myself to them, and the data collection techniques used in this study.

3.1 Ethnography

Ethnography is a field method whereby a researcher embeds himself/herself inside the community he/she is seeking access to, in order to absorb and fully understand the community's culture. It involves the ethnographer's profound engagement in a community's way of life. The role of the ethnographer is not simply to provide descriptions of a community and its culture. Such a description, given from an outsider perspective, is inadequate. That is, the description of the community and its culture cannot adequately be provided by those who are not members of the community or have not become embedded within it. It is likely that non-members of the community do not fully or correctly understand the community's way of life and they will inevitably describe the community through their own cultural perspective. This is likely to distort the description of the community. Ethnography goes beyond such description. The general aim of ethnography is to investigate "the constitution of society and culture" (Duranti 1997: 90). It sets its goal at reaching, or being as close as possible to, the community's insider perspective, i.e. the "emic" perspective (Pike 1954), in order to describe and explain the community's culture and way of life accurately through the lens of the community itself.

When looking at a particular community, what we see is their practices, events, and everyday activities. But we only see what is expressed at the surface level. Aiming at the insider perspective of members of the community, the ethnographer tries to explain what underlies the surface expression and presentation. Also, in ethnography, all of the observed behaviours and phenomena are illustrated in light of the context of the community. The practices are not seen as independent. Instead, people's behaviours are observed in context and are analysed as relating to all other community practices and the community itself. One aspect of the community is connected to others, i.e. the principle of situatedness (Blommaert & Jie 2010: 8). With such goals, the ethnographer is required to engage in a target community in order to see the internal structure and the culture of the community. The engagement is usually in the form of the observation of, and participation in, a community's events and activities. So as to go as close to the insider position as possible, the ethnographer has to spend a long time in the field with a target community. Through this, the ethnographer is able to identify and explain recurrent patterns of behaviours among members of the community, in the context of the community. These patterns are found through "the repetitiveness of everyday life" (Duranti 1997: 92). Through successful ethnographic methods, the local reasoning of the community can be discovered.

Ethnography explains how a society is constituted and how members of the society make sense of themselves and their cultures.

Ethnography originated in the field of anthropology. One of the seminal ethnographic studies is Malinowski's (1922/1978) study of the inhabitants of the Trobriand islands, located in the east of the present Papua New Guinea. In his book, Malinowski (1922/1978) introduces several important principles for conducting ethnography, summarised below. Before doing ethnography, the ethnographer has to prepare himself or herself with the theoretical foundation and the most updated research results on the target community. The ethnographer should enter the community without any bias or preconception. As the source of information in ethnography lies in the people themselves and "the inponderabilia of actual life" (Malinowski 1922/1978: 14), there is no shortcut to the results even by asking direct questions of the community members. The ethnographer has to observe the practices closely with an analytical mind, which makes the ethnographer different from a general untrained observer. The ethnographer has to make an effort to go deeper into what is beneath the surface presentation, i.e. the "mental attitude" (1922/1978: 14). The ethnographer has to collect the concrete evidence and organise the data systematically. An ethnographic study should pay attention to all aspects of a target community in order to fully understand it. All of the principles lead to the ethnography's ultimate goal, which is "to grasp the native's point of view, his relation to life, to realise *his* vision of *his* world" [sic] (Malinowski 1922/1978: 19, original emphasis). What is emphasised by Malinowski as the key to do successful ethnographic study of a particular community is that all aspects of the community must be studied so as to get the entire picture of the community. Moreover, the investigation has to be done with an analytical mind in order to see the rules which control the outward behaviours, and to understand whatever is observed from the insider perspective of the community members. The issue of the distinction between the insider perspective of community members and the outsider perspective of other non-members are developed and elaborated by Pike (1954) as the concepts of "emic" and "etic."

As emphasised by Malinowski, the "emic" or "native" perspective is the main concern in doing ethnography. The distinction between the "emic" and "etic" aligns with that between "phonemic" and "phonetic," as explained by Pike (1954). He argues that the two concepts are helpful in complementing our understanding of a language or a culture. A phonetic feature is a characteristic of a sound which may be described and categorised from articulatory or acoustic perspectives. All human beings possess the same set of organs which produce the human voice. Therefore, it stands to reason that the range of phonetic features

and linguistic sounds potentially produced in every human language are the same. Phonetic features are then universal. The features can be classified into different groups according to various criteria, and the classification is universal. The universality of phonetic features enables the comparison of linguistic sounds and the sound system in different languages. Although a language's sound system is different from that of another language, linguistic sounds in different languages can be compared in order to see the difference or similarity in each language's phonetic features. Speakers of all human languages are able to produce the same set of sounds, composed of the same set of phonetic features. However, only certain sounds or phonetic features are linguistically significant and this is what creates the difference in meaning in a language. The smallest significant unit of sound in a language is called a phoneme. Certain sounds may be a phoneme in one language, but not in another. Phonemic analysis is, therefore, language-specific.

The concepts of "emic" and "etic" are derived from "phonemic" and "phonetic," respectively. According to Pike (1954), "emic" and "etic" are the two standpoints in approaching and describing human behaviours. The etic approach classifies and organises the data into types and these types are global. They can be applied to every language and culture, making the data from different languages or culture comparable. In other words, the etic standpoint, also called "alien standpoint," brings together all data, whether linguistic data or other human behaviours, and makes the data systematic. Data from a language or culture are analysed from the external perspective along with data from other languages or cultures. Different languages and cultures can be seen through the same universal model which is created before investigating each particular culture. In contrast, the emic approach is only particular to one language or culture. The aim of the emic approach, also called the "internal" or "domestic" standpoint, is to find the internal pattern of a language or culture, and describe an element of that particular language or culture in relation to other elements in the same system. The emic analysis is done from the inside of a particular language or culture. While the etic approach makes the data from one system universal and comparable to others, the emic approach seeks to understand the structure or organisation within one particular system and the importance or value of an element in relation to the entire system.

Discovering the pattern and being able to explain the human behaviours of a culture or community from the insider, or emic, perspective is the ultimate goal of conducting ethnography. Geertz (1983) explains "the native point of view" through the concepts of "experience-near" and "experience-distant," introduced by Heinz Kohut, a psychoanalyst.

The ethnographer has to make an effort to understand the “experience-near” of a community while maintaining his/her own stance of the “experience-distant” (Geertz 1983). According to Geertz (1983), the experience-near is the one referred to by the experiencer. It is how a person who experiences a situation or a feeling describes what he/she is experiencing in his/her own perception. In contrast, the experience-distant is the one employed by analysts or experts to describe a situation or a feeling through the perception of their theoretical standpoint. The experience-distant is, therefore, an effort made by a non-experiencer of a situation or a feeling to be more scientific or objective. What the ethnographer has to do is to catch and explain the experience-near for certain people while relating the experience-near to the experience-distant, making it more understandable in the broader social context.

Ethnography is a field method which arises from the paradigm of naturalism, as opposed to positivism. The discussion of the distinction between positivism and naturalism can be found in Hammersley & Atkinson (1983), as summarised below. The priority of positivism is to make the data analysis falsifiable. Positivism focuses on testing a hypothesis through the use of quantitative and standardised methods such as experiments and surveys. The goal of using such methods is to provide concrete and objective data which is ready to be proved right or wrong. Analyses or conclusions are derived from the data obtained through standardised and neutral methods. While positivism focuses on scientific methods as discussed above, naturalism aims at studying human behaviours in natural settings. Naturalism believes that human behaviours can only be investigated in their natural contexts, not in the experimental ones employed in positivism. Human behaviours are the results of social reasoning in a community. In doing ethnography, the ethnographer’s job is to become a social actor in a particular community in order to investigate human behaviours in the context of the community itself. The ethnographer’s process of learning to be part of a community yields the understanding of the community’s culture and social reasoning, which underlie the behaviours of the community members.

The appeal of ethnographic methods for linguists is that language is considered to be part of the culture, and ethnographic methods are designed to gain access to the culture. Language is seen as practices and thus, with the emic perspective, the local practices should be understood in their natural contexts. Therefore, in linguistic ethnography, it is not language per se that is the object of interest, but how language is used in certain situations. The linguistic ethnographer views language as a tool for speakers who can choose what they

want to “do” with language. And by investigating the actual language use in its context, the social contexts of a community can be explained.

This study adopts the emic approach in investigating *kathoey* and gay men’s linguistic practices, while also making use of standard sociolinguistic methods, which, I am aware, are not completely emic. Bringing linguistics and ethnography together in research, there is a tension arising from different research goals and interests of the two fields. As discussed by Rampton et al. (2004), ethnography pays attention to social processes, practices and activities which are seen as key to the understanding of culture in a community, while linguistics focuses on patterns or generalisation in language and sees such social events as a means of accessing the data. Traditionally, linguistics, particularly the first wave of sociolinguistics (Eckert 2012), made an assumption about social categories from an outsider perspective based on demographic and socioeconomic criteria. Even though the second wave of sociolinguistics paid more attention to local categories, social categories were fixed and associated with identities (Eckert 2012). With these differences between linguistics and ethnography, what this thesis tries to achieve, therefore, is “tying ethnography down” and “opening linguistics up” (Rampton et al. 2004: 4). The analyses in this thesis focus on linguistic variation considering the data both quantitatively and qualitatively, and on using linguistic frameworks to capture systematic and meaningful linguistic patterns. But it also takes into account social processes and activities which connect to the linguistic practices analysed through ethnographic methods. Quantitative sociolinguistics particularly is believed to provide useful tools for an ethnographic investigation (Levon 2010). In other words, this thesis examines the linguistic practices of Thai non-normative men in an ethnographic context where certain linguistic practices emerge as meaningful.

In this study, it is important to adopt the emic approach as it leads me, as an ethnographer, not only to *kathoey* and gay men’s linguistic practices, but also to other aspects of their lives, which contribute to the understanding of the linguistic practices. The approach helps me access the worldview of the participants, which affects their behaviours, both linguistic and non-linguistic. With the emic standpoint, *kathoey* and gay men’s linguistic practices are analysed in light of their own conception. In this study, I focus on *kathoey* and gay men’s linguistic presentation of self. I conducted the ethnographic fieldwork which allows me to spend a long period of time with the participants to learn about their way of life. I observed and took part in the participants’ group activities and interactions. I interviewed the participants and asked them to record their own interactions. The access to the groups’

activities and interactions provides me with the insider standpoint, which enables me to see their interactions and practices based on the groups' viewpoint.

3.2 Access

In this study, I aim to approach friendship groups with *kathoey* and gay men as group members. I adopted the snowball sampling method (Goodman 1961) in approaching my participants. Using this technique, also called the "friend of a friend" technique (Milroy 1980, Milroy & Gordon 2003), the researcher starts accessing the participants through someone the researcher knows. That someone may be a member of the community or know people in the community, and is able to introduce the researcher to his/her friends in the community. The researcher is then introduced to the community as a friend of a friend. The researcher then gets in touch with these people and asks them to introduce him/her to more people in the community. In other words, the researcher starts from his/her own social network and then follows the social network of his/her initial contacts. He/she gradually builds the connection with members of the community through his/her friendship, gaining access to more people in the community.

To approach someone who does not know me or does not have any mutual friends with me, and ask the person about his non-normative gender and sexuality would be seen as rude and offensive in Thai society. I therefore started to approach the potential participants through my own friendship networks. I made the initial contact through my friends mostly via Facebook messages. With the use of the social media website, I was able to explain the nature of the study through online chats. Therefore, Facebook is not only convenient, but it also reduces the formality of the introduction of my study. For those who are not frequent users of Facebook or who prefer being contacted through e-mails, I instead sent e-mails to explain my study. Apart from Facebook messages and e-mails, one of the initial contacts was made by chance in an interpersonal conversation. I met one of my friends and talked to him about many things including my fieldwork. He offered to help me by contacting his transgendered friends. After the initial contacts were made, I communicated with my potential participants through various means – Facebook messages, phone calls and mobile chatting applications. Even though people I contacted are people in my own social networks, there were certain issues of societal opinions about *kathoey* and gay men that need to be considered.

In Thai society, the issue of gender and sexual diversity is not new. Thai people, especially those in urban areas like Bangkok, are quite familiar with this diversity. *Kathoey* and gay

men are ubiquitous both in real life and in the media. Talking about gender and sexual diversity in general is acceptable. However, when it comes to the personal level, gender and sexual diversity becomes a very sensitive topic. Even though at the surface level the general public is quite tolerant towards people with non-normative gender and sexuality, this tolerance is limited and below the surface, and intolerance is deeply embedded in the society. For example, having a friend with non-normative gender and sexuality is usually accepted and common, whereas accepting a gay man or especially a *kathoey* as an employee for a “proper job,” i.e. non-stereotypical jobs for them outside the area of entertainment, beauty and the sex business, is not always possible. Similarly, having a son who turns to be *kathoey* or a gay man tends to be seen as embarrassment and is not accepted, especially in non-urban areas where non-normative genders are less accepted. Therefore, the tolerance and the acceptance of gender and sexual diversity do not apply to all levels or to the whole society. In addition, due to this negative attitude and the limited acceptance in the society as discussed, some *kathoey* and gay men conceal their gender and sexuality in certain circumstances. Also, the terms *kathoey* and *gay* are considered as having negative connotations for some people. Explicit reference to someone with the terms *kathoey* and *gay* can be inappropriate and offensive unless you are intimate enough with the person and are certain that the person feels comfortable being referred to in that way. The term *kathoey* particularly has a discriminatory meaning. In the general public, such as in the press and media, other terms are used to refer to *kathoey* in order to avoid the negative connotation and the resentment possibly incurred.

The use of terms regarding one’s gender and sexuality is a sensitive and potentially controversial issue, and it required careful consideration and planning in terms of how I approached potential participants to my study. Labelling participants with a particular term is not a simple matter. Some of the participants do not identify themselves clearly or consistently in a particular way or with any particular label. For example, if I had explicitly made clear to potential participants that I wanted to recruit *kathoey* to my study, they might have expected this term to refer only to the narrowest understanding of the term. In Thai society, people usually expect *kathoey* to be those with feminine appearance, e.g. dressing in feminine clothes, wearing make-up or having long hair. However, in reality, *kathoey* do not have to express their femininity through their appearance. Furthermore, use of the potentially stigmatised term *kathoey* by me could have led to potential participants inferring that I held negative views about such non-normative men. Therefore, the use of the term *kathoey* would limit my opportunity for reaching participants. In order to avoid

these issues, I decided to approach the participants by using the term *khwam laklai thang phet* 'sexual/gender diversity.' Before explaining the processes of data collection to the participants, I introduced the study to the participants as a linguistic study focusing on the use of language and the self-expression of gender and sexuality among male speakers with gender and sexual diversity. The term *khwam laklai thang phet* is more general than *kathoey* and *gay* as it includes all kinds of non-normative gender and sexuality. It also sounds neutral with no negative connotation attached to it. The term was expected to provide the potential participants with more freedom to express their gender and sexuality by not being limited by the connotation or the stereotypical impression associated with the terms *kathoey* and *gay*. Also, it was expected to help reduce the possibility of the offensiveness possibly caused by the terms *kathoey* and *gay*, and any feelings that I, as an outsider, was categorising the potential participants. Its indirectness and neutrality helped reduce the possibility of controversy. Moreover, I also felt more comfortable using the term *khwam laklai thang phet*, as opposed to *kathoey* and *gay* especially when approaching those I did not know from before.

The fieldwork location is Bangkok, Thailand, my hometown and home country, respectively. Doing ethnography in my own culture has both advantages and disadvantages. The facts that I am a native Thai speaker and that the participants and I speak the same language reduce the barriers to us getting to know each other. It helps me gain an "insider" status even though I am studying abroad. Belonging to the same culture as the participants, I am more likely to share the same set of cultural values and code of conduct with the participants. I am aware of the historical, cultural and political conditions which govern people in the society. I know the "Thai way" as I am a member of the society. It is then beneficial as I do not have to start from zero. My personal background as Thai provides the basic information I need to understand the participants in terms of the broader social context of the Thai culture. Therefore, it is in a way not too difficult to get along with the participants as I follow what they talk about and how they behave generally in light of Thai society. Moreover, I have been living in Bangkok since I was born so I know how things work in the city and also the condition of people living in such an urban area. For example, I know where people like to go in their free time or during weekends, what the different roles played by different places are and what it is like living in the capital. This is information I have as part of my life background and it helps me understand the lifestyles of the participants.

Being a native Thai is not always beneficial for the study. As mentioned above, living in the same context, the participants and I share the same conception and worldview as a member of Thai society. We are aware of the cultural norms of our society: of how things should be and how we should interact with each other appropriately. The influence of this shared cultural knowledge is most evident in regard to cultural issues around seniority. Age is an important social factor in Thai society. Interacting with people older than you is different from doing so with those who are younger. To be considered appropriate, the younger ones should show respect to the older ones. Depending on situations, the ways of showing respect vary. These include word choice, intonation, clothes and gestures. The older ones also have to behave appropriately. In other words, they are expected to behave themselves well enough to deserve the respect from the younger ones. These cultural values affect all interactions and impact on the relationship between the participants and me. The participants who are younger than me tried to follow these cultural expectation of seniority and this sometimes caused unnaturalness, especially in regard to their speech style. When I interacted with those who were older than me, I also had to consider the issue of seniority and behaved accordingly, both consciously and unconsciously. I will discuss this issue in more details when describing the profile of the participants. Briefly, I presented myself slightly differently when interacting with different participants. Positionality of the ethnographer is an important issue in conducting ethnography as it influences the way participants perceive the ethnographer and, thus, affects the kind of data the ethnographer is able to access, as discussed in various ethnographic studies (e.g. Kulick 1998, Josey 2004, Mendoza-Denton 2008, Levon 2010). Basically, during the fieldwork, I presented myself slightly differently in the way I believed was most likely to maximise the amount and the types of data I would get. In addition, I had to consciously balance my different roles: ethnographer, group member or a friend of the participants.

Additionally, being a member of the society and sharing the same cultural background with the participants can also be an obstacle to ethnography. Usually, the ethnographer spends time in a community to observe and learn the community's way of life. The ethnographer is expected to detect patterns in the everyday life of the community's members and explain the way things work in the community. As a member of Thai society, I am well equipped with the cultural knowledge shared with the participants. However, sharing the same background with the participants can sometimes bring blindness to the ethnographer. The things I saw in the participants' interactions did not look unfamiliar to me. The places they went to, the way they interacted and the activities they participated in are things I have

seen all my life. At a glance, the participants' interactions and activities did not seem to be different or particular. But this causes difficulties in doing ethnography as I could possibly ignore things that I consider ordinary and banal but which are significant for the participants, or significant in explaining some aspects of language use. Therefore, I had to be careful and make an effort to open myself up to everything even though it seemed like there was nothing significant at a glance. In other words, I had to look for "rich points" (Agar 1980), which are the points where things do not go as expected and do not make sense from an outsider perspective. Such incidents indicate the distinctiveness of a particular group of participants or a community, and are thus the points where the ethnographer starts investigating the community.

In terms of gender, the participants perceived me as woman. I did not refer to either my gender or sexuality explicitly. The participants then by default assumed that I was a heterosexual woman. Some of them are friends with me on Facebook, which means they have access to information about my personal life and are able to learn more information about me. This includes my background, personal interests and attitudes, as revealed through the things I post on my Facebook page. Therefore, through Facebook, these participants know more about me including what I did not say explicitly or tell them personally, such as my gender and sexuality. The participants' perception of me as a heterosexual woman does not seem to have had any obvious impact on their interactions with me.

At first, the participants were informed, either by me or my initial contacts, that I am a PhD student. Through later interpersonal interactions, I further introduced myself and the study to the participants. I told the participants that I was doing a PhD in London and that I returned to Thailand to collect data for my thesis. I intentionally avoided mentioning my academic affiliations as I am aware that big names could make me sound formal and boastful, and lead to negative impression on the side of the participants. For the same reason, I did not mention or inform the participants of my position as a staff member at a university in Bangkok unless asked. The fact that I am studying PhD abroad already creates distance between the participants and me to some extent. Therefore, during the observation, I did not mention or bring up any topic relating to my academic background and affiliations so as to blur my academic side. Instead, I tried to emphasise my status as a friend and joined them in the interactions on non-academic topics. However, sometimes my academic background was a way for the participants to relate to me and was a topic they wanted to discuss. I had to prepare myself to be flexible enough to get along with the

participants in the way they found comfortable. In addition, each of the participants, both individually and as a group, has different kinds of relationships and connection to me. I therefore emphasised different sides of me with different participants and groups of participants in the way I thought was best for befriending them and making them feel more comfortable. Further details of the participants and differences of my self-presentation to them and of their perception of me will be discussed in the next section.

3.3 Participants

The participants in this study consist of some who participate as part of a friendship group and some who participate individually. I aimed to examine the participants in the form of friendship groups in the first place. Such a way of looking at the participants allows me to see the participants in the contexts of their social groups, and the local values they adhere to as a group. Observing their group activities and interactions makes it possible for me to understand and analyse the linguistic data more completely through the “insider” point of view. However, finding friendship groups of *kathoeys* and gay men who would agree to let me into their groups and participate in their group activities was not easy. Some of the people I contacted told me that they themselves would be prepared to work with me, but their friends would not agree to have a stranger observing them even though some of the members were willing to participate in the study. I therefore decided to include those individuals who wanted to participate in the study, but I was not able to observe the full group. This was beneficial as the potential participants decided for themselves to participate more easily than they did as a group. This then allowed me to have more participants in the study. Although I was not able to observe these individual participants as part of the ethnography, I could maintain the “insider” standpoint to some extent. These participants, like those who participated as a group, recorded their conversations in different situations for me, so I had the data of their interactions with other people apart from the interviews with me. They were also willing to clarify certain points in the conversation if needed.

In this section, the details of friendship groups and individual participants are discussed. All of the participants’ names are pseudonyms. The groups’ names were created by me based on the groups’ characteristics. In this thesis, I refer to all of the participants with the masculine forms *he* or *him*. This decision was taken only because the English grammar system forces me to choose either the masculine or feminine forms to refer to the participants, and so I decided to follow the established English writing convention of

referring to a male person with the masculine forms. By adopting this convention, I in no way mean to be judgemental or disrespectful of the participants' gender identification.

There are three friendship groups participating in this study: the Undergraduates, the Postgraduates and the Professionals. Each group have different backgrounds and different lifestyles. I also presented myself to each group a little differently.

3.3.1 The Undergraduates

The Undergraduates is a group of undergraduate students who were all approximately 20 years old and were studying in a university in Bangkok. They were from different majors but were all in their third year (It generally takes four years for an undergraduate degree in Thailand). The school and the university where they were studying are also where I obtained my bachelor degree and where I hold a staff position. Four members of the group participated in the study – Shane, Gift, June and Pong. They all defined and expressed themselves openly as *kathoey*. They used the term *kathoey* in referring to themselves explicitly in the interactions among themselves and with me. However, they differed in the extent of the femininity they showed.

Shane was the one I was firstly introduced to. He was very sociable. He was the centre of the group because, as he told me, he was always the one who set up a get-together or asked other members to meet. He was the one who explained to me the situations and the relationship within the group. Shane then introduced me to Gift, June and Pong. In terms of gender performance, Shane, Gift and Pong were quite similar. They wore masculine uniforms (university students in Thailand are required to wear university uniforms) and even when they met outside campus, or when they did not have class and did not have to wear the uniform, they still dressed in masculine clothes. However, they were noticeably not masculine. Their non-masculinity can be seen from their other behaviours including the way they walked and used gestures. Also, Shane, Gift and Pong all had short hair. Shane and Pong did not wear make-up while Gift did. The other member, June, showed his femininity more obviously than others. When I first met him, June was in a masculine uniform but he wore make-up and had long hair. At the time I interviewed him, he had already started to wear feminine uniforms, and became *kathoey taeng ying* 'kathoey who dresses in a feminine way/as a woman.' Therefore, June's expression of femininity was more visible than that of other group members.

In terms of personality, Shane, Gift and June were outgoing and cheerful, while Pong was relatively quieter. However, all these four members frequently participated in social events in the school, and their identification with *kathoey* was very visible and significant in such activities. Their role in those social events often involved giving a humorous and joyful performance and being *kathoey* is central to such role. Stereotypically, *kathoey* are expected to be fun and humorous. Participating in the school's social events by doing such performances, these members fulfilled the society's expectation of their personality. Performing in the school's social events was also an opportunity for them to dress up in a feminine way, especially for Shane, Gift and Pong, who did not dress in a feminine way in everyday life. Their feminine appearance in performances was seen as a way of making their performances more interesting and entertaining. In addition, as a result of participating in social events frequently, they were well-known and became the centre of attention among students in the school.

The group members hung out together both at the university and outside the university. In their free time, like other teenagers in Bangkok, they hung out in department stores or shopping malls. They spent time together eating, talking and watching films. They also went clubbing and went on a trip outside Bangkok together. However, according to Shane, during the time when I conducted the fieldwork, they were in their third year and had fewer classes together. They met less frequently both at the university and outside. Apart from being full-time students, Shane and Gift also worked part-time as English tutors for students in secondary schools. Therefore, they were busy and spent less time together than they used to.

Apart from these four members, there was one other group member who identified as *kathoey*. This member, who was called Bam, was a roommate of Shane in the student dormitory. According to Shane, although he and Bam were roommates, Bam was closer to Gift. He also expressed his femininity similarly to Gift. That is, Bam wore a masculine uniform and had short hair, but had visible make-up. During the fieldwork, I saw Bam several times. However, I did not include him in this study as I did not have a chance to interview him. The Undergraduates also had another two female members – Pim and Tai. Shane told me that he was closer to Pim, but they spent less time together during the fieldwork as Pim spent more time with her boyfriend.

I was introduced to the Undergraduates through a friend of mine, who had also graduated from the school. She introduced me to Shane, who later introduced me to other group

members. I asked my friend to inform the group that I was a student in the school before, but I asked her not to tell them that I am a staff member. I was cautious about this as in Thailand, staff members and students are in extremely different social positions; staff members are highly respected both by students and the public. Therefore, I only told them that I am doing PhD in London. As previously mentioned, I was an undergraduate student in the same school where they were studying. I majored in English, like some of the group members. I used this common ground as the starting point to befriend the group and started to get along with them through the backgrounds that we shared. I expected at first that the mutual background between the group members and I would make it easier for them to become familiar with me as at least I had something in common with them and it could be a topic to start talking about. The mutual background was also expected to help tone down my academic side, as I presented myself as a senior in the school, rather than a staff member or a researcher. The mutual background actually helped me as expected. However, getting along with the group was more difficult than I anticipated because of the influence of seniority.

Seniority is a salient and significant value in Thai society. One should respect a person who is older and behave oneself when being with the person. The members of the Undergraduates saw me as their senior, which was the way I intended to present myself, as I wanted to make them feel that I came from a similar background to them. My presence obviously made them feel uncomfortable and caused some unnaturalness in their conversations. They seemed to start interacting unnaturally when I was present. They became more careful with their speech, especially with the impolite words, swear words and gossip which I knew were usually involved in their conversations. These “inappropriate” words were still used but with more cautiousness and consciousness. This indicates that the group members respected me as their senior but did not fully accept me as their friend. They became more careful and paid more attention to their speech, as predicted by Labov (1972b) when he wrote about Attention Paid to Speech or the Principle of Attention. This principle predicts that speakers will speak differently when they use different speech styles identified by Labov, which are classified based on the amount of attention paid to speech. The five speech styles used in Labov’s (1966) study were casual speech, careful speech, reading style, word lists and minimal pairs. Casual speech represents the least careful speech style where speakers do not pay much attention to speech, while minimal pairs are the most careful speech style drawing speakers’ attention to a particular variable in question. The prediction is that the more attention speakers pay to speech, the more likely it is that a standard form will be

used as opposed to a vernacular form. Conversely, vernacular forms are more likely to be used when speakers pay less attention to speech. In other words, the vernacular form is more likely to be used in more casual speech. In this thesis, even though I do not classify styles in the way Labov does, I could see that the Undergraduates became more aware of, and attentive to, their speech in my presence. That is, they used a relatively more careful style compared the more casual one they used when talking among themselves and with other friends. They therefore used “inappropriate” words less frequently when talking to me.

Apart from the issue of seniority, the fact that I am a PhD student created the distance between them and me. They tended to see me as an academic person. The only topic in which I was fully included was of studying abroad. My involvement in conversations concerning other topics was sporadic. They also found out that I am a staff member as they were friends with one of my former students. When asked, I told them that I am a staff member but I am not a fully working staff as I am doing PhD and not teaching, which is the truth. I tried to show the group members that I did not fully identify myself with other staff members. Moreover, there was a very high level of solidarity among the group members. Each group member was independent and had high self-confidence. However, they identified strongly as belonging to the same group, and this made it even more challenging for me to observe them and gather meaningful data.

In total, I participated in the Undergraduates’ group activities and observed the group on six occasions. The group activities mainly involved them talking during lunch breaks (on weekdays) or lunch time (on weekends), but also included shopping and going clubbing. After hanging out with them several times, I still found it hard to get along with the group. After the sixth time, Shane mentioned to me that he could feel the unnaturalness and discomfort of his friends when I was with the group and seemed unwilling to let me participate in any more group activities. But he offered to do recordings of their group meetings for me so that I could get more natural data and did not have to be with them. After that, Shane did not let me know when the group was meeting as he did before. Therefore, I decided to stop the participant observation and start the interview.

During the participant observation, I only had a few chances to directly interact with the group members. Most of the time, the group members talked to each other rather than interacting with me, even though they were aware of my presence. They did not pay much attention to me. This caused even more distance between the group members and me.

They did not really know me and clearly felt a bit uncomfortable having me around. In comparison to the observation method, the interview method seemed more likely to be successful and to elicit the type of meaningful data I needed to answer my research questions. The interview is relatively more formal than their everyday interactions with friends but because this fitted in with their social expectations of the relationship between someone of a more senior position, they did not seem to have any problem interacting with me in the interview. They were friendly, considerate and generous. They told me that they were willing to answer every question and insisted that I could ask them anything so that I got all the information I needed. Therefore, the interview actually gave me a chance to explain my study to the group members individually and to have them communicate with me directly. That is, it allowed me to get to know the group members better and allowed them to become more familiar with me. After conducting the interview, even though the formality was still there, they at least knew me better and seemed to feel more comfortable interacting with me (see below for a description of interview methods).

3.3.2 The Postgraduates

The Postgraduates consist of seven members. Three members, who are non-normative men, are the focus in this study. They were full-time postgraduate students pursuing master degrees in educational linguistics at a university in Bangkok, but not the same university as the Undergraduates. One of the group members, Yoot, is my friend from our undergraduate years. He is from Phatthalung, a province located in the southern part of Thailand and he moved to Bangkok after finishing high school. Yoot and I were not close friends in our undergraduate years but after our undergraduate years, we became friends on Facebook and have Facebook interactions with each other from time to time. Yoot worked part-time as an English tutor for school students and this is how he supported himself financially. Since his undergraduate years, Yoot has expressed himself clearly as *kathoey*. When he was an undergraduate student, he always wore the masculine uniform but at the time of the fieldwork, he usually dressed himself with feminine clothes, usually blouses, jackets, trousers and high-heel shoes, and feminine accessories such as handbags and hair clippers. He had short hair in the feminine style and usually put on a bit of make-up. However, his feminine expression was not consistent. He was a *kathoey taeng ying* ‘*kathoey* who dresses in a feminine way/as a woman,’ but not in all situations. His casual style, for example, was more masculine. I once met him at one of the group members’ apartment and he was wearing a masculine t-shirt and shorts, and did not put on make-up.

Yoot introduced me to other group members – Tor, Tony, Pla, Som, Noi and Fon. Yoot, Tor and Tony are the participants in this study. Tor and Tony are older than me. Tor was from Buriram, a province in the north-eastern part of the country. He lived in Bangkok with his partner, who was an affluent Scottish man. Tor and his partner were in a serious and long-term relationship. The relationship was also known to the group members. Most of them had already met Tor's partner who was sometimes referred to in the group interaction. Tony was, like Yoot, from the southern part of the country. At the time of the fieldwork, he had been living in Bangkok for over ten years. Both Tor and Tony expressed their homosexuality outwardly in the group interactions. They showed similar gender expressions. They dressed themselves in masculine clothes. They had masculine short hair styles and never wore make-up. Tor and Tony therefore looked similar in terms of their appearance. They obviously looked more masculine than Yoot. While Yoot expressed himself clearly as *kathoey*, in the group interactions Tor did not clearly identify himself as either *kathoey* or gay man. Tony identified himself as a gay man. However, he sometimes referred to himself as a *kathoey* in group interactions. He also sometimes categorised himself and Tor together as gay men. Despite the difference in the explicit self-identification, Yoot, Tor and Tony grouped themselves together in interactions. They saw themselves as "the same" due to their interest in men. The rest of the group members - Pla, Som, Noi and Fon - were heterosexual women. Fon and I were at the same age while Pla and Som were a little younger than me. Noi was older than me and was the oldest one in the group. Som, Noi and Fon all had the teaching background. Som was a part-time English tutor. Fon was a school teacher before starting her master study. Noi worked as a lecturer at a university in Bangkok.

The members of the Postgraduates, at the time of the fieldwork, had been friends for less than a year. However, they spent a lot of time together at the university, and became close to each other. They supported each other especially in their study. Yoot was the "coordinator" of the group. He was usually the one who was in touch with lecturers and kept other group members posted with any events or updates with classes or assignments. Yoot also had a better academic performance than the others. He helped other members reviewing the lessons and revising the assignments. As Noi was more senior and had been in academia longer than others, she was also the group's academic consultant. In non-academic interactions, Tony tended to be the one who led the conversations. Within the group, Fon was alienated. Other group members did not like her because of her

misbehaviours in doing assignments. The group's dissatisfaction was expressed clearly in their interactions when Fon was not present and she was often the group's topic for gossip.

Even though some of the group members were older and some were younger than me, the issue of seniority did not seem to be significant for this group. Yoot introduced me to the group as his friend, and the group members accepted me as "a friend of Yoot." Yoot also added me to the group's private Facebook group. As time went by, the group members accepted me comfortably as their friend. I told the group members that I am doing PhD in linguistics in London without mentioning any specific names of affiliation. As with the Undergraduates, I at first did not bring up any topic relating to my academic background and position unless asked. The fact that I am doing my PhD abroad and that I am a staff member at a university made them see me as academically superior. However, I realised later that this did not exceed the influence of my status as a "friend of a friend" and my linguistic background. In contrast to the Undergraduates, my academic background and status brought the group and me together rather than set us apart. The common ground that the group members and I shared in linguistics is very important as it provides the starting point for the very first interactions between the group members and me. I presented myself as someone who was in the same situation of postgraduate study as they are, sharing the same feelings and experiences. The group saw me as a fellow postgraduate student in linguistics rather than a researcher or a staff member. The group members liked to talk to me about their linguistic lessons, my linguistic background and my experiences of studying abroad, especially Tor who was interested in pursuing his PhD in the UK. As a linguistic fellow and a friend, they became familiar with my presence rather quickly. I was allowed to take part in any of their get-togethers and meetings, and became part of the group during the fieldwork. I participated in and observed the Postgraduates' group activities twelve times, mostly during lunch breaks or in their free afternoons in the university or places nearby. During these times, the activities mainly involved the members talking about their study, classes or assignments, and other issues such as celebrities, popular actors/actresses, and clubbing. I also met the group members at Tor's condominium where they sometimes gathered for both group discussion for their course assignments and leisure activities such as swimming and partying.

3.3.3 The Professionals

The Professionals are composed of four people, Mik, Max, Ning and Nut. They were all about 28 years old when the fieldwork was conducted. Mik and Max are the participants in

this study. The four members had been friends since their undergraduate years. Mik and Max are twins. Mik worked as a fashion editor for a Korea-originated magazine in Thailand. He expressed his femininity outwardly and explicitly identified himself as *kathoey*. He always wore feminine clothes, he put on make-up and had long hair. That is, Mik was a *kathoey taeng ying* 'kathoey who dresses in a feminine way/as a woman,' who showed his femininity consistently across all situations. Max identified as a gay man and his appearance was masculine. He always wore masculine clothes, he had short masculine hairstyle and never wore make-up. Max worked as a counsellor-at-law. Unlike Mik, Max did not explicitly refer to his gender or sexuality. However, his identity was not concealed. He talked about his relationship with a male partner in group interactions. He also expressed his interest in men even in interactions with his colleagues. Nut, another group member, was also a gay man, and like Max, had a masculine appearance. Nut, however, was not included in the study. This is because during the time when the fieldwork was conducted, Mik came into conflict with Nut. Mik was very upset with Nut and after their disagreement, Nut effectively left the group. The other group member was Ning. She was the only woman in the group, and was a full-time mother.

My initial contact with the group was Mik. I was introduced to Mik through a friend of mine. In my first interaction with the group, I was asked about my background and current academic status. As with the other two groups, I told the group that I am a PhD student studying in London. They were therefore aware of my academic background. This group was different from the other two groups because they were not in an academic context. Therefore, I did not stress my academic status or background when interacting with them. The group members were very generous and friendly to me. I assume that this is partly due to the fact that they were all older than me. Again, the issue of seniority is at play here. As discussed earlier, Thai culture dictates that younger people should respect older people, but it also dictates that the older should be kind to those who are younger. It might also be due to the fact that the group members and I did our undergraduate degree at the same university and this may have closed down some of the social distance between us. As most of the group members are working people, I also tried to align with them by highlighting my status as an employee in an organisation. I expected that this way of self-presentation might encourage the group members to be less aware of my status as a student, and further narrow the gap between the group members and me.

I participated in and observed the Professionals' group activities on only three occasions when they went out for a meal or a drink together. The Undergraduates and the

Postgraduates were full-time students and were more likely to meet at specific times during the week at universities because of their schedule. The Professionals, in contrast, did not have a specific time or place they regularly met. The group members were very busy at work during the time of the fieldwork and did not meet often. Also, as they told me, sometimes they met promptly without planning in advance for a quick meal and agreed to meet only shortly before the meeting time. They did not let me know they were meeting as they thought it was too short notice. Even if they let me know, by the time I arrived at the place, their meeting would have been finished. Therefore, I did not have much chance to hang out with them. However, the three times I did hang out with them were very lengthy meetings, and they really included me in their conversations.

Having three different groups participating provided the study with lots of variety in the data. The three friendship groups are from different stages of life. The members of the Undergraduates were still in their undergraduate years. Even though they worked part-time, they were full-time students and pursuing the degree was their main task. In many ways, they offered an example of how typical Thai teenagers in Bangkok live their life. The other two groups showed two typical ways of life after undergraduate years in Thai society. One way is to further one's study and stay in the academic area like the Postgraduates. The members of the Professionals, unlike the Undergraduates and the Postgraduates, lived their life as employees outside of the academic sphere. They worked full-time but in different areas. These three groups had different lifestyles and interests. The differences are shown, for example, in the topics of their interactions and the places they hung out. While the Undergraduates and the Postgraduates mostly talked about their university friends and lessons, the Professionals talked about their budget planning, overseas trips during vacation period, and situations in their workplace. Also, the Professionals lived a relatively more prosperous life than the other two groups. The members of the Professionals usually hung out at luxurious restaurants situated in particular areas in Bangkok. The differences among the three groups gave variety to the data and exemplified different groups of people in different life stages with different lifestyles and interests. But, for all their differences, they shared the practice of self-identifying as non-normative men.

Having people at different life stages and with different interests is important for this thesis. As discussed earlier, one of the research interests in this thesis is to counter assumptions about homogeneity among non-normative men in Thailand. The Thai public tends to consider non-normative men as one homogeneous group. Non-normative men are usually perceived and presented in a stereotypical way in Thai society and diversity among them

tends to be ignored. One of the goals of this study is to illustrate the diversity and the heterogeneity of Thai non-normative men, which are expressed both linguistically and non-linguistically. Therefore, the study is specifically designed to explore the overlooked heterogeneity of non-normative men in Thai society.

3.3.4 Individual participants

As mentioned at the beginning of the section, this study also includes individual participants, i.e. the participants who do not participate as a group. The individual participants are different from each other, although some of them share certain characteristics with each other and with the groups. There are five individual participants – Lek, Win, Nan, Dew and Mod. They all identified as *kathoeys*. Apart from Mod, they all had different roles in the academic sphere.

Lek was a *kathoeys* who had already had undergone sex reassignment surgery, and lived fully as a woman, meaning that he was consistently feminine in every situation. I was introduced to Lek through one of my colleagues who had been close friends with Lek since their undergraduate years. Lek worked as a lecturer in a university and revealed himself as a *kathoeys* in his workplace. Based on my observation, despite the relative high level of tolerance for non-normative men in Thai society in general, a completely feminine-looking *kathoeys* as a university lecturer in Thailand, as in the case of Lek, is rare. Lek did not only show his femininity consistently in real life, but also expressed his interest in men clearly through his personal Facebook account. His behaviours indicate that he was open about his gender and sexuality both in informal contexts and more formal or institutional contexts.

I knew Win from my undergraduate degree course. During that time, Win was doing his master degree. When the fieldwork was conducted, Win had already finished his degree and was working in a language institute in the same university where he graduated. He had both research and teaching responsibilities. While Win did not conceal his identification as *kathoeys*, he expressed it to a lesser degree than a stereotypical *kathoeys*. He had a short feminine hairstyle but did not wear make-up. He always wore trousers and never skirts. His presentation was generally somewhere between masculinity and femininity. Win mentioned his gender expression during the interview. He did not see this way of presenting himself as a means of covering his gender, but rather of showing himself as a different type of *kathoeys*.

This in-between way of self-presentation is not specific to Win. As has been discussed, among the *kathoeys*-identified group participants, Shane, Gift and Pong of the

Undergraduates, and Yoot of the Postgraduates showed a similar way of in-between self-presentation. That is, they showed more of their femininity in some situations, but maintained their masculinity to certain extent or in some other situations. The mixed presentation of masculinity and femininity among the *kathoey* participants emphasises the heterogeneity of *kathoey* discussed earlier. Even though *kathoey* are stereotypically perceived in a certain way, their presentations in real life can be very diverse, and is not necessarily feminine. While maintaining masculinity can be a result of following social norms, such as masculine uniforms in the case of the Undergraduates, it can also only be personal preference indicating the diversity among *kathoey*. In addition, the other individual participants – Nan, Dew and Mod – also showed this kind mixed or in-between self-presentation.

As I have known Win, Nan and Dew for a long time before I interviewed them, I have encountered them expressing their interests in men openly. They talked about men they found attractive, and commented on male actors or singers' appearance. They also revealed such interest in the comments they made on social media networks. Nan and Dew were PhD students at the same school and university. I had known Nan since he started his PhD while I was doing a master degree. Nan dressed in masculine clothes, had a short masculine hairstyle, and never wore make-up. However, he showed his identification with *kathoey* by explicitly mentioning it in interaction and, more indirectly, through his use of feminine gestures. He did not conceal his femininity and actually expressed it consistently including in more formal situations such as in class. Similarly, Dew did not show his femininity and his identification as *kathoey* through his outfit, hairstyle or make-up. He, however, mentioned his *kathoey* identification explicitly in interactions. He also expressed his interest in men to his friends on Facebook. I knew Dew during my undergraduate years. We were studying in the same school and university, but Dew was one year ahead of me. Therefore, I saw how his gender presentation changed over the years. When he was an undergraduate student, like the members of the Undergraduates in this study, Dew had to wear a masculine uniform. He, however, identified clearly and explicitly as *kathoey*. His identification as *kathoey* was known by students in the school. He also had long hair, and his feminine gestures were very obvious. After graduating, he changed his gender presentation. Although he still openly identified himself as *kathoey*, he looked more masculine with his short hair and masculine clothes. This provides an example of the flexible gender identification and expression in Thai society. People may change their gender identification and expression not only in different immediate situations, but also over time or at different stages in life.

Another individual participant is Mod. Mod was introduced to me through a friend of a friend and I didn't know him prior to the study. Mod worked in a cosmetic company. He was responsible for researching into chemical ingredients in cosmetics. Similarly to Win, Nan and Dew, Mod identified himself as *kathoey* and expressed his interest in men on Facebook. He wore a bit of make-up but dressed himself in a masculine style. According to Mod, his colleagues were aware of his identification as *kathoey*, but Mod still maintained masculinity to a certain extent at his workplace.

This section has described the participants involved in this study. The description shows that the participants in this study, especially those identified as *kathoey*, are different from the stereotypical image of non-normative men: they were in the academic sphere and relatively highly educated; they had "proper jobs," in contrast to the stereotypical perception of *kathoey* as only working in entertainment, beauty and prostitution; and most of them were not feminine-looking, or at least not consistently feminine-looking as stereotypically perceived. Therefore, this group of participants exemplifies how diverse *kathoey* and gay men in Thai society can be. In the next section, I will discuss how I obtained the data from the participants after approaching them and getting to know them.

3.4 Data collection techniques

The ethnographic fieldwork in this study is composed of three data collection techniques: participant observation, interviews and self-recordings. For all of the groups, I started the fieldwork with participant observation. This was an opportunity for me to get to know all of the group members and for the groups to become more familiar with me. I then asked them to participate in individual interviews and to record their own interactions. For the individual participants, I did not conduct participant observation, but only interviewed them and asked them to record their own interactions. The total duration of all the data collection procedures was approximately eight months.

3.4.1 Participant observation

I began my ethnographic fieldwork with participant observation. Participant observation refers to the way the ethnographer spends time in their field site observing and/or participating in the community's events or activities. The aim is to observe the community's way of life and learn the insider viewpoint of the participants in their natural context. My role in the field with the participants is somewhere between "complete participant" and "complete observer" (Gold 1958, Junker 1960). The participants were aware of my role as

researcher. Sometimes I only looked at how they interacted and behaved without taking part in their interactions. At other times, when possible, I joined them in their interactions or activities. The participants in this study were not groups of people living in the same community, they were friendship groups and were not connected geographically. The places where they met and where group interactions occurred were not always the same places. Therefore, the field sites varied depending on the groups' decisions and activities. Usually, the participants told me when and where they would meet, then I met them at the places for the observation.

As discussed earlier, the three groups have different lifestyles. The places they hung out and the kinds of activities they did were different from each other. The Undergraduates and the Postgraduates groups, both made up of full-time students, were more similar to each other than they were to the Professionals. The Undergraduates and Postgraduates usually met on campus. The Undergraduates did not have the same school schedule. However, during the semester they met up during their one-hour lunch break about once a week. They sat together in the school canteen and talked while having lunch. The Postgraduates' school schedule was less tight than that of the Undergraduates. The members of the Postgraduates mostly shared the same schedule and were able to meet more often than the Undergraduates. During the semester, after their morning class, the members of the Postgraduates had lunch together at a campus canteen around two or three times a week. As they normally did not have class in the afternoon, they typically spent between one and two hours together during lunch break before they separated. Even though they normally met on campus, the Undergraduates and the Postgraduates also hung out elsewhere. The Undergraduates, like typical Thai teenagers, spent their time together hanging around in department stores or shopping malls, going to movies and going clubbing. The Postgraduates sometimes had their lunch together at restaurants near their campus. They also sometimes hung out at Tor's condominium. The Professionals did not have a regular place of meeting. Their offices were in different areas. They usually met at restaurants and bars for lunch or dinner. The places they usually met were rather fancy ones located in expensive areas. This group met less regularly than the other two groups. Each of their get-togethers took at least two hours. Most of the participant observation in this study took place in the participants' lunch or dinner time. In total, I met each group approximately ten times.

When meeting the participants, I observed the interactions and the relationship within the groups. I wrote fieldnotes which detailed the participants' characteristics and behaviours,

the situations which occurred and my own observations about these things. I did this as soon as possible after I left the participants and in as much detail as possible. Writing fieldnotes is the conventional method of keeping record of the observation (Hammersley & Atkinson 1983). It allows the ethnographer to record any events or activities observed in a detailed manner. At the time of writing, the salient or significant concepts in the community may not yet have emerged. Keeping fieldnotes enables the ethnographer to go back to the observed data and analyse them. In short, fieldnotes are a tool which helps remind the ethnographer of what has been observed and the ethnographer's reaction towards the observed data.

My fieldnotes do not have a particular form or template. However, I always put the date and place of the observation and the names of the participants who took part in the activities. I took note of the participants' characteristics and behaviours including clothing, make-up, personalities, emotional expressions and gestures. In addition, I also observed and took note of the participants' linguistic expressions, including the topics and the content of the conversations the participants had, the participants' opinion and responses and noticeable linguistic forms or features the participants used. After several observations on the same participants, the fieldnotes allowed me to keep track of the participants' practices and detect the recurring patterns of behaviours among them.

Apart from the fieldnotes, when possible, I also made audio recordings of the interactions. I usually put the recorder in my bag and clipped the microphone on the top of my bag. I put the bag on my lap and tried to make the recorder less visible as possible. The instruments used for recording the interactions are Marantz PMD620 digital audio recorder and Audio Technica ATR-3350 omnidirectional condenser lavalier microphone. The first time I recorded the interactions, I explicitly asked for the participants' permission. The explicit request for recording may have made some of the participants feel unfamiliar in the first instance. However, after a certain period of time, they tended to forget about the recorder and interacted naturally. The participants were also informed that when I was present I may record their conversations anytime without asking for their permission each time, and that these procedures were approved by the Queen Mary Research Ethics Committee. All participants were asked to read an information sheet, which detailed all relevant information about the study, and were asked to sign a consent form, in which they gave permission for me to record their conversations and use them for the thesis.

Recording the participants' conversations in such informal contexts when they were interacting with other group members is important as it is a way to reduce the Observer's Paradox (Labov 1971). Sociolinguists want to observe naturally occurring speech, but the observation itself brings an element of unnaturalness to the way people talk. One of the ways in which researchers can reduce the effect of the Observer's Paradox is to observe the participant's interactions with friends or family. In such casual situations, speakers are likely to feel more comfortable talking, and will become less conscious of the fact that they are being observed and recorded. Such informal contexts, it is hoped, will bring about the speech style used when the speakers pay the minimum attention to speech and, hence, where vernacular forms, the most frequently used and spontaneous forms for speakers, are more likely to be used (Labov 1972b). Therefore, recording the participants' group interaction in this way is a way of collecting naturally occurring data from the participants.

3.4.2 Interviews

The interview is used as part of the process of data collection for this thesis. After utilising participant observation methodologies for several sessions with the participants, they generally became more familiar with me, and at this time I asked them to participate in an ethnographic interview. The ethnographic interview is similar to the semi-structured sociolinguistic interview in terms of its format (Levon 2013). In both types of interviews, the interviewer asks several questions, mostly open-ended ones, and lets the interviewee talk naturally. The sociolinguistic interview is aimed at eliciting the interviewee's natural language use. It seeks linguistic samples of "speakers" (Duranti 1997: 103). In the sociolinguistic interview, the interviewer prepares a list of topics which encourages the interviewee to talk and provide as much speech as possible in a spontaneous manner. The ethnographic interview, however, sees the interviewees as "experts" (Duranti 1997: 103) who are able to provide insightful information on events or activities which the interviewer observes and tries to make sense of. The ethnographic interview can complement the participant observation by allowing the interviewer to elicit conversations about things he/she has observed. It is a more direct process of learning about local conceptions for ethnographers. Ethnographers do not plan their interview too strictly. Rather, the interview is a dialogue between the interviewer and the interviewee on various topics (Blommaert & Jie 2010). The interview's structure is determined by both the interviewer and the interviewee (Hammersley & Atkinson 1983).

I interviewed fourteen participants: Shane, Gift, June and Pong of the Undergraduates; Yoot, Tor and Tony from of the Postgraduates; Mik and Max from of the Professionals; and the individual participants Lek, Win, Nan, Dew and Mod. Prior to carrying out the interviews, I had met and got to know the members of the three groups as I carried out the participant observation. They had known me for at least two months before the interviews. For the participants from the Postgraduates and the Professionals, they became more familiar with me during the participant observation and felt comfortable participating in the interviews. Holding the interviews after carrying out a period of participant observation is beneficial as it makes the participants feel more familiar with me and it encourages them to trust me much enough to give me their personal and private information. For the Undergraduates, as previously discussed, the participants felt uncomfortable having me in their group during the participant observation due to issues around seniority and group solidarity. These interviews were a chance for me to officially introduce myself, my study and to get them to talk to me personally. After one to two hours of interviewing, the participants from the Undergraduates became more familiar with me and looked more comfortable interacting with me.

During the observation, I saw the participants when they were with their friendship group. I observed their practices and participated in their group activities. I looked at their interactions and began to figure out their gender positionality and identification in light of the group practices. However, I did not raise the issue of gender and sexuality in a straightforward way. The interviews allowed me to go through each participant's life and attitudes, and to discuss various issues that could not be covered in group interactions. It was an opportunity for me to ask them directly about their gender and sexuality and to discuss any issues arising from the participant observation. The information obtained from the interview provided the background for understanding the participants' behaviours in group interactions. The interaction between the interviewees and me is not only a chance for me to gain more information about them, but it is also the participants' chance to talk to me individually rather than interacting with me as part of the group. In addition to the personal information of the interviewees, their speech in the interviews is also naturally occurring linguistic data elicited in a relatively more formal situation as compared to more informal group interactions and self-recordings within friendship groups or among friends. That is, the participants' speech in the interviews provides the data in a different context or style, which can potentially influence the way the participants talked.

Traditionally, the sociolinguistic interview has been used as a means of getting speech data in various speech styles. The concept underlying this method of data elicitation is outlined by Labov (1972b) and which he calls Attention Paid to Speech. As described earlier, different styles result in different amount of speakers' attention being paid to speech, and this influences the frequency of vernacular forms used by speakers. Speakers tend to use vernacular forms more frequently in more casual styles and less frequently in relatively more formal styles. That is, stylistic variation results from the difference in the amount of attention paid to speech. Bell (1984), adapting the concept of accommodation from Giles & Powesland (1975), proposed the framework of Audience Design. This framework explains stylistic variation which comes about as a result of the speakers' expectations about his or her audience. Bell (1984) found that a radio presenter adopted different speech styles when reading the same news bulletin for two different radio stations, which were each aimed at different audiences. This showed that it is actually the audience – through their influence on the speaker – who designs the speech of speakers. Speakers, based on their own assumptions, perceptions and expectations of the kind of people that make up their audience, respond to different audiences with different linguistic features or behaviours associated with the audience. These two approaches to intraspeaker variation consider style shifts as responsive. It is assumed that there are certain norms of speech in a particular context with a particular group of audience. Stylistic variation is then seen as the way speakers alter their way of speaking, or style shift, so that it is “appropriate” according to the norms. With this conceptualisation, the interview speech collected and analysed in this thesis is important as it is derived from a relatively more formal context. In this context, speakers may respond to the audience with different linguistic behaviours as compared to their style in a less formal context.

The interview questions concern four main topics: background and childhood; current life situation and experiences; attitudes; and language. I began the interviews by asking the interviewees about their background and life as a child. Knowing the interviewee's background is a good starting point for asking further questions and gaining an understanding about them as individuals. Moreover, talking about their own stories should make the interviewees feel relatively comfortable and, therefore, make it easier to elicit the interviewees' natural speech. I asked them about their family background, places where they grew up and their school time. Then I moved on to the interviewees' current life situation and experiences. This section focused more specifically on the interviewees' gender identification and is not totally separated from the previous topic. I asked them how

they have dealt with their non-normative gender and sexuality, how they identify their gender and how they perceive the different labels for non-normative gender and sexuality. Then, in discussions about attitudes, I went beyond the interviewees' own experiences relating to their gender and asked them about how they think the public perceives them (in particular) and gender and sexual diversity (more generally). The last topic of the interviews focused particularly on the interviewees' language use and the linguistic practices of *kathoey* and gay men. I asked them about the way they talk and about differences in their speech in different situations. Eliciting their opinion on *kathoey* and gay men's linguistic practices would, I hoped, be a good source for potential linguistic variables as it would be likely to prompt a shift away from previous topics onto one which would foreground their identities as non-normative men. It would also show how much the interviewees were aware of their own linguistic behaviours when talking about their behaviours explicitly.

Interviews were conducted individually except Mik and Max of the Professionals who were interviewed together. During the participant observation, I learned some information about the twins, which led to my decision to interview them together. Mik and Max have been together for almost all their life. They grew up together, went to the same schools and shared many childhood memories together. They live together in the same apartment. They also have many friends in common and tend to hang out together with their friends. Mik and Max are thus expected to have gone through the same situations and share a lot of experiences. By interviewing them together, Mik and Max could help and complement each other by providing a more complete picture of the stories they discussed, and this proved to be the case in their interview. They were also able to share their opinions towards the same thing from different points of view in the interview. Therefore, they were interviewed together, and that is expected to bring more details and information out of the two participants.

I did most of the interviews in cafes. Conducting the interview in cafes is advantageous in many ways. First of all, cafes are ubiquitous in Bangkok. Finding a cafe in a particular area which is convenient to both the interviewees and me was not difficult. Another advantage is that sitting in a cafe is not time-constrained. The interviewees and I were able to take our time and did not have to hurry to finish everything within a certain time period. Moreover, cafes have become part of Bangkok urban lifestyle. Hanging out or meeting someone at a cafe has recently become a normal habit of people in Bangkok and other relatively urban cities in the country. As the interviewees lived in Bangkok, they were likely to be familiar

with this kind of lifestyle. Meeting at a cafe is likely to make the interviewees feel comfortable and make the interview look more informal. However, I also conducted the interviews in other types of locations if it was more convenient for the participants. For example, for the members of the Undergraduates, it was easier to meet them for the interviews during their free time at the university. Two of the Postgraduates, and Mik and Max of the Professionals, asked me to go to their apartment for the interview.

When meeting the interviewees, I always began with small talk. I then explained my study and the interview questions, and gave them the information sheet which describes the study in detail. I told them that the interview would be recorded and asked for their permission to record them. I emphasised that the information they gave and their voice recorded would be used only in my study and that any identifying information would be kept confidential. After explaining the study, I asked the interviewees to sign the consent form, according to the Queen Mary Research Ethics Committee, to confirm their permission to participate in the study. When the interviewees were ready, I turned the recorder on. The recorder was put in a small purse so that the interviewees could not see the recorder running. The purse was put either on a table or on my lap. The microphone was clipped on the interviewees' clothes near their mouth. The microphone has a very long cord connected to the recorder. The interviewees could then move their body freely during the interview. At the beginning of the interview, I emphasised again that their personal information would be kept confidential and that the interviewees had the right to answer a question or not. Then I repeated the four topics before moving on to the actual interview, which took between one and two hours.

3.4.3 Self-recordings

The final part of my fieldwork required the participants to make audio records of their own interactions when I, the ethnographer, was not with them in the interactional contexts. According to Levon (2013), self-recordings provide more diversity in the linguistic data as the data are derived from various contexts when the ethnographer is not present, i.e. non-participant observation. In the two data collection techniques discussed earlier, I was present with the participants. During the participant observation, I hung out with the groups and tried to understand what was going on in the group interactions, both linguistically and non-linguistically. I gathered non-linguistic data (personal information, etc.) and analysed the data collected. Similarly, I was obviously present during the interviews. My presence during the participant observation and the interviews allowed me to have access to the

ethnographic information leading to the more complete understanding of group interactions and the participants' linguistic practices. However, my presence may disturb the participants' speech and make their speech somehow less natural. The use of self-recordings is a way of avoiding the Observer's Paradox (Labov 1971), allowing me to have access to the participants' natural speech in absence of the ethnographer. As the participants were the ones who made the audio recordings of their own speech, they were expected to feel more comfortable when not being observed.

In addition, having the speech data from both interviews and self-recordings allowed me to examine the participants' potential different linguistic practices in different styles, which would indicate their responsive style shift as a result of audience and non-audience effects (Bell 1984). In interviews, I obtained the participants' naturally occurring data when interacting with me, the interviewer, in a relatively more formal context. Self-recordings, in contrast, are the data derived from relatively more informal contexts where the participants interacted with their friends or colleagues. The data from self-recordings were more diverse in several aspects, such as in terms of interlocutors and topics. Therefore, the self-recordings complemented the entire dataset with the type of data I could not obtain from the participant observation or interviews. The diverse range of data obtained from different techniques of elicitation helped me answer the question I am particularly interested in, that is how *kathoey* and gay men express their gender through stylistic variation.

The fourteen participants who were interviewed in this study provided me with their self-recordings. They were asked to make audio recordings of their own interactions, both with their friendship group and with other people, within one month. I asked them to give me at least three self-recordings from each of the two types of situations. One is in more informal situation such as interactions with friends and family, while the other is in more formal situation such as interactions at work. I also asked that each recording should last for at least twenty minutes. The equipment used for the self-recordings was the participants' own smart phone. The recordings were done through the recording applications, either Voice Recorder HD or Recorder Pro, depending on the kind of smart phone the participants used. The use of mobile application in self-recordings is beneficial in many ways. It is very convenient for the participants. All of the participants had already possessed smart phones. Using their own smart phones meant that they did not have to carry extra recording equipment. In addition, they were familiar with the device, and that meant using their

phones as a recorder should be less disturbing for the participants and people they interacted with.

Although I asked the participants to record their conversations both in informal and formal situations, only some of them managed to give me their recordings in both types of situations. All of the participants provided me with recordings of their interactions with friends, i.e. those in more informal situations. However, a lot of them found it difficult to record their conversations in more formal situations for different practical reasons. Some of them told me they rarely had any conversation which they considered formal and which lasted at least 20 minutes. Sometimes they simply forgot about recording their conversations. Therefore, even though self-recordings are advantageous to the study as a means of obtaining naturally occurring data, the method leaves the data collection completely in the participants' hands. I as the researcher had no control over the participants at all, which meant that it was possible that the data gathered would not be enough, or would not be of the required quality.

To sum up, this chapter has discussed the details regarding the methods of data collection, and it has introduced the participants. I gained access to the participants through a "friend of a friend" technique. The participants consist of three friendship groups and five other individuals. I started to collect the data with participant observation. That method allowed me to get into the groups of participants as part of them, to observe and to participate in their group activities. Then I interviewed the participants, the method which enables me to obtain more detailed information about the participants and to elicit speech from them in a relatively formal interview context. Finally, I asked the participants to record their interactions in various contexts. Together, these methods allowed me to gather enough naturally occurring data across the required speech contexts, giving me the ability to explore the stylistic variation among the participants. Different methods of data collection contain different sources of error (Labov 1971). Triangulation (e.g. Denzin 1970a, 1970b, Jick 1979, Patton 1980a, 1980b), which utilises multiple methods in order to get a more comprehensive picture of a phenomenon, is useful as it brings more confidence to the findings through different methods used. The three data collection techniques used in this thesis complement each other, allowing me to gain different types of data from the participants, and hence, to get a more complete picture of the participants' behaviours and practices.

Chapter 4

Vowel lengthening

This chapter focuses on Thai *kathoey* and gay men's use of vowel lengthening, one of the linguistic variables examined in this thesis. Vowel lengthening is analysed in terms of its interactional meaning through the model of stance-taking (Du Bois 2007). The variable is also further examined in relation to its association with gender identity of non-normative men. I argue that stance-taking is the process which allows vowel lengthening to become associated with the gender identity through ideological connections between the two. In this chapter, background information is taken into consideration in the analysis, including the use of vowel lengthening in Thai in general and the stereotypes of Thai *kathoey* and gay men. The literature on phonological vowel length and vowel lengthening in Thai is first provided, before the process of data selection and coding is explained. Then, the distribution of vowel lengthening and the influence of significant factors are analysed and discussed quantitatively. Vowel lengthening is further discussed in relation to stance-taking and its association with gender identity of Thai non-normative men.

4.1 Vowel length and vowel lengthening in Thai

i	/kɾìt/	'dagger'	i:	/kɾì:t/	'to cut'
e	/ʔēn/	'ligament'	e:	/ʔē:n/	'to recline'
ɛ	/pʰéʔ/	'goat'	ɛ:	/pʰé:/	'to be defeated'
a	/fǎn/	'to dream'	a:	/fǎ:n/	'to slice'
ɔ	/klòŋ/	'box'	ɔ:	/klɔ:ŋ/	'drum'
o	/kʰôn/	'thick (soup)'	o:	/kʰô:n/	'to fell (a tree)'
u	/sùt/	'last, rearmost'	u:	/sù:t/	'to inhale'
ɤ	/ŋǎn/	'silver'	ɤ:	/dǎ:n/	'to walk'
ɯ	/kʰûn/	'to go up'	ɯ:	/kʰlû:n/	'wave'

Table 4.1: Thai vowels (Tingsabadh & Abramson 1993)

Thai has nine monophthongs. Vowel length in Thai is phonologically distinctive, and each of the nine vowels can be realised as either short or long (as shown in Table 4.1). The three high vowels /i/, /ɯ/ and /u/ can also be combined with /a/ to form the diphthongs /ia/,

/ua/ and /ua/, respectively. Diphthongs in Thai, however, do not have a phonological length distinction. The phonological vowel length distinction in Thai has been studied in terms of both production and perception. Abramson (1962), in the foundational phonetic study on Thai vowels and tones, measured the duration of vowels in isolation, minimal pairs, and connected speech produced by two Thai speakers. The vowel duration of one speaker was measured in all contexts whereas that of the other speaker was measured only in isolated contexts. Abramson finds that long vowels, analysed as geminates in the study, are relatively longer than short vowels. They were approximately 2.9 times longer in isolated condition and 2.5 times longer in the other two conditions. This vowel length distinction is also confirmed in Gandour (1984), where the duration of short and long vowels in the context of minimal pairs produced by five speakers was measured. The duration of short and long vowels is found not to overlap with each other. Gandour (1984) finds that long vowels are produced approximately two times longer than short vowels. The findings agree with Abramson's (1962) claim, which is that long vowels in Thai are generally 2 - 3.5 times longer than short vowels in comparable contexts. The perception of vowel length corresponds with the distinction in production. That is, native speakers of Thai can distinguish short and long vowels based on vowel duration (Abramson 1962). Later studies also confirm the significance of relative vowel duration in distinguishing different vowel length in Thai (Abramson 1974, Abramson & Ren 1990).

The production of distinctive vowel length in Thai is influenced by certain phonetic features, i.e. tone and stress. Thai consists of five lexical tones which can be divided into two main categories of static tones (mid tone, low tone and high tone) and dynamic tones (falling tone and rising tone). Abramson (1962) investigates the interaction between vowel duration and tones and finds that tones have an influence on the production of vowels in Thai. Considering vowels in isolation, Abramson (1962) finds that the mid and low tones are likely to be produced with longer duration than the rising tone, while the high and falling tones are likely to be shorter in duration than the rising tone. This generalisation, however, is drawn from the average duration of long vowels and diphthongs as the tokens of short vowels in the study only have low and high tones. Abramson (1962) mentions that the study has insufficient data of vowels produced in comparable phonological environments and suggests that data from connected speech are needed in order to confirm the correlation between tone and vowel duration. Gandour, Potisuk & Harper (1996) examine the influence of stress on vowel duration in Thai. The participants in their study were asked to read pairs of syntactically ambiguous sentences containing target syllables which are either short or

long vowels and either stressed or unstressed. Stressed syllables are those occurring before the phrase boundary while unstressed syllables are those before a word-internal boundary. It is found that long vowels are significantly longer than short vowels in stressed condition but not in the unstressed one. The distinction of vowel length is neutralised in unstressed syllables. As stressed and unstressed syllables in the sentence pairs correlate with particular syntactic positions, Gandour, Potisuk & Harper (1996) argue that the vowel length distinction in stressed syllables and the neutralisation of vowel length in unstressed syllables are the results of the use of prosody, particularly stress, to resolve structural ambiguity. In other words, the duration of vowels before the phrase boundaries is significantly longer than that before word-internal boundaries, and this enables speakers to disambiguate unclear sentences.

The distinction between short and long vowels discussed above shows the phonological vowel length in Thai. Thai speakers also make use of vowel duration in making phonetic distinction of vowel lengthening. Vowel lengthening is a linguistic variable existing among Thai speakers. It is a phonetic variable that is ideologically associated with expressiveness and gayness. Nuntiwatwipa (2004) examines the language use of groups of 40 Thai gay men. Each group had 3 - 7 members. The data were drawn from the conversations of each group. One of the linguistic features found in the data and thus categorised as “gay language” is the change of vowel. This includes the lengthening of both short vowels and long vowels. Nuntiwatwipa (2004) claims that gay men in his study use vowel lengthening in order to emphasise the meaning of a statement, be sarcastic or tease others. Examples from this study are shown in (4.1), (4.2) and (4.3). Lengthened vowels are indicated by the sign :. Words where they are used are shown in bold type. Final particles do not have any equivalence in English. They are thus indicated by the term “particle” itself in braces in the translation.

(4.1) tae i ni ko sao **sa**:

But she’s so feminine. {particle}

(Nuntiwatwipa 2004: 30)

(4.2) **o ho**: pak yai mak

Wow! The mouth is very big.

(Nuntiwatwipa 2004: 33)

(4.3) khunmo lo **ma:k** sao **ma:k** tae lo **ma:k**

The doctor is **so** handsome. **So** feminine but **so** handsome.

(Nuntiwatwipa 2004: 33)

Vowel lengthening in Thai has also been claimed as a linguistic feature of so-called “internet language.” It is used as part of the linguistic style in online chat rooms. According to Panyametheekul (2005), the use of spoken language in writing is a characteristic of language use in chat rooms. Participants in chat rooms tend to write with spelling which gives sound as similar to the pronunciation in spoken language as possible. This includes the repetition of letters representing either vowels or consonants, as shown in (4.4) and (4.5). Panyametheekul (2005) claims that the repetition of letters in spelling represents the lengthening of sound in actual pronunciation and helps make chat room participants feel as if they are talking in person. Both Nuntiwatwipa (2004) and Panyametheekul (2005) show that vowel lengthening is used by different groups of Thai speakers in different contexts.

(4.4) คกรายยยยยยยยยยยยย ใจรัยว่าเรา

khraiiiiiiiiii chairai wa rao

Whoooooooooo is mean to me?

(Panyametheekul 2005: 67)

(4.5) อู่นี้จ้ำาาาาาาาาาาาา คุ่ยไปเถอะ รอฝิ่งอะ สงสัยไม่มา แล้วมั้ง

yu ni chaaaaaaaaaaaaa khui pai thoe ro Phueng a songsai mai ma laeo mang

I’m here {particle}. Let’s keep talking. I’m waiting for Phueng. Maybe she’s not coming.

(Panyametheekul 2005: 67)

In addition, anecdotally, as a native Thai speaker, I have seen people use letter repetition on the internet, and heard vowel lengthening being used by Thai speakers in general, and this is not only limited to *kathoey* and gay men. A lot of men who identify with non-normative male roles in Thai society (including people in my social network and public figures like actors/actresses, DJs, and celebrities) use vowel lengthening in their speech. Interestingly, men who present themselves as straight or normative do not seem to use the variable, or at least not as much or as noticeably as women and non-normative men do. During my fieldwork, I noticed the use of vowel lengthening from the beginning. Some speakers use it so frequently that the variable is salient in their speech while some others do not use it that much. Therefore, based on the previous literature and my own observation, I argue that vowel lengthening is not a completely innovative linguistic variable. It is a linguistic variable that already exists among Thai speakers. My observation of Thai speakers in general and the participants in this study, and the limited amount of previous research on the use of vowel

lengthening, motivate me to examine the variable more systematically. I aim to find out how vowel lengthening is used by *kathoey* and *gay* men particularly, and whether the variable is at all connected to their gender identity, as my own anecdotal observations would suggest.

In this thesis, vowel length and vowel lengthening were coded impressionistically. Each vowel token was coded for whether it is a short or long vowel based on the standard pronunciation and whether it is lengthened. In order to validate the impressionistic coding, and ascertain the existence of distinctive vowel length and the phenomenon of vowel lengthening phonetically, acoustic measurements of sample vowels were conducted. Each vowel sample was derived from coming-out stories told by Shane (a member of the Undergraduates), Yoot (a member of the Postgraduates), and Mik (a member of the Professionals) during their interviews. These three participants were the first people in their group with whom I got into contact. A total of 120 tokens of stressed vowels were taken as samples to test for a vowel length distinction. The sample consists of 20 tokens of stressed non-lengthened short vowels and 20 of stressed non-lengthened long vowels. These tokens are the first 60 stressed non-lengthened short vowels and the first 60 stressed non-lengthened long vowels used in the coming-out stories. The average vowel duration for short and long vowels of each speaker, as well as the overall average, is shown in Table 4.2. The mean duration of short vowels is 90 milliseconds (SD = 17.32) while that of long vowels is 153.33 milliseconds (SD = 25.17). The difference in duration between short and long vowels is statistically significant, $t(4) = 3.59, p = 0.02$.

	Short vowels (milliseconds)	Long vowels (milliseconds)
Shane (Undergraduates)	100	150
Yoot (Postgraduates)	70	130
Mik (Professionals)	100	180
Average	90	153.33

Table 4.2: Average of vowel duration in non-lengthened vowels

The total of 97 lengthened vowels from the three participants – 20 short vowels and 48 long vowels – were taken as samples of tokens with vowel lengthening. Like non-lengthened vowels, these tokens are the first and only 20 lengthened short vowels and the first 48 lengthened long vowels encountered in the coming-out stories of Shane, Yoot and Mik. As shown in Table 4.3, lengthened vowels, both phonemically short and phonemically long, are

longer than non-lengthened ones. Short vowels that are lengthened are longer than long vowels that are not lengthened. Like for non-lengthened vowels, the phonological distinction of vowel duration (i.e., between phonemically short and phonemically long) is preserved among lengthened vowels. The mean duration of lengthened short vowels is 290 milliseconds (SD = 55.68) while that of lengthened long vowels is 413.33 milliseconds (SD = 40.41). Within lengthened vowels, the difference of duration between lengthened short vowels and lengthened long vowels is statistically significant, $t(4) = 3.11$, $p = 0.04$.

	Short vowels (milliseconds)	Long vowels (milliseconds)	Lengthened short vowels (milliseconds)	Lengthened long vowels (milliseconds)
Shane (Undergraduates)	100	150	340	390
Yoot (Postgraduates)	70	130	300	390
Mik (Professionals)	100	180	230	460
Average	90	153.33	290	413.33

Table 4.3: Average of vowel duration in non-lengthened and lengthened vowels

The measurement of vowel duration confirms that there is a phonological contrast of relative vowel duration in Thai. The length distinction is kept and remains significant among vowels which are lengthened. This phonetic distinction of short and lengthened long vowels is embedded in the phonological vowel length distinction in the language. Such a pattern of phonological distinction being maintained in phonetic variation shows how phonetics and phonology can interact with each other. Either due to internal or external factors, speakers vary their speech at the phonetic level. Such phonetic variation can lead to a change in the phonological system because the change of a sound has an effect on another sound in the system. A phonological unit can then be realised differently causing phonological change. The interaction between phonetics and phonology, and the possibility of such interaction leading to linguistic change can be seen, for example, in the variation of front vowels in New Zealand English (e.g. Watson, Maclagan & Harrington 2000, Maclagan & Hay 2007), and the close-mid vowels in Tyneside English, the variety of English spoken in Newcastle upon Tyne in England (e.g. Watt 1999, 2000, 2002). In the case of vowel lengthening in Thai, the phonetic variation does not affect the phonological system in the way that would cause changes to the system as in the case of New Zealand English and Tyneside English. Still, it

indicates the way phonetic variation and a phonological distinction in a language co-exist. As shown in Table 4.3, the length distinction between short and long vowels is maintained in both non-lengthened and lengthened vowels. This shows that the phonetic variation corresponds to the phonological distinction of vowel duration. Phonetic vowel lengthening and phonological vowel length work independently in parallel. The phonetic variation goes beyond the limit of phonological distinction in a sense that all lengthened vowels, both short and long, are longer than non-lengthened vowels, both short and long. The fact that length distinction is maintained in lengthened vowels shows to some extent the participants' effort to make this distinction clear and not mix non-lengthened and lengthened vowels. The phonetic variation of vowel duration fits into the phonological categorisation of vowel length distinction.

4.2 Data selection and coding

The data are derived from fourteen participants I got in touch with through my friendship network, as discussed in detail in Chapter 3. Both the interviews and the self-recordings are included in the dataset as the two provide different kinds of data. The data from the interview involved only me (as the interviewer) and the participants and this allowed for the control of several variables across all participants: the role of the participants as the interviewee, the topics of conversation, and the social situation (an interview). Self-recordings, on the other hand, are the interactions among the participants themselves, or between them and their other friends. The conversations are undirected. Self-recordings then involve more diverse data in terms of interlocutors, topics and the format of interaction. Despite these differences, the interviews were designed so as to minimise the differences between them and the self-recordings. The interactions in both the interviews and the self-recordings are informal. The atmosphere of the interactions is casual and friendly. It is true that the format of the interview is generally more rigid as it involves one being the interviewer and the other the interviewee, whereas in the self-recordings the participants do not play a particular role. However, just like in the self-recordings, the participants were free to narrate stories in the way they wanted, and not restricted to the question-answer format in the interview. They were able to elaborate their stories and add any details to their answers as much as they liked.

Approximately 10 - 15 minutes of each interview and each self-recording were chosen for the analysis. The selected part of each interview is the coming-out story narrated by the participants in the interview. During the interview, one of the topics I asked the participants

to talk about is their background and childhood. It is while talking about this issue that the participants told their coming-out story. Coming-out stories here refer to narratives of the participants when they started to notice their different behaviours from people with the same sex, recognise their non-normative gender and present their gender in public. Such recognition, as narrated in the interview, is a gradual process consisting of several events rather than one single moment or event. Normally the participants saw their difference when they were children. Thus, the coming-out stories analysed here are part of narratives about their childhood which focus on their gender. Focusing on the same kind of narrative, i.e. the coming-out story, in all interviews makes the data more comparable because topic of conversation becomes a controlled variable. The nine self-recordings consist of one from the Undergraduates, one from the Postgraduates, two from the Professionals and five from the individual participants. Unlike the data from the interviews, the extracts derived from self-recordings were not selected based on particular topics. They were selected due to more practical issues such as the quality of recording and the audibility. The interactions recorded by the Undergraduates and the Postgraduates are those among the group members. Four members of the Undergraduates – Shane, Gift, June and the other member who is not included in this study - were discussing courses they wanted to take during the next semester, as well as other topics. In the self-recording from the Postgraduates, five members – Yoot, Tor, Tony and the other two female members – participated in the conversation. It did not focus on any particular topic. The participants took turns in telling stories. The two self-recordings from the Professionals are not the conversations between the group members themselves but are the interactions of Mik and Max and their own work colleagues. In the interaction recorded by Mik, he and his colleagues addressed some issues from work but in a non-serious and jokingly manner. Similarly, in the interaction recorded by Max, he and his colleagues were talking during their lunch break. The conversation was full of laughter and humorous narratives. Also, the five self-recordings derived from the individual participants are the conversations with their friends, and do not focus on any issue in particular.

Analyses are based on approximately 140 minutes of recorded interviews drawn from a larger corpus of 17.6 hours, and approximately 119 minutes of self-recordings drawn from a larger corpus of 6.92 hours. The parts of the data extracted and analysed here then have the total recording time of approximately 259 minutes. The data analysed was segmented into intonation groups: 2678 intonation groups in interviews and 1995 intonation groups in self-recordings (4673 intonation groups in total). The grouping is based on pauses, semantic

coherence and prominent stressed syllables. An intonation group is composed of stressed and unstressed syllables. Stress in Thai is signalled by both pitch and duration, which also have phonemic functions in the language (Gandour, Potisuk & Harper 1996). Duration, however, is claimed to be the predominant acoustic cue in signalling stress in Thai (Potisuk, Gandour & Harper 1996). At the word level, Thai has a fixed stress pattern where the stress falls onto the last syllable of a word (Luangthongkum 1977). The stress pattern at the phrasal level follows that for the word level.

According to Luksaneeyanawin (1983), intonation groups are pause-defined units governed by phonological pauses and phonological tonics, i.e. prominent stressed syllables. In unmarked speech in Thai, the rightmost syllable of an intonation group receives the prominent stress and is the tonic syllable (Luksaneeyanawin 1983). The prominent stress can be in a different position of an intonation group where the speaker puts an emphasis on a particular part of information in the intonation group. In other words, the rightmost syllable in an intonation group is normally the most prominent stressed syllable receiving the pitch accent, but it needs not necessarily be the case. Also, there can be more than one stressed syllable in an intonation group. The example in (4.6) shows an unmarked intonation group where the rightmost syllable is the prominent information point and receives the prominent stress, indicated in bold type. In (4.7), the prominent information point and the prominent stress shift to *suai* ‘beautiful,’ which is not the rightmost syllable, either to indicate sarcasm or restrictiveness. The intonation group in (4.8) contains two prominent information points, and hence two information groups divided by a pause and two stressed syllables.

(4.6) /chan phop phanraya khon suai khong **khun**/
 I meet wife one beautiful of **you**
 ‘I met your beautiful wife.’

(Luksaneeyanawin 1998: 387)

(4.7) /chan phop phanraya khon **suai** khong khun/
 I meet wife one **beautiful** of you
 ‘I met your beautiful wife.’

(Luksaneeyanawin 1998: 387)

(4.8) /chan phop phanraya khon **suai** / ./ khong **khun**/
 I meet wife one **beautiful** of **you**
 ‘I met that beautiful wife of yours.’

(Luksaneeyanawin 1998: 388)

Internal features	External features
Syllable structure (open or closed syllable)	Speaker (random intercept)
Vowel (short vowel, long vowel or diphthong)	Friendship group (UG, PG, PRO)
Tone (mid, low, high, falling, rising)	Genre (interview or self-recording)
Vowel lengthening (yes or no)	
Rightmost position in an intonation group (yes or no)	

Table 4.4: Internal and external features coded in the analysis of vowel lengthening

After being segmented, every syllable which receives stress in an intonation group was coded for both the internal and external features, listed in Table 4.4. The internal features of syllable structure, vowel, tone, and rightmost position were coded in order to find out whether they have any influence on, or relation with, the occurrence of vowel lengthening. For syllable structure, an effect of syllable weight was expected. Heavier closed syllables were expected to positively correlate with vowel lengthening. Monophthongs were predicted to be the favoured linguistic condition for vowel lengthening as opposed to diphthongs, which have no phonemic length distinction. Different tones were claimed in Abramson (1962) to be produced with different vowel lengths. Tone was therefore predicted to be another factor influencing the occurrence of vowel lengthening. Rightmost position was hypothesised as a significant internal factor on vowel lengthening. As the rightmost syllable in an intonation group receives the prominent stress (Luksaneeyanawin 1983), it is phonologically the most important syllable, and a linguistic action is expected to occur with this syllable rather than other less important ones. Therefore, it was hypothesised that the rightmost position is the significantly preferred linguistic condition for vowel lengthening.

For external features, speaker was included as a random factor. Friendship groups and genre of the data were hypothesised as significant social factors. The members of the Undergraduates, the Postgraduates, and the Professionals, are different in several ways. They are different ages and they have different occupations, interests and lifestyles. They also vary in their gender identification and presentation. More importantly, the members in each group spend a lot of time together and have intimate friendships with each other. Such a bond was expected to shape their behaviours, including language use, as a group. That is, each group may use vowel lengthening in a particular way as a means of signifying in-group status. In terms of genre, as discussed earlier, interviews and self-recordings are different formats of interaction and contain different types of information. Such differences were expected to result in the difference in the frequency of vowel lengthening. Coming-out

stories from interviews focus on the participants' gender. If vowel lengthening is used significantly more frequently in the interview, that might suggest some kind of connection between gender and the variable.

4.3 Distribution of vowel lengthening

	Interviews (4151 tokens)		Self-recordings (2627 tokens)		% Vowel lengthening	Total N	
	% Vowel lengthening	N	% Vowel lengthening	N			
Undergraduates	9.67	1169	8.59	326	9.43	1495	
Postgraduates	7.54	915	4.84	661	6.41	1576	
Professionals	14.84	492	10.51	552	12.46	1044	
Miscellaneous	4.51	1575	5.79	1088	5.03	2663	
Total N	6778						

Table 4.5: Distribution of vowel lengthening in the dataset

As shown in Table 4.5, there are 6778 stressed tokens included in the analysis, 4151 tokens from the interviews and 2627 tokens in the self-recordings. The five individual participants are grouped together as Miscellaneous. This is not to indicate that they belong to the same friendship group in the way the members of the other three groups do. These participants have no connections to each other and they take part in the study individually. They are categorised here into the same group only for the purpose of the quantitative analysis. They all share the feature of not belonging to any of the three friendship groups. These individual participants are then grouped together so that all participants can be seen as roughly four groups. This way of categorisation, instead of considering each individual participant individually for the overall pattern, allows us to see the big picture of the dataset more clearly. Of the whole dataset, 507 tokens (7.48% of the total) occur with vowel lengthening. Among the three friendship groups, the Professionals uses vowel lengthening the most, 12.46% of their tokens, following by 9.43% use of the Undergraduates and 6.41% of the Postgraduates.

	Significance
Syllable structure	
Vowel	✓
Tone	✓
Rightmost position	✓
Friendship group	
Genre	

Table 4.6: Predictors for vowel lengthening overall

All the tokens coded were quantitatively analysed. Logistic regression analysis was conducted in order to find out which features are significant factors influencing the use of vowel lengthening. Four internal features and two external features were included in the regression as being the potential factors: syllable structure, vowel, tone and rightmost position (internal); and friendship group and genre (external). The results are shown in Table 4.6. Three features are significant factors conditioning the occurrence of vowel lengthening. They are all internal features – vowel, tone and rightmost position. None of the external features is significant. Additionally, all six predictors are examined for their interactions. However, none of the predictors shows any interaction in conditioning vowel lengthening. Table 4.7 shows the results of the logistic regression of the three significant linguistic features. The factor weight (FW) indicates how strong the correlation is between the dependent variable and a predictor. In this case, it shows how strong the effect of a linguistic factor is in determining the occurrence of vowel lengthening.

Input prob.	0.04		
Total N	6778		
Deviance	3156.83		
	FW	%	N
Tone			
Falling	0.68	11.52	2075
Rising	0.55	7.57	423
Mid	0.51	6.51	2258
High	0.49	6.38	956
Low	0.28	2.63	1066
<i>Range 40</i>			
Rightmost position			
Yes	0.68	14.06	2432
No	0.32	3.80	4346
<i>Range 36</i>			
Vowel			
Long vowel	0.64	8.76	3653
Short vowel	0.56	6.56	2684
Diphthong	0.31	2.49	441
<i>Range 33</i>			

Table 4.7: Logistic regression of the linguistic factors conditioning vowel lengthening

Vowel lengthening is most favoured by the two contour tones, the falling and the rising tones. The falling tone is highly preferred for vowel lengthening with the factor weight of 0.68. The rising tone, despite being the second most favoured tone for vowel lengthening, does not show a strong effect on vowel lengthening with the factor weight of only 0.55. Similar to the rising tone, the correlation between vowel lengthening and the mid tone is almost neutral, while the factor weight of the high and the low tones shows negative favouring. The falling tone is a contour tone, meaning there is a pitch movement within the pronunciation of the tone. Such movement provides the speaker more space to play with the vowel length. This may be only one of the reasons why the falling tone is the favoured condition for vowel lengthening since the rising tone, which is also a contour tone, does not turn out to be a significant factor. Also, interestingly, the findings here do not agree with what is claimed in previous literature about Thai tones and vowel duration. According to

Abramson (1962), as discussed earlier, the mid and low tones are likely to be produced with longer duration than the rising tone, while the high and falling tones are likely to be shorter in duration than the rising tone. The findings here seem to be in the opposite direction to what is claimed in Abramson (1962). This may be due to the differences between the data analysed in Abramson (1962) and here in this study as Abramson (1962) only analyses long vowels and diphthongs in citation forms and minimal pairs, and not connected speech.

The rightmost position in an intonation group is the position which is more preferred by vowel lengthening with the factor weight of 0.68, whereas the non-rightmost position shows negative favouring. As discussed earlier, according to Luksaneeyanawin (1983), the rightmost position in an intonation group receives the prominent stress. In unmarked speech, the rightmost position is important since it functions as the prominent information point and the end of the information unit receiving the phonological significance. It is therefore not unexpected that the vowel of the rightmost syllable, which is the most significant syllable in an intonation group, is more likely to be lengthened. If a vowel in an intonation group is to be lengthened, it tends to be the one in the rightmost position, the most phonologically prominent syllable. This confirms the importance of the rightmost syllable as claimed by Luksaneeyanawin (1983). It is not only the lengthening of a vowel but also the lengthening of the most prominent vowel of an intonation group.

Long vowels are more likely than short vowels and diphthongs to be lengthened with the factor weight of 0.64. The factor weight of short vowels is only slightly above 0.50 indicating that the correlation is almost neutral. Generally, monophthongs are the preferred linguistic environment for vowel lengthening as opposed to diphthongs, which show the negative favouring. Diphthongs in Thai do not have phonemic length distinction. It is therefore not surprising that diphthongs do not provide the favouring linguistic condition for vowel lengthening.

As shown in Table 4.6, none of the social factors are significant factors conditioning vowel lengthening. The results of logistic regression of the entire dataset indicate that friendship group does not significantly correlate with the occurrence of vowel lengthening. The fact that friendship group is not a significant factor is unexpected. As previously discussed, the three friendship groups – the Undergraduates, the Postgraduates, and the Professionals – are different in many respects. They also use vowel lengthening at different levels of frequency, as shown earlier in Table 4.5. These were expected to make friendship groups become a significant factor conditioning vowel lengthening. However, that is not the case.

The results indicate that belonging to different friendship groups does not make the participants distinct from each other in terms of their use of vowel lengthening. That is, vowel lengthening does not appear to be used as part of a package of features which index their group membership.

Even though friendship groups are not a significant factor, it is useful to see the similarities and differences among the three groups and the significant factors within each group compared to those of the dataset in general, considering their differences in the frequency of use of vowel lengthening. The Undergraduates and the Professionals use vowel lengthening more frequently than the Postgraduates. Interestingly, the members of the Undergraduates and the Professionals are similar in terms of their personality. Based on my observation during the fieldwork, the members of the two groups are more expressive and affected than those of the Postgraduates. That is, the members of the Undergraduates and the Professionals are popular in the society they are/were in. Other people know them even though they do not know everyone. They are the centre of attention. As discussed earlier and also will be discussed later in more details, vowel lengthening is generally associated with expressiveness in Thai. It is used to intensify the meaning of an utterance the speaker is trying to convey. It was predicted that the Undergraduates and the Professionals construct themselves among friends and in public as fun and humorous characters, and vowel lengthening can be one of the linguistic features used to index this personality trait. Looking at the results separated by groups allows us to see whether the Undergraduates and the Professionals show similar trends in terms of the conditions preferred for vowel lengthening, which factors are important for them, and whether the Postgraduates differ from the other two groups in terms of factors influencing their use of the variable. Table 4.8 shows the results of logistic regression of the significant factors determining the occurrence of vowel lengthening among the three friendship groups.

	Undergraduates			Postgraduates			Professionals		
Input prob.	0.05			0.05			0.04		
Total N	1495			1576			1044		
Deviance	828.62			683.98			607.66		
	FW	%	N	FW	%	N	FW	%	N
Tone									
Falling	0.71	15.40	487	0.69	10.85	470	0.63	14.56	309
Rising	0.45	5.50	109	0.63	9.91	111	0.50	19.57	46
Mid	0.45	6.35	441	0.44	4.23	520	0.48	13.07	398
High	0.53	9.59	219	0.45	4.95	222	0.54	11.27	142
Low	0.34	4.60	239	0.28	2.37	253	0.36	6.04	149
	<i>Range</i>	37			41			27	
Rightmost position									
Yes	0.67	17.94	496	0.64	9.89	728	0.79	24.31	469
No	0.33	5.21	999	0.36	3.42	848	0.21	2.96	575
	<i>Range</i>	34			28			58	
Vowel									
Long vowel	0.63	10.10	782	-	-	-	0.80	17.47	601
Short vowel	0.61	9.64	612	-	-	-	0.50	6.56	381
Diphthong	0.28	2.97	101	-	-	-	0.20	1.61	62
	<i>Range</i>	35						60	
Syllable structure									
Open syllable	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.56	18.16	391
Closed syllable	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.44	9.19	653
	<i>Range</i>							12	

Table 4.8: Logistic regression of the linguistic factors conditioning vowel lengthening among the three friendship groups

Tone and rightmost position are the two factors which are significant for every group, while vowel is significant only for the Undergraduates and the Professionals, and syllable structure only for the Professionals. Long vowels are significant factors for both the Undergraduates and the Professionals with the factor weight of 0.63 and 0.80, respectively. Short vowels are also significant for the Undergraduates, and almost as significant as long vowels. For the Professionals, syllable structure is another significant factor. Open syllables shows the positive correlation for vowel lengthening with the factor weight of 0.56.

The general pattern when considering the entire dataset shows that the two contour tones, especially the falling tone, is favoured for vowel lengthening. Table 4.8 shows that the three groups have the same preference as the overall trend. The falling tone receives the highest factor weight of 0.71, 0.69 and 0.63 among the Undergraduates, the Postgraduates and the Professionals, respectively. The correlation between the rising tone and vowel lengthening is weaker than that between the falling tone and vowel lengthening. The rising tone is only favoured by the Postgraduates receiving the factor weight of 0.63. It is neutral among the Professionals and shows the negative favouring among the Undergraduates. For these two groups, the other tone with a positive correlation apart from the falling tone is the high tone. However, the factor weight the tone received from the two groups is also almost neutral, 0.53 from the Undergraduates and 0.54 from the Professionals. The mid and the low tones show negative correlations in all groups. Therefore, the falling tone is significantly preferred for vowel lengthening in every friendship group. The rightmost position in an intonation group is a linguistic environment strongly correlated with vowel lengthening among the three friendship groups. The Undergraduates, the Postgraduates and the Professionals show the same preference for vowel lengthening to occur in the rightmost position, with the factor weight of 0.67, 0.64 and 0.79, respectively.

Apart from friendship groups, the genre of the data is another social factor considered in the analysis. Apart from the format of interaction and the interlocutors, another difference between interviews and self-recordings is the topic of conversation, which is expected to lead to differences in the frequency of use of vowel lengthening. However, the results indicate that the genre of the data is not a significant predictor for vowel lengthening. The differences in the topics of conversation and interlocutors do not predict the difference in the occurrence of vowel lengthening in the dataset. This suggests that the topics of conversation, and particularly that of gender, do not have an influence on vowel lengthening, at least in terms of frequency of use.

So far in this chapter, I have discussed vowel lengthening and the favoured context for lengthened vowels to occur. The quantitative findings indicate that vowel lengthening is preferred in certain linguistic environments. In those favoured environments, vowel lengthening can be interpreted as being linguistically conditioned. However, lengthened vowels are not used only in such linguistic environments. They are also used by the participants in linguistic contexts which do not conform to the general tendency of preference. For example, lengthening is found among short vowels, vowels which have static tones, and vowels of syllables which are not in the rightmost position of an intonation

group. This indicates that linguistic factors may not give the complete picture of why vowel lengthening is used. This leads to a question of why they use vowel lengthening in these other disfavoured linguistic conditions. If the use of vowel lengthening cannot be accounted for entirely by linguistic factors, then the question is: what are the motivations for the participants to lengthen certain vowels?

In the quantitative findings, social factors are found not to be significant predictors for vowel lengthening. The examination of social factors in the quantitative analysis is limited to two predictors – friendship group and genre – and different friendship groups and different genres of the data do not predict different patterns of use or frequencies of vowel lengthening. The two factors were examined in terms of their effect on the frequency of vowel lengthening in the entire dataset. Such an investigation contributes to an understanding of how certain social features of the participants and social settings of the conversation might influence the frequency of vowel lengthening. That is, the two factors serve to explain the social aspects of vowel lengthening at the macro level through the frequency of the variable in the whole dataset. The quantitative analysis may not cover the whole range of possible social aspects of the variable since instances of vowel lengthening are not considered in detail or in the particular context they are used.

What is still missing in the quantitative analysis is the explanation of the participants' external motivation for using vowel lengthening, even in linguistic conditions which are shown to be statistically disfavoured for vowel lengthening. Finding no significant constraint of friendship group or genre does not mean that vowel lengthening is not being used socially (or to do some kind of social work). It just means that it is not being used differently across groups or genres. So it could be the case that all speakers are using it to do the same kind (or amount) of social work. In order to answer more thoroughly the questions of why the participants use vowel lengthening, and whether the variable is used for social purposes, in the next section, the data are analysed qualitatively. The analysis in the next section takes the interactional context into account. All instances of vowel lengthening are examined within the context they are used. The analysis aims to complement the quantitative analysis and explain the social and stylistic motivations for the use of vowel lengthening.

4.4 Vowel lengthening and stance-taking

In this section, vowel lengthening is examined in terms of its functions in interaction. The analysis explores how vowel lengthening is used taking the interactional context into consideration. The goal is to find out whether vowel lengthening has any stylistic use among

this group of speakers. The use of vowel lengthening is analysed through the framework of stance-taking, specifically Du Bois' model of the stance triangle (Du Bois 2007). In this section, I argue that vowel lengthening is used by the participants as part of stance-taking. The variable is a tool for strengthening the force of a stance taken. The analysis shows that vowel lengthening empowers both propositional and interactional positioning. It plays an important role in intensification and such a role can be captured by the model of stance-taking.

This analysis includes only the data from self-recordings of the three friendship groups – the Undergraduates, the Postgraduates and the Professionals. This is because self-recordings consist of interactions between the participants and people in their friendship group. Thus, in terms of people participating in interactions, self-recordings involve a more diverse group of interlocutors as opposed to the interviews where the participants talked to the interviewer only. The participants are also more intimate and familiar with their interlocutors compared to the relationship they have with me. Therefore, self-recordings are expected to provide relatively more “natural” interactional data, or at least show how the participants actually use vowel lengthening in informal interactions with their peers. Additionally, the format of the interview is relatively stricter. In this study, the interactions in the interviews are not rigidly in the question-answer format. The atmosphere of the interviews in general is friendly and relaxing. However, the power in the interaction is to some extent non-reciprocal. One person plays a role of interviewer asking questions and hence controls the direction of the conversation. The interviewee, despite being allowed to elaborate on their answer as much as he wants, and in the way he wants, is limited in terms of topics by the format of the interview. In self-recordings, on the contrary, the participants are not restricted by either the format or the direction of the interaction. Self-recordings are therefore believed to provide relatively more “natural” or “real” interactional data in a sense that the participants are not limited or controlled by any means.

4.4.1 Stance-taking

Du Bois (2007: 163) defines stance as “a public act by a social actor, achieved dialogically through overt communicative means, of simultaneously evaluating objects, positioning subjects (self and others), and aligning with other subjects, with respect to any salient dimension of the sociocultural field.” According to Du Bois (2007), an act of stance-taking consists of three acts – evaluation, positioning and alignment. In order to arrive at a particular stance, a stance-taker evaluates a target or a stance object, and then positions

himself/herself in relation to the object. A position taken by a stance-taker may align or disalign with that taken by another stance-taker, who also has to evaluate the same object and position himself/herself in relation to the object. Therefore, stance-taking is composed of the three acts, which determine the relation between a stance-taker and a stance object, and between stance-takers themselves. Du Bois (2007) describes an act of stance-taking towards a stance object accomplished by a stance-taker through the concepts of subjectivity and positioning, while the relation between stances taken by different stance-takers towards the same stance object is characterised through the concepts of intersubjectivity and alignment.

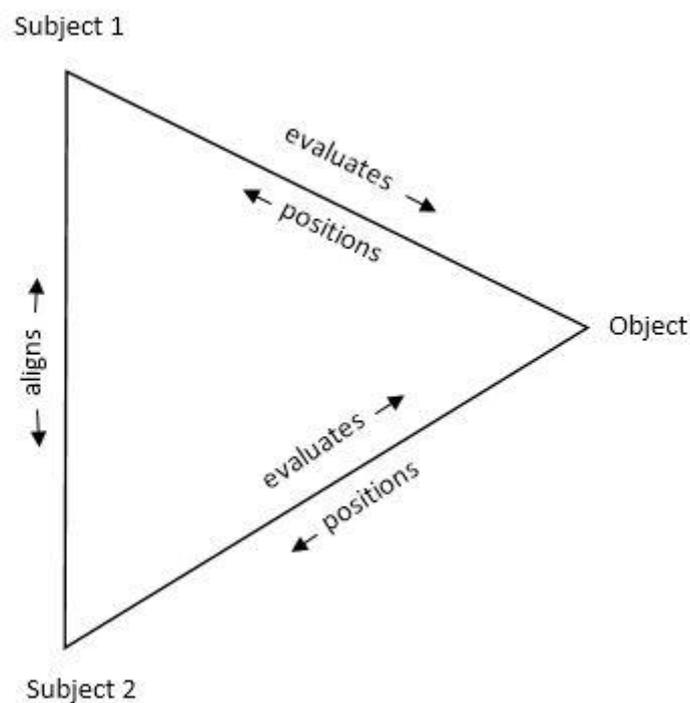


Figure 4.1: The stance triangle (Du Bois 2007)

Part of stance-taking is an act of positioning of a stance-taker or a stance subject in regard to a stance object. In other words, stance-taking shows subjectivity. As stance-taking occurs when people communicate in interaction, it is interactional or, to use Du Bois' (2007) terminology, dialogic. It does not only involve one's subjectivity or positioning to an object, but also one's alignment with other stance-takers. Two or more stance subjects may align with each other, by sharing the same position. They may also position themselves differently and thus disalign with each other. Alignment, interpersonal alignment (Agha 2007) or interpersonal stance (Kiesling 2009), therefore shows the relation between two or

more stance subjects, or intersubjectivity. In other words, subjectivity is accomplished through the act of evaluation, which enables a stance subject to position himself/herself towards an object evaluated. When a stance object is evaluated by different stance subjects, the positioning of different subjects, or intersubjectivity, is related through alignment. Therefore, intersubjectivity is dialogically constructed through the shared stance object (Du Bois 2007).

A stance can be epistemic or affective. Both epistemic stance and affective stance are about a relationship between a stance-taker and a stance object. Epistemic stance is the positioning in terms of one's knowledge about a stance object. Kiesling (2009) sees epistemic stance as a way one expresses his/her relationship to utterances one produces. The positioning lies in the content of an utterance where an act of stance-taking takes place. Evaluation of a stance object, and positioning towards an object regarding the knowledge one has about the object, and the certainty one has for the information, lead to an epistemic stance. Affective stance is about emotion. It shows the positioning in terms of the emotional state of a stance-taker toward an object.

In the next section, I analyse vowel lengthening through the framework of stance-taking. I examine what kinds of stances are taken by the participants when vowel lengthening is used. Then I look at how vowel lengthening influences the act of stance-taking. In other words, I focus on the interactional functions of vowel lengthening, and how the interactional functions affect or shape a stance in any way.

4.4.2 Vowel lengthening as an enhancing tool for stance-taking

In the data analysed, I look at each instance of vowel lengthening, considering the interactional context where it is situated, and identify what kind of stance is being taken at that particular interactional moment. The analysis reveals that two kinds of stance, following Du Bois' (2007) model, are taken in the dataset: epistemic stance and affective stance. Vowel lengthening plays an important role in strengthening the act of stance-taking and in intensifying epistemic or affective force.

4.4.2.1 Epistemic stance intensified by vowel lengthening

- (4.9) 01 Pook: phi khit wa tha koet E dai a
- 02 Mik: uem=
- 03 Pook: =khao tong ten nae loei a
- 04 Mik: tong ten

- 05 Pook: praman wa baep pai duai kan arai yang ngia
 06 Mik: [khong mai khanat nan mang
 07 Pook: [nong khao muean () sa-uek sa [uek nit nueng na [tonnan thi ru wa mi-
 08 Mik: [ro] [thi ru wa E-
 09 Pook: oe
 10 Mik: tae E a khao pen thi ruchak nai wongkan **ma:k**
 11 [phro nong khon nia khao khluukkhi ma **na:n**
 12 Pook: [ni khue ni ko cha pen run mai mak loei nia arai ngia [[laughter]
 13 Mik: [oe oe]
 14 Pook: kot kot wai noi [laughter]
 15 Nok: oe mai mak

Translation

- 01 Pook: I think if E wins
 02 Mik: Yes=
 03 Pook: =He/she must be dissatisfied
 04 Mik: Must be dissatisfied
 05 Pook: Like they are going together something like that
 06 Mik: [It may not be that bad
 07 Pook: [He/she was like stunned, st [unned a bit [when knowing that there's-
 08 Mik: [Really] [When knowing that E-
 09 Pook: Yes
 10 Mik: But E is **very** well-known in this area
 11 [Because this person, she has been around for **a long time**
 12 Pook: [This is, this is a very new generation, something like that [[laughter]
 13 Mik: [Yes yes]
 14 Pook: To threaten her a bit [laughter]
 15 Nok: Yes, very new

The extract in (4.9) is an example of vowel lengthening used as a tool for strengthening the force of the epistemic stance. In the Thai transcript, in (4.9) and also all of the following examples, lengthened vowels are indicated by the sign :, and the words in which they are used are shown in bold type. In the translation, words corresponding to those where vowel

lengthening occurs in the original Thai speech are shown in bold type, although the position of the words may be different from the original Thai transcripts. The extract in (4.9) is a conversation among Mik, a member of the Professionals, and his work colleagues outside the work setting. In the extract, they talk about a fashion design competition organised by the magazine they work for. The goal of the competition is to select brands that are qualified to take part in a fashion week abroad. Mainly in the extract, Pook says that she thinks that a brand called M, mentioned in line 03 as *khao* 'he/she,' will not be happy if another brand E wins the competition (due to their previous conflict). Mik then says that despite being a new brand, the designer of E has been working in fashion for a long time, and that makes the brand well-known, and thus it has a chance to win.

In line 03, Pook takes an epistemic stance showing how she predicts what is going to happen if E wins the competition. Pook thinks the brand M will not be satisfied. Mik in line 04 repeats what Pook says potentially to ask for confirmation or clarification. In line 05, Pook explains how she arrives at the prediction in line 03. Pook thinks that M will not be happy if M and E are going to the fashion week together. In line 06, Mik disagrees with Pook. He takes an epistemic stance and shows his disalignment to Pook saying that what Pook says in line 05 should not be the case. Overlapping with Mik in line 06, Pook in line 07 provides further clarification and more evidence for her stance. She refers to the reaction of M when receiving the news that E gets through to the next round and is still in the competition. In line 08, Mik says *ro* 'really' asking for confirmation from Pook, who confirms what she says in line 09. In lines 10 and 11, where vowel lengthening is used, Mik takes an epistemic stance by giving the information he knows about E. In line 12, overlapping with line 11, Pook uses reported speech to show what she wants to say to the designer of E. She laughs, and the laughter is clarified in line 14 where Pook explicitly mentions that the reported speech in line 12 is a way to threaten the designer of E. The laughter indicates the teasing tone and suggests that this may only be a joke and she may not really intend to say it.

In this extract, vowel lengthening is used in lines 10 and 11 where Mik takes an epistemic stance showing the knowledge he has about E. Earlier in line 07, Pook mentions that M seems to be uncomfortable when knowing that E is still in the competition. Mik shows his cooperation in the overlap towards the end of line 08. However, in lines 10 and 11, he says that E is well known because of the designer who has been working in fashion for a long time. This implies that it is not surprising or unexpected if a new brand like E is still in the competition or wins it. The statement Mik makes in lines 10 and 11 indirectly questions the reaction of M mentioned by Pook in line 07. That is, the person from M mentioned in line 07

should not be stunned as the situation is not unexpected. In other words, in spite of being cooperative in line 08, Mik shows his disagreement in lines 10 and 11 by providing information and taking an epistemic stance. In the two lines, the vowels of *mak* ‘very’ and *nan* ‘a long time’ are lengthened. Vowel lengthening here serves to emphasise the statement made by Mik. It intensifies the epistemic stance Mik is taking and makes the force of the stance stronger. By lengthening the vowel, Mik does not only take an epistemic stance, but also makes it more forceful. Although the word *mak* ‘very’ is an intensifier itself, it is intensified even more through vowel lengthening. Mik indicates that he really knows about the statement he is making, and that he is certain. Vowel lengthening shows his certainty, enhances the force of the epistemic stance, and makes the statement more convincing.

- (4.10) 01 Yoot: khue tha khun pai khana thi (.) thi khonkhang **ne:rd**
 02 khun pai khana thi lang **la:ng**
 03 khue cha chai kham wa lang chai khana thi baep wa
 04 maikhoi cha hi so noi
 05 tae ching ching khana hi so man ko ku mueng lae
 06 phiangtae wa at cha baep wa nip nit nueng
 07 Tor: **o:=**
 08 Yoot: =at cha nip nit nueng bao bao yangchen (.)
 09 okay tha pen banchi tha pen rat- tha pen banchi ratsat
 10 an ni ko cha high khuen ma radap nueng=
 11 Tor: =uem=
 12 Yoot: =tae tha khun pai choe kharu (.) khun pai choe (.) **nithe:t**
 13 rue khun pai choe arai yang ngi=
 14 Tor: =a=
 15 Yoot: =an ni khun ko cha choe ik baep nueng thi man low long ma noi nueng
 16 an ni ko cha baep wa straightforward mak khuen
 17 an ni ko cha [baep wa raeng khuen
 18 Tor: [[laughter]

Translation

- 01 Yoot: If you go to faculties which (.) which are quite **nerd**
 02 You go to those which are quite **low**

- 03 Using the word “low,” I mean those who are like
 04 Not quite from high society
 05 But actually, those high ones also use *ku mueng*.
 06 Just that they do so a bit discreetly
 07 Tor: **Right=**
 08 Yoot: =They may do it a bit discreetly, for example (.)
 09 Okay, if it’s Accountancy or Po- If it’s Accountancy or Political Sciences
 10 They’re higher to some extent=
 11 Tor: =Right=
 12 Yoot: =But if you go to Education (.) you go to (.) **Communication Arts**
 13 Or something like that=
 14 Tor: =Right=
 15 Yoot: =You’ll see another style which is a little lower
 16 It’s like more straightforward
 17 It’s [like more explicit
 18 Tor: [[laughter]

The extract in (4.10) is derived from the conversation among the members of the Postgraduates. They are studying in the same university for their master degree but did their bachelor degree in different universities. Tor previously saw a group of students speaking impolitely despite the presence of a university lecturer. In the interaction before the extract selected here, Tor asks Yoot what students from the university Yoot graduated from are like as the university Yoot graduated from is one of the most prestigious universities in the country. Tor asks Yoot if students there also talk impolitely like those he saw. In the extract here is Yoot’s answer to Tor’s question. Yoot explains that students from different schools have different behaviours, while Tor acknowledges Yoot’s answer throughout the extract.

In the extract, vowel lengthening is used in lines 01, 02, 07 and 12. In lines 01 and 02, Yoot answers the question explaining what types of students speak impolitely. He gives the information he knows about students from his undergraduate university, hence taking an epistemic stance towards the students. Yoot lengthens the vowels of *nerd* ‘nerd’ and *lang* ‘low’ to emphasise the important characteristics of students which influence the way they talk. Vowel lengthening does not only emphasise the content of the utterance, but also strengthens the epistemic stance Yoot is taking. The variable indicates that Yoot is confident of what he is saying, and at the same time that *nerd* ‘nerd’ and *lang* ‘low’ are really

important in Yoot's opinion. Then in lines 03 - 06, Yoot clarifies himself by explaining that students who are "low" also speak impolitely (*ku* and *mueng* are impolite first- and second-person pronouns, respectively) but do so discreetly. In line 07, Tor acknowledges Yoot's answer. The term *o* itself is used by Tor to take an epistemic stance showing his understanding of Yoot's explanation. By lengthening the vowel, Tor emphasises that he clearly or really understands Yoot's answer, and strengthens his epistemic stance towards Yoot's explanation. Similar to vowel lengthening used in lines 01 and 02, Yoot lengthens the vowel of *nithet*, the short term for 'Communication Arts,' to intensify the epistemic force. In line 12, Yoot continues to answer Tor's question and give more information. The use of vowel lengthening in his answer makes it more forceful and convincing. It serves to assure Tor that Yoot is certain that what he says is true.

4.4.2.2 Affective stance intensified by vowel lengthening

- (4.11) 01 Shane: i tua sam m [a yang mak khong mai mai koen song chut chet a
 02 Gift: [chak si m
 03 Shane: khao khong khai baep ()
 04 June: kho tua khruengbin chak [yipun plian pen farangset dai mai kha
 05 Shane: [tae yoe koenpai a song chut chet]
 06 (.)
 07 June: ngan
 08 Shane: khue man [phoeng newly grad
 09 June: [mai lot kodai kha
 10 kho tua khruengbin yipun phrom pocket **mone:y** [laughter]
 11 Bam: kho nueng lan yen pho [kha
 12 June: [[laughter]

Translation

- 01 Shane: The 3-million one [the lowest price won't be lower than 2.7
 02 Gift: [From 4 million
 03 Shane: He/she may sell like ()
 04 June: Can I have a plane ticket from [Japan, can I change to France
 05 Shane: [But it's too much, 2.7]
 06 (.)

- 07 June: So
- 08 Shane: Well we're [just newly graduated people
- 09 June: [You don't have to give me discount
- 10 Can I have a plane ticket to Japan with pocket **money** [laughter]
- 11 Bam: Just one million Yen is [enough
- 12 June: [[laughter]

The extract in (4.11) is derived from the conversation among the members of the Undergraduates. In the extract, they are talking about a flat which is for sale. Bam previously talked to a sales agent of the flat who told him that the price of the flat can be negotiated. Bam told the other members about it. In this extract, Shane says that even though some discount is possible, the price will not be lower than 2.7 million, and that it still costs too much for them who are “newly grad” (when the conversation was recorded, they were going to finish their undergraduate degree in about one year). June then jokes about the price negotiation of the flat by asking for a plane ticket instead of discount, and Bam joins in later.

In line 01, Shane expresses his opinion about the possible lowest price he thinks the sales agent can give. In line 04, June uses the reported speech as if he is addressing the sales agent, and negotiates with the agent. Then in line 05, overlapping with June, Shane continues to explain what he thinks. A pause in line 06 indicates that both June and Shane hesitate to continue after the overlap. In line 08, Shane provides the reason why he thinks 2.7 million is still too much. In lines 09 and 10, June continues his reported speech like the one in line 04. The reported speech shows his negotiation with the sales agent. Unlike line 04, there is interactional evidence or contextualisation cues (Gumperz 1982) which indicate that lines 09 and 10 are a joke. The form and content of the utterance in line 04 are similar to those in lines 09 and 10. June repeats what he says in line 04 in line 09 and 10 with a slight change. This indicates that line 04 is potentially meant to be a joke, too. In line 04, June is interrupted by Shane, so he probably has not fully finished his point yet. That is why he continues in lines 09 and 10 where the core of the utterance in line 04 is repeated. The humour is firstly indicated by the laughter of June at the end of line 10 after his utterance. Then in line 11, Bam supports June by continuing the joke. Since June asks for a plane ticket and pocket money for Japan, Bam asks for 1 million Yen. The humour is confirmed again by June in line 12 where he laughs at Bam's follow-up joke.

In this extract, vowel lengthening is used in line 10 as part of the joke made by June. In line 10, June jokes about the price negotiation for the flat. As discussed earlier, a few interactional cues indicate that the utterances in lines 09 and 10 are intended to be humorous. June does not aim to say so to the sales agent. The utterances are for humorous purpose, and hence June takes an affective stance in lines 09 and 10. Apart from the contextualisation cues mentioned earlier, the lengthening of the vowel of *money* in line 10 also serves as an indicator for humour. In this case, vowel lengthening does not have an emphatic role in terms of the content of the utterance. Instead, the unusually long vowel helps increase the power of humour and hence intensifies the affective force of the stance June is taking. Without vowel lengthening, the humour would still remain. However, alongside other contextualisation cues, vowel lengthening helps indicate the intended humour more clearly and makes the joke more effective.

- (4.12) 01 Yoot: tha rao thue khong rao cha rusuek wa man tong naep tua hai mak thisut
 02 doithi wa ham pai don khon uen
 03 Tor: ue hue=
 04 Yoot: =tha pai don khon uen pup duai prakan tangchai rue mai tangchai kotam
 05 rao tong rip khothot [thanthi
 06 Pla: [khothot
 07 Tor: chai
 08 Yoot: tae khon samai ni mai khon samai ni khue maeng i dok
 09 mueng sue ma loei kha sip thung
 10 Tor: [laughter]
 11 Yoot: mueng doen yang ngan la kha:

Translation

- 01 Yoot: If we carry stuff, we will feel that it has to be as close to us as possible
 02 And it mustn't touch others
 03 Tor: Yes=
 04 Yoot: =If it touches others, either intentionally or not
 05 We have to apologise [immediately
 06 Pla: [Apologise
 07 Tor: Yes
 08 Yoot: But people these days don't do so. People these days are, damn, bitch
 09 You go ahead and buy stuff of 10 bags
 10 Tor: [laughter]

11 Yoot: You walk like that {particle}

The extract in (4.12) is derived from the conversation among the members of the Postgraduates. In this extract, Yoot is criticising social manners of people nowadays. He compares himself and people in his generation with those younger generations. He mentions that he, and people in his generation, will surely apologise if his personal belongings hit other people. He criticises people in younger generations for not having the same social manners and behaving carelessly to other people. Yoot starts out in lines 01 and 02 by talking about himself and people from the same generation. In line 03, Tor acknowledges Yoot. Yoot continues in lines 04 and 05 saying an apology is needed if his belongings disturb others. His statement is agreed by Pla in line 06 where Pla mentions the apology and overlaps with Yoot. Tor in line 07 is also being cooperative in the talk by again acknowledging Yoot. In lines 08 and 09, Yoot criticises *khon samai ni* 'people these days' through the use of swear words and reported speech. Tor perceives Yoot's criticism as humorous as indicated by his laughter in line 10. Yoot continues with his criticism in the form of reported speech in line 11.

In line 08, Yoot uses the swear words *maeng* and *i dok* as part of his criticism. *Maeng* is a common swear word while *i dok* is stereotypically associated with *kathoey*. After swearing, in line 09 Yoot uses the reported speech as if he is addressing the target of the criticism, i.e. *khon samai ni* 'people these days.' The reported speech is indicated by his use of the second-person pronoun *mueng*, which is an impolite form, to address people these days. The use of *mueng* is significant as Yoot does not normally use the form with the other members of the group. Therefore, using *mueng* here marks the utterance as reported speech targeting at people Yoot is criticising. Also, Yoot uses the feminine polite final particle *kha* within the reported speech. The use of *kha* seems to be in contrast to the impolite pronoun used earlier. However, the two forms share the same feature of not being usually used by Yoot when interacting with the other members of the Postgraduates. Therefore, both *mueng* and *kha* work together in indicating his unusual way of using language, and hence signifying the reported speech. Additionally, the use of the impolite pronoun and the feminine polite final particle also help convey the sarcastic meaning of the utterance. Through the reported speech, Yoot says to *khon samai ni* 'people these days' (the target of the criticism) that they can buy and carry a lot of stuff. The content of the utterance, the use of the forms Yoot does not normally use, and the contrast between the two forms suggest that Yoot aims to be sarcastic and potentially humorous. In other words, in lines 08 and 09, Yoot takes an affective stance towards the target of his criticism. The use

of swear words, the impolite pronoun and the polite final particle serve to make Yoot sound more emotional and make his sarcasm more effective. Tor's laughter in line 10 indicates that he perceives the reported speech in line 09 as humorous.

Yoot continues his sarcasm in line 11. Similar to line 09, Yoot uses the impolite second-person pronoun *mueng* and the feminine polite final particle *kha* within the reported speech. Like in line 09, Yoot takes an affective stance, and the affective force is strengthened by his word choice as discussed earlier. In addition to that, the affective force in line 11 is also intensified by speaking loudly and vowel lengthening. In the original transcript and the translation, the use of a loud voice is indicated by underlining. In line 11, *doen* 'walk' and *kha*, a feminine polite final particle, are pronounced louder than other words. Also, here the vowel of the polite final particle *kha* is lengthened. The final particle does not have any equivalence in the English translation, and hence is indicated by the term "particle" itself in braces in the translation. The use of the final particle does not bring any change to the utterance in terms of the content. The lengthening of the vowel of *kha*, alongside the louder voice and the word choice itself as previously discussed, has the stylistic use of making the utterance more emotional and fun. With the vowel being lengthened, the affective force is even more intensified. The sarcasm and the humour are more obvious and more compelling.

- (4.13) 01 Pook: nuek wa thi nang yu ni nan
 02 Mik: mai mai mai=
 03 Pook: =[laughter]=
 04 Mik: yu khang khang
 05 Pook: pen- hh pen arai na kae [laughter]
 06 Nok: arai wa
 07 Mik: arai na=
 08 Nok: =yan
 09 Pook: phalangng [an bang yang [laughter]
 10 Nok: [o [laughter]
 11 Pook: phalangngan thi runraeng
 12 Mik: hh runr [aeng **ma:k**
 13 Pook: [thi samat da ka ku dai yu tang nan wa [baep ao
 14 Nok: [[laughter]

- 15 Pook: ni mai chai khon [ro nia [laughter]
 16 Nok: [[laughter] (.) ni da na nia hh
 17 Mik: d- maithueng nu pao
 18 Pook: [oe [laughter]
 19 Nok: [oe
 20 Mik: **i do:k**
 21 Pook: [[laughter]
 22 Nok: [[laughter]

Translation

- 01 Pook: I thought this person sitting here
 02 Mik: No, no, no=
 03 Pook: =[laughter]=
 04 Mik: I was next to them
 05 Pook: Was- hh what is it called [laughter]
 06 Nok: What
 07 Mik: What=
 08 Nok: =Spirit
 09 Pook: Power [of some kind [laughter]
 10 Nok: [Right [laughter]
 11 Pook: Vicious power
 12 Mik: Hh **ve [ry** vicious
 13 Pook: [Which has been reproaching me for quite a while [like, oh
 14 Nok: [[laughter]
 15 Pook: You're not human [right [laughter]
 16 Nok: [[laughter] (.) She is reproaching you hh
 17 Mik: Are you talking about me
 18 Pook: [Yes [laughter]
 19 Nok: [Yes
 20 Mik: **Damn**
 21 Pook: [[laughter]
 22 Nok: [[laughter]

In (4.13), the extract derived from the conversation between Mik, a group member of the Professionals, and his colleagues, Mik is being teased by his colleagues Pook and Nok. Previously in the interaction, Mik tells a story about an accident he saw on the way to work that morning. The accident involved three vehicles crashing into each other. In the extract, Pook teases Mik by saying that Mik was in one of the vehicles and died, and the Mik she is talking to now is actually the spirit of Mik. Mik takes part in the teasing as he does not realise in the first place that he is the one being teased. Nok later points out to Mik that he is the target of the tease. When Mik realises that, he swears while Pook and Nok laugh.

In line 01, Pook starts the tease but does not finish his utterance. Mik denies in line 02 that he was in any of the vehicles involved in the accident. Pook, who has not finished her tease, laughs in line 03, which indicates the intended humour. Mik clarifies himself in line 04 saying he was next to the accident. Pook continues laughing in line 05 where she asks for help as she cannot think of the right word. In lines 06 and 07, Nok and Mik try to help Pook, and Nok comes up with a term in line 08. However, Pook finds the term she is looking for. She says it in line 09 with laughter. Her tease is acknowledged and supported by Nok in line 10 where Nok says *o* “right” to signal that she understands what Pook means, and laughs at the tease. Pook continues the tease in line 11 which is supported by Mik in line 12 as he does not yet realise he is the one being teased. The tease continues in lines 13 - 15. Nok then in line 16 mentions explicitly that Mik is the target of the tease. In line 17, Mik asks for confirmation. He is assured by Pook and Nok in lines 18 and 19, respectively, that he is the one being teased. Then Mik swears in line 20, and that makes Pook and Nok laugh in lines 21 and 22, respectively.

In the extract, vowel lengthening is used in lines 12 and 20. In line 12, Mik responds to what Pook says in line 11. He is being cooperative in the conversation by continuing the tease as he does not know that he is being teased. He wants to take part in the tease and align with Pook. In line 12, Mik supports Pook who says *runraeng* ‘vicious’ by adding an intensifier *mak* ‘very.’ By doing that, Mik shows his alignment to Pook and takes an affective stance making his statement more expressive. The intensifier serves to bring a stronger meaning to the utterance. Here, as discussed in regard to the extract in (4.9), the vowel of the intensifier is lengthened. The affective force is enhanced not only by the intensifier itself, but also by vowel lengthening. The intensifier is even more intensified with its vowel being lengthened, which in turn strengthens the affective stance. In line 20, Mik lengthens the vowel of *dok*, part of *i dok*, which is the swear word typically associated with *kathoey*. Mik asks for confirmation in line 17 and gets the answer from Pook and Nok in lines 18 and 19 that he is

the one they are teasing. Mik then swears in line 20. The swearing shows his expression towards what Pook and Nok do, and indicates Mik's affective stance. It adds more fun to the conversation. The swearing is received by Pook and Nok with laughter. This suggests that the swear word is not to be taken seriously or as an indicator of negative feeling. By lengthening the vowel, Mik makes the swear word more emotional and powerful. The affective force conveyed through the word is intensified.

4.4.2.3 Epistemic stance intensified via affective stance by vowel lengthening

- (4.14) 01 June: tua cha long arai long duai si
 02 sathaban phasa cha long yangngai
 03 Gift: ko nia [sathaban-
 04 Shane: [Nego: pai long Eng Nego:
 05 Gift: wan angkhan kap pharuehat (chan ko mi)
 06 (0.3)
 07 Bam: Eng wan arai
 08 Shane: Eng Nego nia mi chao **wan angkha:n**
 09 Bam: oe chai long () Eng dai mai wa
 10 (.)
 11 Gift: rian Eng Nego yang diao
 12 (.)
 13 June: Discuss Nego
 14 (.)
 15 Shane: chao **wan angkha:n**
 16 Gift: dai la
 17 (.)
 18 Shane: [pai long
 19 Gift: [ko klaipen pen lo- pen song laeo chai ma

Translation

- 01 June: What are you taking, can I go with you
 02 Language Institute, what are we going to do
 03 Gift: Well, this [Language-

- 04 Shane: [Nego, take Eng **Nego**
- 05 Gift: Tuesday and Thursday (I have)
- 06 (0.3)
- 07 Bam: Eng what day
- 08 Shane: Eng Nego is on **Tuesday** morning
- 09 Bam: Yes, right what about taking () Eng, does that work
- 10 (.)
- 11 Gift: Take Eng Nego only
- 12 (.)
- 13 June: Discuss Nego
- 14 (.)
- 15 Shane: **Tuesday** morning
- 16 Gift: I got it
- 17 (.)
- 18 Shane: [Take it
- 19 Gift: [So I ta- we have two, right

In (4.14), the members of the Undergraduates are discussing their schedule for the coming semester and the courses they want to take. Shane tells others to take a course called Eng Nego, while other members do not show any particular interest in Shane's suggestion of the course. June, Gift and Bam seem to focus on their own schedules rather than respond to Shane's suggestion. Shane starts to persuade his friends to take Eng Nego in line 04 where he first mentions the course. In lines 05 - 07, Gift and Bam continue to discuss their schedule and do not respond to Shane. Shane then in line 08 provides more information about the schedule of the course, which is that the course is on Tuesday morning. Lines 09-13 show Bam, Gift and June still talk about their own schedules and ignore Shane. Shane emphasises again in line 15 that the course is on Tuesday morning, and continues to persuade his friends in line 18.

In this extract, vowel lengthening is used by Shane as part of his persuasion. In line 04, Shane takes an epistemic stance towards the course called Eng Nego. He mentions the name of the course showing his knowledge about the course and his certainty that Eng Nego is the course which others should take. In line 04, Shane lengthens the second vowel of *Nego* which is part of the course's name. In lines 08 and 15, Shane continues to convince

07 Kaew: hoei wairun baep dek dek [yu arai yang ngia mahalai dek dek

08 Max: [oe **mai**:]

09 Kaew: ko rusuek [wa baep ey loei wai rue pao arai yang ngia

10 Ben: [man khemkhon mak

Translation

01 Max: Gosh, you have to watch th [is

02 Kaew: [No, my brother/sister watched it

03 A[nd like

04 Max: [Really]

05 Kaew: So much fun and [at first I thought, like, it's like

06 Fai: [Yes (.) so much fun]

07 Kaew: Teenagers, like kids [something like that, university kids

08 Max: [Right, **no**]

09 Kaew: So I felt [like, oh, maybe I'm too old, something like that

10 Ben: [It's very interesting

In (4.15), Max, a member of the Professionals, and his work colleagues are chatting during their lunch break. One of the things they talk about is a Thai television series which was very popular at that time. Max really likes the series and encourages everyone to watch it. He also remembers a lot of details from the series and mentions them in the conversation. In line 01, Max encourages Kaew, one of his colleagues, to watch the series. Kaew explains in lines 02 and 03 that her sibling watches it. Max asks for confirmation in line 04, thus being cooperative in the conversation. Kaew continues talking in line 05 saying that her sibling enjoys it, and the statement is supported by Fai in line 06. In lines 05 and 07, Kaew says that she gets the wrong impression about the series in the first place, and presumably that is why she did not watch the series at first. Max confirms in line 08 that Kaew's impression is wrong. Here Max takes an epistemic stance showing his knowledge about the series. He confirms that the series is not a kid's programme like the way Kaew understood in the first place. Max lengthens the vowel of *mai* 'no.' Vowel lengthening functions as the tool for augmenting the power of his epistemic stance. It shows Max's confidence that he really knows about the series and is certain that the impression Kaew had at first is wrong. Apart from showing his confidence and intensifying the force of his epistemic stance, vowel lengthening here also introduces the affective stance into the act of stance-taking. As in the

extract in (4.14), here vowel lengthening has a mitigating effect. Max affectively evaluates Kaew and disagrees with Kaew's impression of the series, i.e. interpersonally disaligns himself with her. Vowel lengthening strengthens his assertiveness while at the same time makes him sound friendly and not too aggressive. In addition, vowel lengthening shows the emotional engagement of Max. It allows him to be more expressive and engaged in the conversation. This brings more fun and liveliness to the conversation, hence the less aggressive disagreement. Vowel lengthening enables Max to disagree with Kaew in a fun, friendly and less aggressive fashion while maintaining his assertiveness. It strengthens the affective force, which then strengthens the epistemic stance making the disagreement more effective and powerful.

Shane in (4.14) and Max in (4.15) have different goals of stance-taking. Shane tries to persuade his friends to take a course while Max disagrees with his friend's perception of a television series. However, in these two extracts, the two participants make use of vowel lengthening in the same fashion. That is, vowel lengthening is used for enhancing the effect of the epistemic stance both directly and indirectly. The direct influence of vowel lengthening on the epistemic stance is as discussed in 4.4.2.1: it directly links to the intensified meaning of the content showing the speaker's emphasis and assertiveness. Vowel lengthening indirectly links to the epistemic stance via affective stance. The variable introduces affective force into the act of epistemic stance-taking. It introduces a friendly and entertaining tone and expression into the conversation and emphasises the speaker's emotional involvement. Such affective force has the mitigating effect of softening the tone of the utterance. The emotional effects brought by vowel lengthening makes the interlocutors feel more related and able to associate themselves with what the speaker says more easily. Consequently, the introduction of affective force through vowel lengthening makes the epistemic stance even more robust.

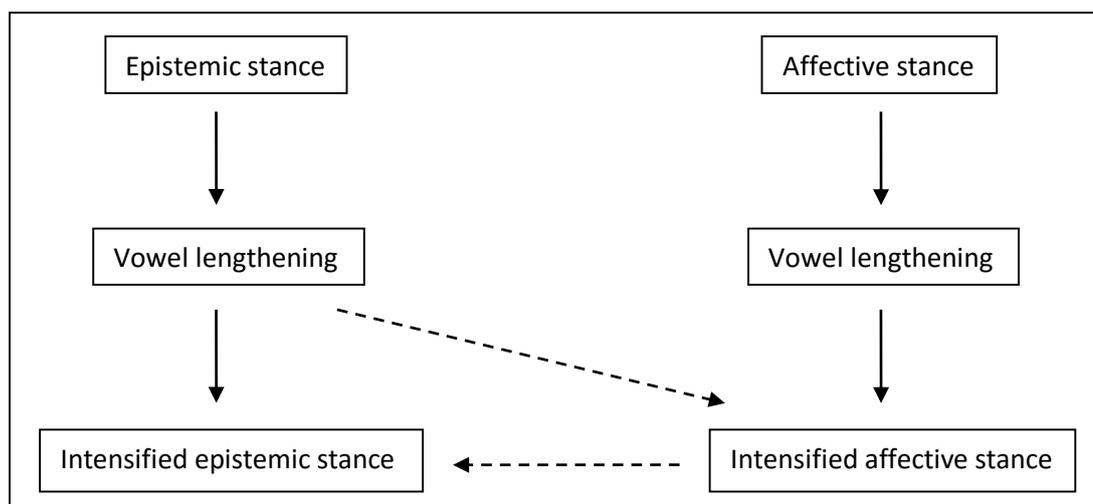


Figure 4.2: Vowel lengthening and stance-taking

Figure 4.2 summarises the intensification of stance-taking achieved through vowel lengthening discussed in this section. As discussed in Du Bois (2007), a stance-taker evaluates an object and positions himself/herself in a certain way, which may or may not align with another stance-taker. A speaker or stance-taker may take either an epistemic or an affective stance towards a stance object. In the data analysed here, vowel lengthening is used among this group of non-normative men as a means of enhancing the force of a stance taken. A speaker takes a stance through their utterance. Certain vowels in the utterance of the stance-taking are lengthened. Vowel lengthening directly intensifies the force of epistemic and affective stance as indicated in Figure 4.2 by the solid arrows. The variable makes the power of stance even stronger. Apart from the direct relation between vowel lengthening and the intensified force of stance, vowel lengthening can also in certain cases intensify an epistemic force via affective stance. In such cases, an epistemic stance is strengthened both directly and indirectly. The indirect relation between vowel lengthening and intensified epistemic stance is composed of the layering of the affective force on the epistemic force. While taking an epistemic stance, the speaker lengthens certain vowels. Vowel lengthening brings affect in to the act of epistemic stance-taking. Affect, conveyed through vowel lengthening, results in the augmentation of the epistemic force and helps the speaker to achieve his/her goal in the interaction.

This section has focused on the relation between vowel lengthening and stance-taking. The variable has been examined at the interactional level. The analysis has revealed the interactional goal of stance-taking and how vowel lengthening contributes to the act of stance-taking at the moment of speaking. The next section will focus on the role of vowel lengthening beyond the interactional level of stance-taking. Vowel lengthening will be

discussed in relation to the broader social category of gender, and how such a relationship is formed through the act of stance-taking.

4.5 Vowel lengthening and its association with gender identity of non-normative men

This section aims to relate the use of vowel lengthening of the participants to the presentation of their gender identity as non-normative men. Vowel lengthening and stance-taking are viewed beyond their interactional use. The analysis in this section seeks to investigate the relationship between vowel lengthening and the gender identity of Thai *kathoey* and gay men as constituted through stance-taking. The analysis shows how momentary positions become associated with a more established social category. Firstly, the importance of interaction for the construction and emergence of identity will be discussed. Interaction is also discussed in relation to non-normative gender identity more specifically. Then vowel lengthening is argued to be associated with, and be, an indirect index of gender identity of *kathoey* and gay men. Such association is made possible not only by the act of stance-taking, but also by the stereotypical image available in Thai society of non-normative men.

4.5.1 Interaction and identity

Sociolinguistics has long focused on the relation between language and social categories. Traditionally, linguistic features are mapped onto pre-defined social categories such as men and women, or working class and middle class. Macro social categories have been studied as existing kinds of identity in a society. The way a group of speakers talk is assumed to directly index a social category the speakers belong to. More recent sociolinguistic studies have turned to focus more on the micro level of identity in local contexts. Social categories emerge as flexible and locally significant rather than as pre-existing (e.g. Bucholtz & Hall 2005, Eckert 2008). Interaction is where linguistic features are used for certain interactional goals. It is at the micro level of language where already existing associations between linguistic features and macro-level identities get used (and get used in particular ways) to construct ideologically connected social types and micro-level identities.

Conventionally, broad social categorisation and normative identity are treated as static and even pre-determined by one's biology, particularly sex and age. However, in this thesis, as in many other variationist and sociolinguistic studies, identity is viewed as flexible and constitutive produced in the course of interaction, i.e. the emergence principle of identity

(Bucholtz & Hall 2005). The speaker constructs certain kinds of identities at the interactional level using particular linguistic features. For an identity to emerge in interaction, the associations between linguistic features and broad identity categories have to already exist in the society, and hence allow the speaker to draw upon the associations in particular contexts (Ochs 1992). Identity in this point of view is interactionally constructed. Therefore, interaction is important as it is where the speaker constructs their identity using linguistic means. Linguistic resources used by the speaker may relate to an identity either directly or indirectly (Ochs 1992). In an indirect indexical relation, linguistic features are linked to identity through momentary positioning of the speaker. It is the momentary positions which are then linked to the identity of more durable social categories.

As proposed by Ochs (1992), gender is related to language both directly and indirectly, and the indirect indexical relations are constituted through stances, acts and activities which connect linguistic features with gender. The indirect indexical relationship applies not only to gender but also to other types of identities. During an interaction, the speaker makes use of linguistic features, which contribute to interactional characteristics or stances. Such use allows the speaker to identify with momentary types of self. Linguistic features are used for interactional purposes providing meanings conveyed at that point of interaction. A stance which is habitually used can become ideologically associated with the more permanent subject position of the stance-taker (Jaffe 2009). The habitual use of a stance makes it become part of one's "habitual persona" (Eckert 2008: 470). That is, repeated use of certain linguistic features to signify certain interactional positioning makes the meanings of the linguistic features more solid, and become an indication of certain personality types; hence, the process of stance accretion (Rauniomaa 2003). The speaker projects particular kinds of persona or personality type at the moment of speaking through the use of linguistic features associated with such ways of self-presentation. It is these momentary stances, acts and activities which are ideologically mapped onto the macro-level identity the speaker is constructing. Such momentary use of language enables linguistic features to be associated with the broader social categories the speaker identifies with. The association of linguistic features with identity is possible due to the ideological relation between the two which are available in a culture, i.e. the indexicality principle (Bucholtz & Hall 2005). A kind of identity is perceived, believed, or stereotyped to behave in a certain way or be a particular kind of person. When certain linguistic features are repeatedly or habitually used to do certain things or take certain stances in interaction, and such interactional acts or positionings are ideologically related to a social category in a culture, such linguistic features then become

indirectly indexical of the category. In other words, the speaker makes use of micro-level linguistic structures to project micro-level stances or personas at an interactional point, which then become associated with macro-level identities through beliefs available in cultural ideology.

Non-normative genders, like normative genders and other kinds of identities, are linguistically constructed through indirect indexicality. Podesva (2007) examines the speech of a gay man in different settings looking at his use of falsetto in particular. He finds that the variable is used by the speaker to indicate expressiveness in his speech. With the variable's association with expressiveness, the speaker uses it as part of his projection of the diva persona in the setting where he was casually chatting with his close friends. Expressiveness is ideologically perceived as non-normative for men. Therefore, falsetto, which is used to show the speaker's expressiveness, becomes associated with the gay identity. In other words, falsetto is not directly linked to gay identity as such, but relates to expressiveness which is ideologically connected to being gay. Not only linguistic features, but a language itself can be used as a means of indicating certain values, which are connected to a gender category. Transgendered men in Tongan or *leiti* (Besnier 2002, 2003, 2004) are in a marginalised position in Tongan society. They seek for upward social mobility and construct their identity through the use of English, which is a way of aligning with privilege, modernity and cosmopolitanism, the values associated with the language.

Kathoey and gay men are generally thought to a part of the non-normative gender in Thai society. They are associated with certain types of personality and activities. Language is used as a means of constructing their gender identity by drawing upon indexical relations between linguistic features and the macro-level gender category circulating in the society. In the next section, vowel lengthening is examined in relation to the identity of gay and *kathoey*. Considering the use of the variable as a tool for stance-taking, the analysis focuses on how such interactional use of vowel lengthening becomes part of the construction of their gender identity, and indirectly indexes the category of non-normative men.

4.5.2 Vowel lengthening and the gender identity of *kathoey* and gay men

As argued in the previous sections, vowel lengthening can be seen from the perspective of stance-taking as a means of intensifying the force of stance-taking. It strengthens the power of the stances taken by the speaker epistemically or affectively. Such use of vowel lengthening seems to agree with the use by Thai speakers in general as a means of showing expressiveness as claimed by previous literature on the variable (Panyametheekul 2005).

This section focuses on the connection between vowel lengthening and the identity of *kathoey* and gay men. Vowel lengthening is argued to be associated with *kathoey* and gay men through the act of stance-taking. The variable is discussed here as ideologically linked to the gender identity of *kathoey* and gay men due to the way *kathoey* and gay men are stereotypically perceived by the society in general.

4.5.2.1 The stereotypes of *kathoey* and gay men

As discussed in Chapter 2, humorous and entertaining personalities are strongly perceived to be important parts of being *kathoey* and gay men in Thai society. It is these personality types that *kathoey* and gay men made use of as a means of gaining position in the society. Due to such stereotypical perception, *kathoey* and gay men are aware of the way they are expected to behave by the society. Some of them live up to society's expectation for pragmatic reasons as a way of being accepted. The employment of humour for such purpose is mentioned in the interview of certain participants in this study.

(4.16) Gift: kiaokap stereotype thi bok wa muean muean pho khru pen- (.) khru th- thi tong ma cha tong talok tong pen tut yang ngia kha (.) khao ko cha muean nu ko don bangkhap ma muean thi bok khao bangkhap ma wa tong pen yang ngia tha- tha yak thamngan hai man okay

It relates to the stereotype I've mentioned. If a tutor who takes the job has to be funny, has to be *tut*. It's like I was also told to be like that, like I've told you. They told me to be like that if I wanted to work for them.

man- khue muean rao mai khoei mai khoei hen kathoey pokka- thammada riaproi raiproi nai sue a suan tha baep pokkati thammada thammada loei laeo ma phut (.) choei choei muean chai ying thuapai man man man man man mai koet a kha

It's like we've never seen ordinary and well-mannered *kathoey* in the media. Ordinary *kathoey* talking normally like men and women do, you won't become popular.

The extract in (4.16) is part of the story Gift, a participant of the Undergraduates, tells about his job as a tutor and how it is related to his being *kathoey*. He mentions that the requirements when he started the job are being *tut*, a casual term for *kathoey*, and being funny. He was requested by his potential employer then to be funny while teaching. This personality requirement was difficult for him at first as he is normally a calm and quiet

person. He did not know how to teach in such an entertaining way as requested. His employer then asked him to copy the style of another tutor. Gift copies exactly everything from that tutor before he later develops his own entertaining teaching style. Gift's story shows that Thai society expects *kathoey* to be humorous, but in fact not all *kathoey* and gay men are humorous as stereotypically perceived to be the case. In the case of Gift, he presents himself as humorous at least when working as a tutor only to fulfil the job requirement even though it goes against own personality. The humorous personality is a means for him to achieve his goal, which is to get and maintain the job position. Gift also points out that it is not common to find "ordinary" *kathoey* in media, referring to *kathoey* who are not funny or overly expressive as stereotypically expected, and behave more normatively like men and women. He mentions that "ordinary" *kathoey* are not successful in their career. This again emphasises the role of the entertaining personality type as a way of becoming popular and accepted in the society. It has the function of fulfilling society's expectation, which leads to a better chance of success for *kathoey* and gay men.

(4.17) Shane: laeotae duai na bangthi tong ngia aep man nara:k sawat di khrap nong nong nong ko cha talok (.) phro rao kha pai set laeo a laeo ko baep sawat di krap nong nong nong ko a hi hi hi: narak chang loei rai ngia (.) klaipen muktalok pai kha wa rao phut khrap dai

It also depends. Sometimes I have to, like, pretend to be masculine, cute, "Hello *khrap* everyone" and that's funny (.) Because I've already said *kha* and then like "Hello *khrap* everyone." They go "Hehehe, you're so cute" something like that (.) It becomes a joke that I use *khrap*

Another member of the Undergraduates, Shane, is also a tutor. In the interview, Shane mentions that he often has to be humorous to make the lessons entertaining and attract his students' attention more effectively. The humorous personality is an important part of his job. In the extract in (4.17), Shane mentions his use of two polite final particles *khrap* and *kha*. The former is the masculine form while the latter is the feminine one. His students find his use of the masculine final particle funny as he previously uses the feminine form and his students are aware that he is *kathoey*. His use of *khrap* then is funny for students as it clashes with Shane's gender presentation. Shane's gender is the centre of such incongruous language use. His gender identity as *kathoey* is the source for humour. That is, it is Shane's intention to *aep man* 'pretend to be masculine' at times, despite his usual feminine presentation, and make a joke of it. Like Gift, Shane intentionally wants to be humorous and

entertaining for the job he is doing. Therefore, people who identify as *kathoey* and gay men are expected to be humorous, and, as suggested in (4.17), their humour can be created having their non-normative gender as the target of the humour.

- (4.18) Max: man phuea khwam talok rue pa
Mik: sanuk
Max: tong talok kathoey tong talok [laughter]
Mik: doem a man tong-
Max: oe man ma chak nai ko mai ru no at cha phrowa ma chak i Nam
Mik: oe
Max: kan thi baep
Mik: tit tit kan ma nanlae
Max: khue rao rusuek wa khue pho tha rao thamtua talok nia khon khao sanuk man dairap kan yomrap man at cha muean kathoey lai lai khon
Mik: oe
Max: thuk khon yang Bookko aria yang ngia
Mik: thi tong tham oe
Max: thuk khon ko tong tham muean tham phuea
Mik: pho talok laeo man dairap kan yomrap talok laeo den
Max: talok laeo khon chop
Mik: talok laeo pen thi- thi sonchai
Max: na cha pen pomdoi khong khon thi pen kathoey
Mik: rue plao
Max: khon thi pen gay rue plao thi thamhai tong baep (.) you tong mi arai sak yang thi thamhai (.) samat step up khuen ma nai sangkhom dai

Translation

- Max: It's for humour, right?
Mik: Fun
Max: You have to be funny. *Kathoey* have to be funny [laughter]
Mik: Previously you had to
Max: Well, I don't know where it comes from. We may get it from Nam
Mik: Yes
Max: The way we

- Mik: We copy each other
- Max: I feel that if I'm funny, people will feel fun and I'm accepted. It might be the same as many *kathoey*.
- Mik: Yes
- Max: All of them, like Bookko for example
- Mik: Have to do, yes
- Max: All of them have to do, do it to
- Mik: Being funny, you're accepted. Being funny, you're outstanding.
- Max: Being funny, people like you
- Mik: Being funny, you get the attention
- Max: This might be the weakness of those who are *kathoey*
- Mik: Isn't it?
- Max: Those who are gay men, isn't it, which makes them, like, you have to have something which enables you to move up in the society

Kathoey and gay men are also associated with the affected style or personality including in speech, which can lead to humour. In (4.18), Mik and Max of the Professionals respond to my question about their affected personality, which is previously mentioned by them. Both of them agree that such personality provides fun and humour. Like Gift and Shane of the Undergraduates shown in (4.16) and (4.17), Mik and Max see this kind of personality as a way of matching society's expectation, and hence being more accepted. What Mik and Max say here shows that they intentionally present themselves as fun and humorous for a particular purpose. Mik and Max also think that such a situation applies to not only them, but also *kathoey* and gay men in general. They see this way of presenting oneself as something every *kathoey* and gay man has to do to advance himself in society. It is a way of getting attention and gaining a position in society.

The way *kathoey* and gay men in Thai society present themselves in a certain way in order to fit themselves into and be part of the society is not uncommon. Similar situations have been found in other societies. The Mainstream group of gay men and lesbian women in Israel, for example, vary in the use of their mean pitch in relation to their persona projection corresponding to the Israeli gender stereotype (Levon 2009, 2010). Levon investigates the interaction between gay/non-gay topics and narrative/opinion discourse types, and their relation to Israeli gay men and lesbian women's mean pitch level. He finds that in narrative discourses, both gay men and lesbian women follow the Israeli gender stereotype. That is,

on gay-related topics, lesbian women speak with higher mean pitch levels while gay men speak with lower mean pitch levels following the stereotypical pattern. But the pattern in opinion discourses is reversed; gay men speak with higher mean pitch in gay topics while lesbian women speak with lower mean pitch. Such pattern follows the Israeli stereotypes of gay and lesbian speech. Even though the Mainstream men and women project different personas in different discourse types, this indicates the significance of stereotypes, and how these Israeli gay men and lesbian women alter their speech according to the stereotypes in order to show that they are part of the normative ideological conceptualisation.

The way Thai gay men, *kathoey* and their speech are perceived and stereotyped as related to expressiveness and humour is not unusual. Goodwin (1989) claims that humour is a means of communication associated with gay men. Also, expressiveness and humour can be related to the way homosexual people speak in general, i.e. “camp talk” (Harvey 1998). Camp refers to the acts of attracting attention “noisily, flamboyantly, bizarrely” as a way of signifying one’s homosexuality (Legman 1941: 22 reprinted in Cameron & Kulick 2006). Camp style features extravagance, playfulness and non-seriousness (Sontag 1964), and is associated with homosexuality generally.

Even though expressiveness is perceived as one of the prominent features of being *kathoey* and gay men as discussed earlier, it is in fact also linked to femininity more generally. Popularly in Thai society, and like in most other societies, women are believed to be more emotional and expressive than men. It is more accepted for women than men to express their emotions explicitly. Therefore, the characteristic of being expressive is associated with femininity. Such association is present in the way men and women are expected to differ in their language use to express their feelings. For example, in Thai, Prasithratsint (2002) claims that reduplication with tonal change is used as a means of expressing intensification, e.g. *kliát kliàt* ‘really hate’ and *dám dām* ‘very black,’ but is typically perceived as women’s way of speaking.

4.5.2.2 Vowel lengthening constituting to the stereotypes of *kathoey* and gay men

As discussed in the previous sections, vowel lengthening serves as an intensifying tool for the act of stance-taking. The variable is used to strengthen the epistemic force and the affective force. Such intensification work done by vowel lengthening helps fulfil the interactional goals of the speaker. The speaker takes a stance aiming to achieve an immediate goal in the conversation such as persuading and swearing. Vowel lengthening reinforces the effect of the stance taken and hence helps the speaker reach their goal more

easily. Considering the function of vowel lengthening through the frame of stance-taking, the variable is employed for interactional purposes yielding the effect at the local or immediate level of use. Repeated use of vowel lengthening for interactional purposes, however, leads to the association of the variable with more stable personality types and social categories.

The act of stance-taking gives a linguistic variable an interactional or momentary function. The social meaning of a variable at the interactional level is situated in the immediate context it is used. Such momentary meaning can be accumulated after being used repeatedly. A variable gains a more enduring meaning, rather than only conveying an interactional stance at the moment of speaking. That is, the speaker habitually uses a variable to take a stance, which then not only signifies a momentary self of the speaker, but also becomes part of the speaker's permanent personality (Eckert 2008). Stances and personality types can further accumulate and constitute an even more durable social category. Such process of stance accretion (Rauniomaa 2003) is an ideological one occurring in bottom-up fashion (Bucholtz & Hall 2005). In the case of vowel lengthening discussed here, the variable is argued to be an indirect index of the non-normative gender identity of Thai *kathoey* and gay men through the process of stance accretion.

In the act of stance-taking, vowel lengthening has an intensification function making the epistemic stance and the affective stance stronger. The variable enhances the epistemic force highlighting the confidence and assertiveness of the speakers. The speakers repeatedly use the variable to convey such momentary positioning, and become associated with the characteristics of being overly confident. Similarly, vowel lengthening strengthens the affective force contributing to the humorous, playful and friendly stance of the speakers. Their constant use of the variable for such affective purposes leads to the association of the speakers with the affected and entertaining personality types. I argue that vowel lengthening is repeatedly and habitually used by *kathoey* and gay men in such fashion, and then becomes ideologically linked to the gender identity of the non-normative men as an indirect index. The meanings of stance are accumulated in the process of stance accretion. The quality of being overly confident, affected and entertaining is repeatedly conveyed through vowel lengthening used in stance-taking by *kathoey* and gay men. Such personality types are taken as indexing their identity as they match the way *kathoey* and gay men are perceived in Thai society. Vowel lengthening, as a tool of indexing such personality types, becomes ideologically related to *kathoey* and gay men. The interactional meanings of

vowel lengthening are mapped onto the stereotypical conceptualisation of Thai *kathoey* and gay men. The variable becomes an indirect index of their gender identity.

In addition, the indexical relation between vowel lengthening and the gender identity of *kathoey* and gay men is also derived from the ideological link between the personality types of being affected and entertaining, and expressiveness, which in turns links to femininity. Being affected and entertaining involves the demonstration of emotion in a certain way. Such characteristics are then taken as signifying femininity due to their mutual association with expressiveness. Men or masculinity have been associated with inexpressiveness (Sattel 1976). According to Sattel (1976), inexpressiveness is linked to rationality and is used as a political tool for men to exercise male power, especially over women, which is the opposite group associated with expressiveness. The ideology that men are inexpressive, as argued by Podesva (2007), also applies to gay as expressiveness is not the norm for men. In other words, feminine behaviours are considered non-normative for male-bodied individuals as people are expected to behave corresponding to their sex. That is, men, being male-bodied, are expected to behave themselves according to masculine norms – and since *kathoey* and gay men are male-bodied, they might be expected to adhere to masculine norms too. But the use of vowel lengthening among *kathoey* and gay men does not conform to masculine norms as the variable is linked to displays of emotion and hence femininity. Male femininity among *kathoey* and gay men, signified by the repeated use of vowel lengthening, thus hints at their gender non-normativity leading to the ideological association between vowel lengthening, femininity and their gender identity.

Figure 4.3 illustrates the indirect indexical relationship between vowel lengthening and the non-normative gender identity of Thai *kathoey* and gay men. The diagram on the left shows the indexical relationship between linguistic resources and social identities as discussed by Ochs (1992: 342). Social identities can be directly or indirectly indexed by linguistic resources including different levels of linguistic structures. The indirect indexical relations between linguistic resources and social identities are constituted through stances, acts, and activities. On the right is a diagram illustrating how the gender identity of *kathoey* and gay men is constitutively and indirectly indexed by vowel lengthening following Ochs' (1992) model. Vowel lengthening is one of the linguistic resources used by Thai *kathoey* and gay men as a tool for intensifying the force of stance-taking. It is used repeatedly by *kathoey* and gay men for such interactional purposes and then perceived as being linked to the personality types of being overly confident, affected and entertaining, and male femininity. Such traits match the stereotypical perception of *kathoey* and gay men in Thai society,

leading to the ideological association and the indirect indexical relation between vowel lengthening and the identity of *kathoey* and gay men. The role of a linguistic variable as an indirect index of gender identity is by no means specific to Thai *kathoey* and gay men. Falsetto, for example, is used by a gay man in Podesva (2007) for a set of interactional functions relating to expressiveness. His use of falsetto to convey expressiveness is part of the projection of his diva persona. Since expressiveness is ideologically considered as non-normative for men, his use of falsetto becomes associated with his gay identity through the projection of his diva persona. That is, falsetto is a kind of linguistic resources used by this gay speaker to index expressiveness, the characteristic constituting the diva persona, which in turn constitutes the gay identity.

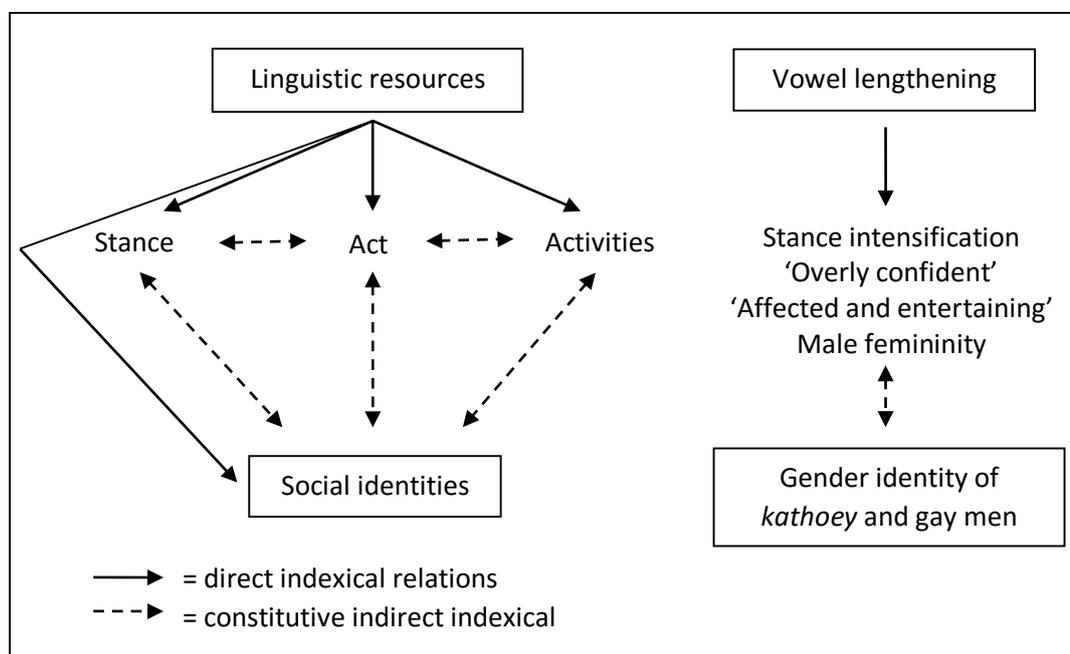


Figure 4.3: Indirect indexical relation between vowel lengthening and the gender identity of Thai *kathoey* and gay men following Ochs' (1992) model

In the analysis, *kathoey* and gay men are considered together as the non-normative identity. This seems to be in conflict with the definition of gay men as masculine-identified and *kathoey* as feminine-identified claimed in previous literature (Morris 1994, Jackson 1997a and 2004a). *Kathoey* is a more traditional gender category being part of the Thai tripartite system of man, woman and *kathoey* (Morris 1994). The concept of being gay arrived in the Thai system of sex, gender and sexuality later from Western conceptualisation. It allows masculine-identified Thai homosexual men to distinguish themselves from feminine-identified *kathoey* (Jackson 1997a, 2004a). Such way of categorisation takes the two categories as completely distinct. However, they are both non-normative and homosexual, specifically being male-bodied individuals who are attracted to other male-bodied ones. In

popular understanding, *kathoey* and gay men are often considered as belonging to the same category. In this thesis, the participants include both those who identify as gay men and those as *kathoey*. Their use of vowel lengthening is an example which demonstrates that they do not distinguish between each other, at least not linguistically. That is, there is no discernible difference in gay men's and *kathoey*'s use of vowel lengthening. Both *kathoey* and gay men who participate in this study use vowel lengthening for the same interactional purposes as part of stance-taking. The results illustrate that the boundary between *kathoey* and gay men is fuzzy even though the two are defined as distinct ways of identification.

The association between vowel lengthening and the gender identity of *kathoey* and gay men does not imply that the variable is exclusively used by this group of speakers. As discussed earlier in the chapter, the literature on "internet language" (Panyametheekul 2005) shows that vowel lengthening, represented by the repetition of alphabets, is employed. This, alongside my own observation, suggests lengthening in the actual speech of Thai speakers, even though the use of vowel lengthening in interaction has not previously been studied. This also indicates that *kathoey* and gay men are not the only group of speakers making use of the variable. Vowel lengthening is one of the linguistic resources which can be used by any Thai speaker. Moreover, the goal of using vowel lengthening discussed in Nuntiwatwipa (2004) and Panyametheekul (2005) is similar to the case here. That is, vowel lengthening is generally related and used for the expression of emphasis and emotion. Although the variable may not be used in the exact same way, it is generally used as part of stance-taking serving to strengthen the force of the stance, either epistemic or affective. The use of vowel lengthening by different groups of speakers for different yet related meanings suggests the social meanings of the variable in the form of the indexical field (Eckert 2008), although this thesis focuses on only one group of speakers (*kathoey* and gay men), and is not equipped to identify the wider indexical field of vowel lengthening, which has to include different layers of meanings derived from different groups of speakers.

This chapter discusses the use of vowel lengthening by Thai *kathoey* and gay men for interactional purposes serving as an intensification tool for epistemic and affective stance-taking. The variable is argued to become associated with the gender identity of *kathoey* and gay men through its repeated use and the process of stance accretion. The momentary kinds of self-presentation at the micro level of interaction accumulate their meanings through the habitual use of the variable. Vowel lengthening is then associated not only with interactional stances, but also more durable personality types. Such durable qualities are mapped onto the stereotypes of *kathoey* and gay men. That is how the variable becomes an

indirect index of being *kathoey* and gay men, the identity which emerges in interaction. This argument, however, does not imply the intention of the speakers to index their gender identity as such. The process of vowel lengthening becoming an indirect index of the gender identity indicates the interactional focus of the speakers, rather than their focus on identification with broader social categories. It is at the immediate micro level where the variable is employed by the speakers to achieve certain interactional goals. Such interactional meanings constitute more general personality types and social identities emerging in the course of interaction through ideological links available in the society.

Chapter 5

Self-reference terms

In this chapter, self-reference terms will be discussed as another linguistic variable in the study. In chapter 4, vowel lengthening was analysed as a linguistic variable participating in gender indexation. Vowel lengthening is seen as part of the linguistic resources available to Thai speakers in general even though it becomes associated with men who identify with non-normative male roles, and it indirectly indexes the gender of *kathoey* and gay men. The relation between vowel lengthening in Thai and non-normative men at the moment works at a subtle level. That is, speakers are not necessarily aware of the association. The participants in this study do not mention the use of the variable. Also, based on my own experience, I have never encountered any explicit mentioning of the variable, either in popular sources or academic research. Vowel lengthening can be seen as an indicator following Labov's (1972a) typology of linguistic variables. Speakers are not necessarily aware of the variable although it has been found to signify group membership. Vowel lengthening in Thai functions as a first-order index (Silverstein 2003, Johnstone & Kiesling 2008) indexing the gender category of *kathoey* and gay men. While vowel lengthening works below the level of consciousness, self-reference terms, in contrast, are very stereotypical. Self-reference terms are perceived by Thai speakers as a kind of linguistic tool, especially for non-normative gendered individuals, to show gender identification. Thai speakers are consciously aware of the variable and its role of signifying gender. In this chapter, self-reference terms used by Thai *kathoey* and gay men are examined in order to see to what extent the variable actually participates in gender indexation for this group of speakers.

Thai does not signify gender morphologically. There are not many ways of indicating gender in the language; but one of the ways in which it can be achieved is through self-reference terms, specifically pronouns. A detailed description of the system of self-reference terms in Thai will be provided in the next section. Briefly, Thai has a gendered pronominal system consisting of masculine, feminine and epicene forms. Considered as a direct index of gender identity, the choice of self-reference terms among non-normative gendered individuals is believed to be simple and straightforward. Those identifying as men use masculine pronouns, while those identifying as women use feminine pronouns. *Kathoey* particularly are perceived as feminine-identified and hence expected to use feminine forms. Such conceptualisations are strong among Thai speakers. It is one of the linguistic features people

usually mention when asked about how they think non-normative gendered individuals speak. This assumption is not only common in popular view, but also from an academic perspective. Winter (2003) argues that *kathoey* regularly use feminine pronouns and final particles, and thus that language is not a good indicator for examining their gender identity. Such way of using language is shown not to be the case in Kongtrakool (1996) where the use of first-person pronouns among men, women and effeminate men is examined. The study reveals that effeminate men do not use masculine or feminine pronouns across the board. The choice of pronoun is not as straightforward as normally perceived to be and is context-dependent.

The pronominal system and the self-reference terms in Thai in general are the complex set of terms where several social factors come into play. Gender interacts with other factors in the process of choosing an appropriate self-reference term in a context. In this chapter, self-reference terms used by *kathoey* and gay men are examined in order to answer the question of how self-reference terms participate in gender work. The analysis focuses on how gender interacts with other social factors in the system of self-reference terms, and how self-reference terms are used as a means for gender identification for men who identify with non-normative male roles. The chapter begins with background information regarding the system of self-reference in Thai, and the process of data selection and coding. The analyses are then divided into those involving the data from the interviews and those from self-recordings. The data from the interviews are first analysed quantitatively. The use of self-reference terms within each friendship group and for individual participants is then discussed in relation to predicted patterns of use as compared to how the participants actually use the terms. Also, the data from self-recordings are examined in order to complement the situations which are not covered by the interviews.

5.1 Self-reference terms in Thai

Self-reference terms are first-person personal reference terms used to refer to one's self as the speaker. The system of self-reference in Thai consists of both overt and zero forms. Overt self-reference terms in Thai consist of personal pronouns, kin terms, personal names and occupational titles (Cooke 1965, Palakornkul 1972, Iwasaki & Ingkaphirom 2005), while as a radical pro-drop language (Neeleman & Szendrői 2007, Phimsawat 2011, Holmberg & Phimsawat 2015), self-reference terms in Thai can also be omitted where the referent is recoverable from the context.

Thai has a highly articulated pronominal system. According to Palakornkul (1972), there are seven social factors that underlie the choice of which pronouns are to be used in any given interactional context (in addition to the sex of the speaker): power and status, age, kinship and family relationship, friendship, ethnic-religious groups, occupation and genealogical distance. Regarding power and status, people considered to have more power and higher status are those who are wealthier, from higher social rank and have higher education, such as aristocrats, bureaucrats, professional, political, and business leaders, and white-collar workers in general. Those with lower power and status are then less wealthy, from lower social rank and have less education. This social group consists of generally blue-collar workers, such as farmers, transportation workers and domestic servants. Another significant factor is the relative age of interlocutors, which is commonly mentioned either explicitly or indirectly at the beginning of an interaction, if it is not already clear from what the interlocutors know or how they look. It is important that this is made clear so that the interlocutors can choose appropriate pronouns and carry on the conversation. In addition, information about whether the interlocutors are kin or non-kin, or friend or non-friend, and the kind of relationship they have within kinship or friendship networks are important for pronominal choice. Also, people belonging to certain ethnic groups such as the Chinese and the Malays, or religious groups such as Muslims, may use their ethnic or religious pronominal terms. Certain occupations can be referred to as first-person with occupational titles, which are categorised as pronominal forms in Palakornkul (1972). Finally, genealogical distance refers to whether the interlocutors are from the same, younger or older generation.

In addition to these social factors, pronominal choice also depends on nine aspects of the role relationships between interlocutors: intimacy, length of time of acquaintance, solidarity, respect, presence of non-acquaintances and persons with status, condescension, presence of children, formality, and emotional manifestations in talk (Palakornkul 1972). Different levels of intimacy and how long the interlocutors have known each other influence their pronominal choice. In order to signify solidarity between interlocutors, the speaker may use kin terms or pronouns which indicate intimacy. In contrast, the speaker is expected to choose pronouns which indicate respect when talking to someone with higher status or older age. Moreover, in the presence of non-acquaintances and people with status, the speaker has to be more careful with pronouns and choose the forms which are appropriate to this group of people even though the interlocutors are, for example, the speaker's close friends or younger relatives. At the same time, the speaker with higher status may lower

him or herself linguistically by choosing a particular form in order to decrease the social distance between him or herself and the interlocutor in order to make the conversation friendlier. The presence of a child can influence pronoun choice in that adult speakers tend to adopt a child’s pronominal use when a child is present in the conversation. Formality of situations also influences the choice of appropriate pronouns. Finally, a change in pronouns chosen can also signify a change in the speaker’s emotional state.

This very complex system described above is for pronouns only. The first-person pronominal system is represented schematically in Tables 5.1 and 5.2. In these tables, all of the determining factors of pronoun choice described above are mapped onto a simpler system based on Brown & Levinson’s (1978) dimensions of Formality, Power, and Distance (see also Irvine 1979). Power here refers to differences of status between interlocutors, while Distance refers to speakers’ degree of acquaintance. Formality is a property of the speech context itself. The system for feminine first-person pronouns is presented in Table 5.1, while the system for masculine first-person pronouns is in Table 5.2. Pronouns that appear in boldface type are epicene forms (i.e., they are used by both women and men).

					Distance		
					Intimate	Neutral	Non-intimate
Formality	Formal	Power	Reciprocal		<i>dichan</i>		
			Non-reciprocal	- Speaker	<i>nu</i>		
	Informal		Reciprocal	+ Speaker	<i>ku</i>	<i>chan</i>	
					<i>khao</i>	<i>rao</i>	

Table 5.1: A simplified schematic of Thai feminine first-person pronouns

					Distance		
					Intimate	Neutral	Non-intimate
Formality	Formal	Power	Reciprocal				<i>phom</i>
			Non-reciprocal	- Speaker			
	Informal		Non-reciprocal	+ Speaker	<i>ku</i>		
			Reciprocal		<i>khao</i>	<i>chan</i> <i>rao</i>	

Table 5.2: A simplified schematic of Thai masculine first-person pronouns

We see in Tables 5.1 and 5.2 that Formality, Power, and Distance frame how both feminine and masculine pronouns are used. These three dimensions, however, do not function in the exact same manner across the two systems. In the feminine systems, two forms which are exclusive to the system are *dichan* and *nu*. For feminine pronouns, in formal situations where the balance of power between speakers is reciprocal, *dichan* (/dìchǎn/, /dìchán/) is the only option. *Dichan* is also available to be used in formal situations where the balance of power is not reciprocal, whether the speaker has higher or lower status, and no matter what level of interpersonal distance between interlocutors is. In other words, the key social factor which leads to the use of *dichan* is the formality of the context. *Dichan* is used in formal situations regardless of the distance between speakers or the balance of power. For example, two women of different age who are close friends and work colleagues would refer to themselves with *dichan* when interacting with one another at their company's annual meeting because the situation is formal despite their different age and intimate friendship. The other feminine pronoun *nu* is available in situations where the speaker has lower status. This pronoun signifies the speaker's humbleness, younger age or lower social rank. *Nu* is then used in situations where the speaker has less power regardless of the formality of the situation or the distance between interlocutors.

While the formality of context is the main feature of *dichan*, *nu* is mainly used based on the lower status of the speaker. As shown in Table 5.1, the two feminine pronouns overlap in some contexts. In formal situations where the speaker has lower status, both forms are available to be used. The tension between the two pronouns is then very common. For

example, a recent graduate in her early twenties with no work experience may struggle with her pronoun choice between *dichan* and *nu* during a job interview where she is interviewed by the potential employer, who is older, more experienced, and has higher status. As the situation of job interview is formal, *dichan* may be used to signify the formality. The use of *dichan* in this context suggests maturity and professionalism but the speaker risks sounding too formal and unnatural. Instead, the speaker may choose to use *nu*, which signifies her humbleness to the potential employer. As humbleness, especially to those who are older and have more experience, is a valued characteristic in Thai culture, the pronoun then makes the speaker sound more loveable. At the same time, it can also lead to the interlocutor's impression of the speaker as immature and unprofessional.

The only pronoun exclusive to the masculine system is *phom*. The pronoun is used in situations where the speaker is non-intimate regardless of where he stands on the Power and Formality dimensions. In other words, the speaker who uses *phom* can be younger than, older than, or the same age as the interlocutors; lower than, higher than or equal in status or social rank to the interlocutors; and in either formal or informal situations. If the speaker wants to mark distance from the interlocutors, *phom* is used to indicate the lack of intimacy. In addition, *phom* can also be used in other contexts where no specific form of pronouns is shown in Table 5.2. That is, the pronoun is also available in situations where the speaker has lower status and the level of intimacy is high or neutral, and where the speaker has higher status and the level of intimacy is neutral. *Phom* and *dichan* are usually considered counterparts in the masculine and the feminine systems, respectively. Although they are both polite first-person pronouns, the use of *dichan* is more restricted to formal situations; kin terms, nicknames and other pronouns in the feminine system are preferred in less formal contexts. *Phom*, in contrast, is used more extensively (Hoonchamlong 1992). In other words, *phom* is a default form for men. It is the safe choice available in almost every context for the masculine system.

The epicene pronouns *ku*, *khao*, *chan* and *rao* are part of both the feminine and the masculine systems. *Ku* and *khao* are used in the same way in both systems, that is, in situations where the speaker and the interlocutor are intimate. *Khao* (/khǎw/, /kháw/) is exclusively used in situations where the balance of power between interlocutors is reciprocal. It is very common particularly among romantic partners and intimate (girl)friends. *Ku* is an "impolite" form commonly used among close friends, including when engaging in ritual insult and teasing. It can be used both in situations where the balance of power is reciprocal, and where the speaker has higher social status. Additionally, *ku* is also

used as a means of expressing anger or resentment regardless of the relationship between interlocutors. The effect of *ku* for such use is even stronger in the case of interlocutors with non-intimate relationship.

The other pronouns shared by the two systems are *chan* and *rao* although the two forms are used differently. In the feminine system, the use of *chan* and *rao* echoes that of *ku* and *khao*, but for situations where speakers are not particularly close to, or distant from, one other (what in Table 5.1 is called “neutral”); or where speakers are not close to each other at all (“non-intimate”). That is, *rao* is exclusively used where the power is reciprocal, while *chan* can be used both in situations where the balance of power is reciprocal and where the speaker has higher social status. In the masculine system, the use of the two pronouns is restricted to only situations where the distance between interlocutors is neutral and the balance of power is reciprocal, as the masculine system has *phom* for almost all other situations. More generally, *chan* (/chǎn/, /chán/) can only be used as a singular first-person pronoun while *rao* can be used as both singular and plural, inclusive and exclusive, first-person plural pronouns.

Tables 5.1 and 5.2 do not provide an exhaustive list of the first-person pronouns available in Thai. Rather, the tables include those that are most commonly found in everyday conversation. Those pronouns that are rarely used or exclusively used in written language are not listed. It is important to note, moreover, that Tables 5.1 and 5.2 depict general patterns rather than definitive rules. Thai speakers have a fair amount of leeway in choosing which first-person pronouns to use, and the choice of an appropriate pronoun is not always evident or clear-cut.

<i>pho</i> ‘father’
<i>mae</i> ‘mother’
<i>pu</i> ‘father’s father’
<i>ya</i> ‘father’s mother’
<i>ta</i> ‘mother’s father’
<i>yai</i> ‘mother’s mother’
<i>thuat</i> ‘grandparent’s parent’
<i>thiat</i> ‘parent of grandparent’s parents’
<i>luk</i> ‘son’ or ‘daughter’
<i>phi</i> ‘older brother/older sister’
<i>nong</i> ‘younger brother/younger sister’

<i>lung</i> 'father's or mother's older brother'
<i>pa</i> 'father's or mother's older sister'
<i>na</i> 'mother's younger brother or sister'
<i>a</i> 'father's younger brother or sister'
<i>lan</i> 'grandchild'
<i>len</i> 'grandchild's child'
<i>lon</i> 'child of grandchild's child'

Table 5.3: Basic kin terms in Thai

In addition to the pronouns listed in Tables 5.1 and 5.2, it is perfectly common in Thai for speakers to refer to themselves in the third person using kin terms instead of first-person pronouns. According to Prasithratsint (2001), there are 17 basic kin terms in Thai, as shown in Table 5.3. The basic kin terms are based on 5 dimensions of contrast: generation, lineality (whether referring to a direct line of descent or not), age, sex and parentage. It is also common to refer to one's self as a speaker with kin terms even when speaking to those who are not one's kin. Kin terms used this way are pseudo-kin terms. They are used among non-kin to strengthen the social bond and among non-acquaintances in order to create a good relationship (Palakornkul 1972). For example, being an older brother or sister, a person can refer to oneself as *phi* when speaking to one's own younger sibling(s) and also to friends of the younger sibling(s). An older colleague can refer to oneself as *phi* when speaking to a colleague who is younger. Examples of the use of kin terms for self-referencing are shown in (5.1) and (5.2).

(5.1) A mother says to her son/daughter:

thammai	mueawan	mai	tho	ma	ha	mae
why	yesterday	not	call	come	meet	mother

'Why didn't you call **me** yesterday?'

(5.2) An older colleague says to a younger one:

phi	yak	hai	thoe	titto	lukkha
older brother/older sister	want	give	you	contact	customers

'I want you to contact customers.'

Personal names and occupational titles can also be used as self-reference terms in Thai. Mostly, people in Thailand have three different types of name: a first name, a last name and a nickname (Iwasaki & Ingkaphirom 2005). First names and last names are mainly for official use in formal settings. First names can be used independently without last names. Last

names, in contrast, are always used alongside first names. In formal or official settings, it is most appropriate to address someone with the titles Mr/Miss/Mrs or the polite title *khun* followed by first names, typically without last names apart from where identification is needed, but never the titles with only last names. This pattern is in contrast to the standard for English, where the polite forms of addressing someone are the titles Mr/Miss/Mrs, or the titles followed by last names. Nicknames are for casual use among family and friends. Nicknames can be completely unrelated to first names. Part of first names, especially the first and the last syllable, can also be taken as nicknames (i.e. a shortened version of first name). It is normally one's nickname that is used as a self-reference term. Apart from personal names, according to Iwasaki & Ingkaphirom (2005), the three occupational titles most commonly used in Thai as self-reference terms are *mo* 'doctor,' *achan* 'teacher, instructor' and *khru* 'teacher.' Examples of the use of names and occupational titles as self-reference terms are shown in (5.3) - (5.4), respectively.

(5.3) A person called Tong says to his parents:

Tong mai yak kin ahan thale

Tong not want eat food sea

'I don't want to eat seafood.'

(5.4) A teacher tells his/her students why Kanya is absent from the class:

Kanya bok **khru** wa khao mai sabai

Kanya tell **teacher** that he/she not well

'Kanya told **me** that he was sick.'

Another choice of self-referencing is the use of non-overt, or zero, forms, i.e. null/zero pronouns, or null/zero anaphora (Pingkarawat 1989, Aroonmanakun 1999, Hoonchamlong 1991). As a radical pro-drop language, Thai speakers can omit first-person personal pronouns and other kinds of self-reference terms. It is in fact common for Thai speakers to omit referential expressions in general, either first-person, second-person or third-person. Intratrat (2003) examines the use of zero pronouns in contemporary Thai song lyrics and finds that zero pronouns are used much more frequently than pronouns and full noun phrases. According to Intratrat (2003), syntactic functions and semantic roles of zero pronouns tend to correspond to each other and are based on the correspondence, Thai zero pronouns can be categorised into four types. The majority of zero pronouns are those occurring as the subject of the sentence and having an agentive role. The other three types are the direct object with patient role, the indirect object with dative/benefactive role, and

the noun modifier with genitive role. Examples (5.5) - (5.7), taken from Intratat (2003), illustrate the four types of zero pronouns found in the study. Example (5.5) is derived from the lyrics of a song about a woman, i.e. the singer, who has a love affair with a man not knowing that he has a partner. In the song, the singer explains herself and apologises to the man's partner. The lyrics in (5.5) are the singer's apology for almost taking the man as her partner. The first token of zero pronoun in (5.5) is one in the subject position of the verb *ti tra* 'stamp' with agentive role while the second token occurs in the direct object of the same verb with patient role. The subject position of the verb *ti tra* 'stamp' is the singer while the direct object of the verb is the man she has an affair with. The zero pronoun in (5.6) occurs in the position of indirect object of the verb 'give,' with a dative/benefactive role. In (5.7), the zero pronoun functions as the modifier of the noun *chai* 'heart.' The full noun phrase would be *chai thoe* 'your heart/the heart of you' and, hence, the zero pronoun here has a genitive role.

(5.5) khot hot thi kueap cha ti tra chong
 excuse that Ø almost stamp reserved Ø
 'Excuse me for almost stamping him reserved.'

Intratat (2003: 389)

(5.6) khwam rak thi phi mop wai hai ni
 love that I offer PARTICLE give Ø this
 'This love that I've already given to you'

Intratat (2003: 391)

(5.7) phuea chai ao wai kon thoe yang mai sai
 spare heart Ø PARTICLE before you still not late
 'Spare your heart before it's too late.'

Intratat (2003: 391)

Phimsawat (2011) argues that there are four main types of zero pronouns in Thai: deictic, referential, expletive and inclusive generic. Deictic zero pronouns refer to the speaker or the hearer, as shown in (5.8) and previously in (5.5) - (5.7), and are optionally null. Referential zero pronouns are definite third-person pronouns which refer to an antecedent. The antecedent can be a noun phrase previously mentioned in one of the preceding clauses, or a discourse topic introduced earlier in the discourse. In the former situation, the pronoun is optionally null, whereas in the latter, the pronoun is obligatorily null, as shown in (5.9) and (5.10), respectively. Expletive zero pronouns, shown in (5.11), are third-person pronouns

which do not have thematic roles and are obligatorily null. Inclusive generic zero pronouns, as shown in (5.12), are not co-referential with an antecedent. This type of zero pronoun corresponds to English generic “one” or “you,” and is obligatorily null.

(5.8) (chan) phoeng sop set
 I just exam finish
 ‘I’ve just finished the exam.’

Phimsawat (2011: 6)

(5.9) Kim bok wa (khao) dai ngan laeo
 Kim say that (he/she) get job already
 ‘Kim said that he/she has just got a job.’

Phimsawat (2011: 6)

(5.10) luksao khong chen keng khamnuan
 daughter of Jane good at calculation
 khru bok wa (*khao) sop lek
 teacher say that (*she) exam maths
 dai khanaen sungsut
 get mark highest

‘Jane’s daughter is good at calculations. The teacher said that she got top marks for maths.’

Phimsawat (2011: 27)

(5.11) (*man) fontok laeo
 it rain already
 ‘It has rained.’

Phimsawat (2011: 8)

(5.12) khru son wa chong pen khon di
 teacher teach that ∅ should BE person good
 ‘Teachers teach that you/one should be the good.’

Phimsawat (2011: 29)

As the use of self-reference terms is the focus of this chapter, only the deictic use of zero pronouns is included in the analysis. For the deictic use, first-person and second-person pronouns and referential expressions in general in Thai can be omitted for several reasons. According to Palakornkul (1972), speakers tend to use zero pronouns when the referents of

pronouns are recoverable from the context, such as in situations where the interlocutors are intimate and of equal status. The difficulty in choosing the right pronoun in a context is another reason for omitting pronouns (Hoonchamlong 1992). The difficulty may arise from unknown social roles between interlocutors, or conflicting options available in situations where interlocutors have multi-bonded relationship (e.g. both kin and a boss), or where participants are of different status and level of intimacy relative to the speaker (Palakornkul 1972). In addition to the complication of selecting personal pronouns, and in spite of the ubiquity of zero pronouns in Thai in general, the omission of pronouns can suggest the avoidance of social identification and hence become sociolinguistically marked. Chirasombutti & Diller (1999) argue that the use of zero pronouns is neutral when used in the beginning of a conversation, but that later in the conversation its use can be taken to indicate the avoidance of identifying the social relationship among interlocutors.

To summarise, this section has described the system of self-reference terms and referential expressions more generally in Thai. Self-reference terms in Thai can be overt or null. Overt self-reference terms consist of pronominal and non-pronominal forms. The first-person pronominal forms are classified into masculine and feminine, and differ from each other based on the dimensions of power, distance and formality. Non-pronominal forms are composed of kin terms, names and occupational terms. Also, self-reference terms can be omitted, i.e. in null form. In spite of being commonly used, zero self-reference terms may be sociolinguistically significant in certain contexts. In the next section, the information about the dataset used for the analysis of self-reference terms is provided. It discusses how the data were obtained, selected and coded.

5.2 Data selection and coding

The data included in the analysis of self-reference terms are taken from both interviews and self-recordings. The quantitative analysis, however, is based on only the interview data. In self-recordings, different participants participate in different kinds of social interactions with different people. The data from self-recordings are therefore more diverse than those from the interviews. However, the choice of self-reference terms in Thai depends on various social factors of speakers, addressees and contexts. Such diverse data like those of self-recordings may make the participants' use of self-reference terms in different contexts less comparable for quantitative analysis. The interviews provide the data of all participants' use of self-reference terms in the same context. Even though each participant has different kinds of relationship at different levels of intimacy with me, the interviewer, they interact

with me in the same social setting, which is an interview. The format of interaction in the interview is then relatively more comparable than self-recordings for quantitative analysis in that sense. Nevertheless, only looking at the interview data would bias and restrict the dataset in certain ways. The data from self-recording are included later in the qualitative analysis to complement what is missing in the interviews.

The interviews provide the data of the participants interacting with only me, the interviewer. As age is an important social factor determining the self-referencing choice in Thai, the participants are expected to use only certain terms which are appropriate in terms of our relative age when talking to me during the interview. This means that the choice of self-reference terms of each participant is limited to only the terms they use when talking to me or someone at my age. For example, the members of the Undergraduates are all younger than me and are expected to use certain forms during the interview. These forms may not occur in other situations due to different interlocutors and the nature of a particular context. Also, in spite of being in the same context of the interview, the Undergraduates, for instance, are expected to use a different set of self-reference terms from members of the Professionals, who are all older than me. Considering only the interview data could therefore provide an inaccurate impression that a participant prefers particular forms, when in fact the preference very much depends on the context. Therefore, both the interviews and self-recordings are included in the qualitative analysis. As the interview data limit the choice of self-reference terms to only those used when the participants talk to me, the data from self-recordings aim to fill in the gap and make the whole dataset cover contexts as wide and diverse as possible. For example, in the interview, the members of the Undergraduates interact with me, an interviewer who is older than them. The self-recording analysed for the Undergraduates is then one in which they speak with each other, i.e. the one where they are speaking to people of the same age. The qualitative analysis of self-recordings is, then, expected to show how the participants use self-reference terms in contexts outside of the interviews.

The interview data are divided into two discourse types – personal narratives and opinions. The participants' use of self-reference terms was predicted to differ in the two discourse types showing their responsive style shift according to the context of interaction. Responsive style shift is the way the speakers change their linguistic behaviour in response to different groups of audience, topics or settings of interaction. Bell (1984) proposes the framework of audience design as a way of approaching stylistic variation. According to Bell (1984), the audience plays an important role in shaping the speaker's way of speaking. That

is, the speaker takes the audience into account in designing his/her speech, and alters his/her way of speaking accordingly. Such style shift brought about by the audience is responsive as the speaker adjusts his or her speech style to take into account different aspects of the audience. Responsive style shift includes not only audience design, but also non-audience or non-personal design, which accounts for the way speakers design their speech in accord with speech situations - topics and settings (Bell 1984). Approaching linguistic variation from the perspective of responsive style shift is also discussed and investigated elsewhere (e.g. Bell 2001, Schilling-Estes 2002, Coupland 2007).

For example, Coupland (1980, 1988) investigates the speech of an assistant in a travel agency in Cardiff in four settings or contextual types – “casual,” “informal work-related,” “client,” and “telephone” – which differ from each other based on topics and audience. Coupland finds that the speaker he investigates uses more of the features associated with Cardiff English in “casual” and “informal work-related” contextual types, where she discusses general issues and work issues, respectively, with her colleagues, while uses less of the features when talking about work to her clients and other travel-agents in “client” and “telephone” contextual types, respectively. Rickford & McNair-Knox (1994) investigate the use of vernacular variables of an African American teenager, Foxy, living in East Palo Alto, California, in two interviews. In the earlier interview, Foxy was interviewed by two African American interviewers who she was familiar. In the other one, she was interviewed by a European American who she did not previously know. The physical setting of the two interviews was the same. The topics of the two interviews were controlled to the extent that many topics in the two interviews overlapped and hence were comparable. The results indicate that Foxy uses vernacular variables more in the earlier interview than in the other one. This is taken as an indicator of Foxy’s addressee-influenced style shift. Also, Foxy shows topic-influenced style shift in the two interviews, even though the degree of influence received from topics is argued to be less than that received from addressees. Foxy uses certain vernacular features less when speaking about college and her future career, topics associated with being standard, while uses more of the variables when talking about “wives and slamming partners,” as the topic is associated with friends, and hence vernacular features. Levon (2009) examines the speech of Israeli men who participate in lesbian and gay activist associations. He classifies his data into two discourse types of narratives and opinions, which are argued to function as conversational frames providing the speaker with certain constraints on how he/she should or is expected to speak in a particular context. That is, the two discourse types are taken to represent the contexts which the participants

linguistically respond to. He finds prosodic variation across narratives and opinions. The responsive shift generated by the discourse types also interacts with topics and group membership and influences the participants' overall stylistic variation.

The data from the interviews included in the analysis here consist of personal narratives and opinions. Personal narratives are taken from the same coming-out story included in the analysis of vowel lengthening discussed in the previous chapter. It is the 10 - 15 minute portion of the interview where the participants talk about their childhood and how they first recognised themselves as different from others in terms of gender. Opinions are taken from a later section in the interview where the participants talk about how they think Thai society treats and tolerates people with gender diversity. Approximately 10 - 15 minutes of the interview from this section were extracted and included in the analysis. Following Levon (2009), I take personal narratives and opinions as the two discourse types potentially influencing the participants' linguistic behaviours, specifically their use of self-reference terms. Personal narratives involve the participants' own stories. Focusing on the participants themselves, mainly on their gender and sexuality, this discourse type was expected to influence the participants' use of self-reference terms in the way that the participants may refer to themselves frequently, and hence often use overt forms of self-reference terms, particularly feminine pronouns. In contrast, opinions are not related to the participants directly. Opinions are how the participants evaluate and position themselves toward certain things or situations. They involve the participants' own way of thinking but do not necessarily include incidents which happen to the participants themselves. Therefore, within this discourse type, the participants were predicted to use self-reference terms and feminine pronouns less frequently than in personal narratives. Zero forms of self-reference and epicene pronouns were also predicted to be used more often in opinions than personal narratives as the participants may not need to refer to themselves directly, and could potentially avoid gendered forms or self-reference terms in general. Variation in the participants' use of self-reference terms potentially found across the two discourse types is taken as signifying responsive style shift of the participants as influenced by speech situation.

As with the analysis of vowel lengthening, the data analysed was derived from the fourteen participants whose details were discussed in Chapter 3. In the data selected, all potential sites for the occurrence of self-reference terms were identified and coded for the types of form that appeared (including both zero and overt forms). Both overt and zero self-reference terms in the data were coded for two external features and two internal features.

Discourse type is one of the external features coded. Tokens of self-reference terms derived from the interview were coded for either occurring in personal narratives or opinions. The other external feature coded is friendship groups. Every token of self-reference term was coded for which friendship group the participant who uses the token belongs to.

The two internal features are the subject versus object position and whether they occur in direct speech or constructed dialogue (Tannen 1986). As both overt and zero self-reference terms can be used in either the subject or the object position, every term was coded for its position in the clause where it occurs. The object position includes both the object of a verb and the object of preposition. The object of preposition includes that in the possessive construction consisting of the preposition *khong* 'of.' The full possessive construction in Thai is the possessed person/thing + *khong* 'of' + the possessor e.g. *mae khong nu* 'my mother' (literally 'mother of me'). The possessive marker *khong* can, however, be dropped. Hence, *mae nu* still means 'my mother' (literally 'mother me'). In Intratat (2003), the construction where the possessive marker is dropped is classified as the noun modifier with genitive role, whereas in this thesis it will be classified as the object of preposition *khong* even though the preposition is dropped. The coding for self-reference terms in the subject/object position does not imply that differences were expected between the two positions. Rather, the coding was conducted in order to see the general trend of the use of self-reference terms, particularly those of zero forms. Zero pronouns are found to be used most frequently in the subject position in contemporary Thai lyrics (Intratrat 2003). The coding here is to check if the preference for subject position remains in different types of data.

In the interview, the participants mostly talk to me, the interviewer, with their own voice in the current context of the interview. Therefore, the majority of their speech during the interview is direct speech. The participants, however, from time to time use constructed dialogue in the interview. According to Tannen (1986), constructed dialogue refers to the part in speech where speakers report the speech or thoughts of themselves or other people; hence it is not necessarily the exact wording of how it was originally produced, due to speakers' limited memory and access to the information, and in fact does not necessarily have to have actually been said at all. In the dataset here, the participants sometimes report their speech when they have spoken to others, or their thoughts embedded within the context of the stories. They also report the speech and thoughts of other people in their stories. Self-reference terms used in such instances were coded as constructed dialogue. Direct speech and constructed dialogue are the two distinct types of speech in different contexts. The direct speech is when the participants talk to me in the interviews while

constructed dialogue is their speech in other situations. As context is significant for choosing self-reference terms, the distinction between direct speech and constructed dialogue makes it possible to see the participants' choice of self-reference terms in different contexts. That is, the coding for direct speech/constructed dialogue is expected to show how the participants choose to refer to themselves when speaking to me in the interview as opposed to when reporting their thoughts or speaking to others in other contexts.

5.3 Self-reference terms in the interview data

The data analysed in this section are derived from the interviews I carried out with the participants. The interview was designed to be an informal conversation between me and the participants. The power and distance varies from one interview to another. The distance between me and the participants was either neutral or non-intimate depending on how long they had known me and to what extent they had become familiar with me. The power mainly depended on age difference: the relationship between me and the participants who are the same age was reciprocal while that between me and those who are younger or older than me is non-reciprocal.

5.3.1 Overall use of self-reference terms

Table 5.4 below shows all the self-reference terms found in the dataset and their overall raw frequency. Approximately 140 minutes from the discourse type of personal narratives and approximately 125 minutes from opinions drawn from a larger corpus of 17.6 hours were analysed. In total, there are 2807 tokens of self-reference terms used in the dataset: 2060 tokens from personal narratives and 747 tokens from opinions. In the dataset, there are zero forms and thirteen overt forms, which can be classified into five categories – personal pronouns, kin terms, names, occupational titles, and others including the terms which do not fit into any of the previous categories.

			Personal narratives	Opinions	Total
Zero forms			1089	201	1290
Personal pronouns	Masculine	<i>phom</i>	0	3	3
	Feminine	<i>nu</i>	77	65	142
	Epicene	<i>chan</i>	64	51	115
		<i>rao</i>	519	231	750
	<i>ku</i>	26	9	35	
Kin terms		<i>phi</i>	220	153	373
		<i>che</i>	0	5	5
Names			26	11	37
Occupational titles		<i>khru</i>	1	0	1
Others		<i>phi + name</i>	21	15	36
		<i>phuakrao</i>	7	1	8
		<i>i ni</i>	8	2	10
		<i>tua-eng</i>	2	0	2
Total			2060	747	2807

Table 5.4: Raw frequency of tokens of self-reference

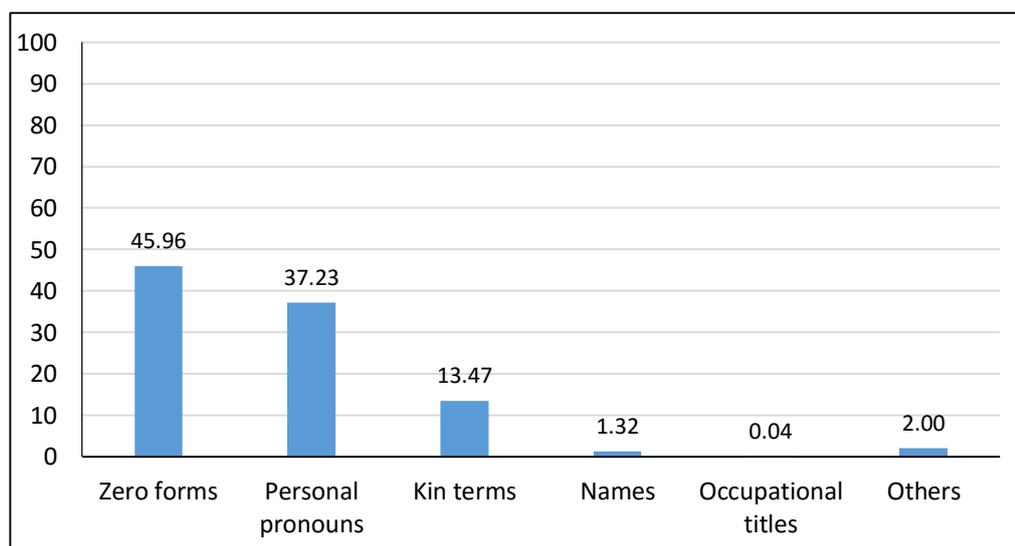


Figure 5.1: Percentage of use of the six categories of self-reference terms

Figure 5.1 shows the overall percentage of use of the six categories. Zero forms have the highest percentage of use with 45.96%, followed by personal pronouns (37.23%), kin terms (13.47%), others (2%), names (1.32%) and occupational titles (0.04%). As seen in Figure 5.1, zero forms are used very frequently. Almost half of the instances of self-reference are

accomplished via the use of zero forms. Among the three friendship groups, zero forms are the most frequently used type of self-reference for the Undergraduates (55.09%) and the Professionals (67.20%). Moreover, among the fourteen participants, zero forms are used most frequently by ten of them. Examples of the use of zero self-referencing in the data are provided in (5.13) - (5.15).

(5.13) Shane: **(zero)** mai bok
 I not say
 'I did not say.'

(5.14) Mik: achan rak **(zero)**
 Teacher love **me**
 'Teachers loved **me**.'

(5.15) Gift: laeoko **(zero)** mai (.) mai khoei rusuek wa (.)
 And I not not ever feel that
(zero) chop phuying rue arai
 I like woman or what
 'And I have never felt that I like women or anything.'

Such a high percentage of zero forms is not unanticipated. It confirms the previously reported finding that the self-referencing choice of zero forms is very common among Thai speakers. As noted above, zero pronouns are found to be used most often in the data of Thai contemporary song lyrics, accounting for 57.05% of all tokens in the data, as compared to overt pronouns and full noun phrases (Intratrat 2003). Phimsawat (2011) also addresses the prevalence of zero pronouns in Thai and their possibilities of being used in almost all linguistic environments. Therefore, the high frequency of zero self-referencing in the dataset here supports the assertion that such linguistic phenomenon is common in Thai. In addition, zero forms are used more frequently in the subject position (88.99%) than the object position (11.01%). This is also the case found in Intratrat (2003), where zero pronouns favours the subject position rather than other positions.

	Zero forms	Overt forms	Total
Personal narratives	1089	971	2060
Opinions	201	546	747
$\chi^2 = 148.71, df = 1, p < 2.2e-16$			

Table 5.5: Distribution of zero versus overt forms of self-reference terms across discourse types

Table 5.5 shows a significant difference between zero and overt forms in personal narratives as compared to opinions. In personal narratives, zero forms are used more frequently than overt forms. Out of 2060 tokens of self-reference terms in personal narratives, 52.86% (1089 tokens) of all tokens are zero forms, slightly more than overt forms (47.14%). In opinions, on the other hand, zero forms account for only 26.91% of self-reference terms used. The participants prefer overt forms of self-reference, which account for 73.09% (546 tokens) of 747 self-reference terms in opinions. The results shown in Table 5.5 go against the predictions discussed in the previous section. The predicted pattern was that the participants would use overt forms more frequently in narratives and zero forms more frequently in opinions. In personal narratives, the participants focus on themselves and their own experiences. They mainly talk about themselves. It was therefore predicted that they would use overt self-reference terms more frequently due to the nature of the discourse type which has the participants as the centre of stories. The fact that the participants actually use zero forms of self-reference terms more frequently than overt forms in narratives, however, does not necessarily disagree with the assumption that the participants are the focus of personal narratives. What was possibly not given due consideration in the prediction is that even though the participants focus on their own stories and refer to themselves frequently, the use of overt forms may not be necessary in that particular speech situation. Zero forms of self-reference are used more frequently in narratives arguably because it is obvious from the context that the participants are referring to themselves. As the participants are the focus, it is then likely that zero self-reference is recoverable from the context.

In opinions, the participants focus on their opinion towards the society's attitude and perception of gender diversity in general. The preference for overt forms of self-reference terms in opinions can be due to the participants' desire not to be committed to the truth of the statements they make. According to Schiffrin (1990), opinions are the speaker's stance toward something which is subjective and can be disagreed with by others. The statement made by the speaker is not necessarily true epistemically but the speaker's stance itself

cannot be denied (Schiffrin 1990). In other words, when expressing opinions, the speaker expresses his/her sincerity by showing his/her stance. By doing that, the speaker does not claim the truth of the statement. In the dataset analysed here, overt forms of self-reference terms are used much more frequently than zero forms in opinions. Zero self-reference can make a statement ambiguous in the sense that it can be interpreted as both fact and opinion. In an opinion statement, omitting a self-reference term can make it sound more like a factual statement. To avoid any confusion it may cause, using overt self-reference terms may be a way for the participants to make it clear that the statement they are making is their own opinion, not a factual statement, and hence they do not guarantee the truth of it.

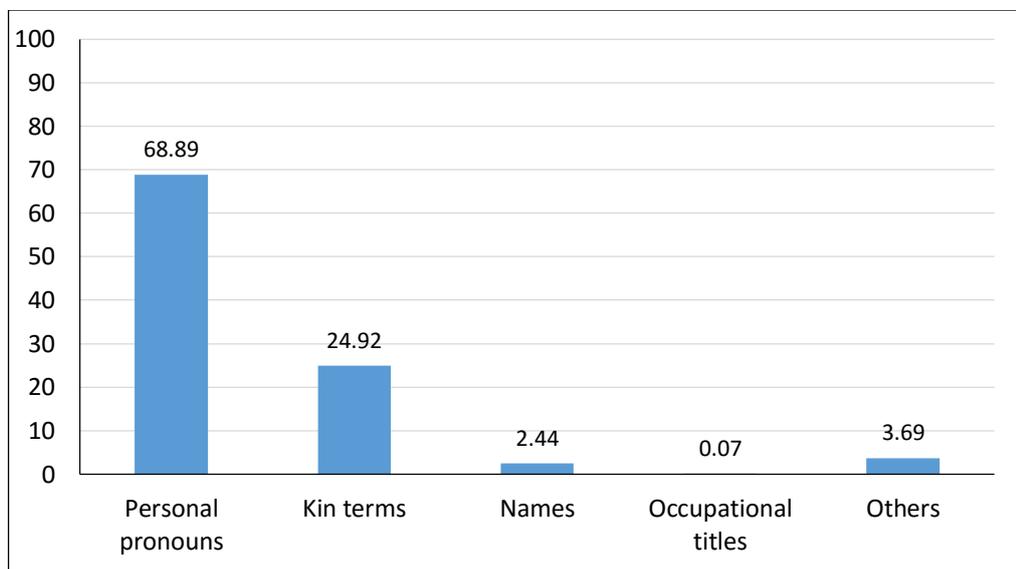


Figure 5.2: Percentage of use of overt self-reference terms

Due to the large amount of zero forms in the dataset, the remaining self-reference terms are analysed excluding zero forms so as to get a clearer picture of the distribution. Figure 5.2 shows the distribution of the five categories of overt self-reference terms. Personal pronouns are used most frequently (68.89%) and much more frequently than other categories. Kin terms, which are the second most frequently used category, account for only 24.92% of all overt self-reference terms. Table 5.6 below shows that there is a significant difference in distribution of personal pronouns and other overt forms across discourse types. Personal pronouns are used significantly more frequently than other overt forms of self-reference terms in both personal narratives (70.65%) and opinions (65.75%). In terms of the distribution between personal pronouns and other overt forms, no prediction of a particular pattern was made. However, the preference for personal pronouns in both discourse types is not unanticipated. Considering self-reference in Thai in general, the

system of pronouns is a big set of forms while others, i.e. kin terms, names, and occupational titles, are composed of fewer forms, and hence have more limited use. It is therefore not surprising that pronouns are used more frequently than other overt forms in both discourse types. The preference for pronouns found here agrees with what has been found earlier in Saisuwan (2016) where the use of self-reference terms in three online webboards for *kathoe*y and women is examined, and pronouns are found to be used much more frequently than other self-reference terms in the dataset.

	Personal pronouns	Other overt forms	Total
Personal narratives	686	285	971
Opinions	359	187	546
$\chi^2 = 3.91, df = 1, p = 0.04795$			

Table 5.6: Chi square test of personal pronouns and other overt forms of self-reference terms

Even though pronouns are used more frequently in both personal narratives and opinions, the difference between pronouns and other overt forms in personal narratives is greater than that in opinions. That is, the preference for pronouns over other overt forms is stronger in personal narratives than opinions. It is difficult at this point to argue why this is the case as pronouns in Thai consist of masculine, feminine and epicene forms. Considering all types of pronouns together does not show how different types of pronouns are used exactly. Feminine pronouns were predicted to be used more frequently in personal narratives where the participants focus on their gender and sexuality.

Personal pronouns used in the dataset can be classified into masculine, feminine and epicene pronouns. The majority of personal pronouns used in the data are epicene pronouns, which account for 86.12% of all pronouns. Therefore, overall epicene pronouns are used much more frequently than masculine and feminine pronouns. The only masculine pronoun in the dataset is *phom*. Following Table 5.2 discussed earlier, this pronoun indicates non-intimate distance between interlocutors regardless of power between them and the formality of situations. In the dataset, there are only three tokens of *phom* and all of them are used in constructed dialogue as shown in (5.16) and (5.17). In (5.16), Gift, a member of the Undergraduates, uses *phom* when reporting the speech of his student. *Phom* here is the form reported by Gift as the way the student referred to himself. In (5.17), Mod talks about difficulties in getting a job for people who identify with a non-normative gender. In this extract, *phom* does not refer to anyone in particular. Mod uses the masculine form in order

to clarify and emphasise his point, which is that even though a job does not require any gender in particular, people with normative genders are actually preferred.

(5.16) Gift: son son pai khao ko chuan khui khao bok wa oe nia phi tae **phom** ko khao chai kham wa rai chuenchom phi na thi baep yomrap tua-eng ok ma poetphoei tua-eng ngia

After teaching him for a while, he talked to me. He said “Right, but I ...” which word did he use? “admire you. Like, you accept yourself, you reveal yourself.”

(5.17) Mod: tha pen khon tha pen thi mueangthai yang ngia maekrathang ngan sale thammada mai dai chai phet mai dai mi kan baep yuen pai **phom** pen nai nun ni nan **phom** pen nang nun ni nan ngia tae khue tha khui kan luek luek ching ching a phut loei wa baep **phi** rap tae phuchai na ngia

If it’s, if it’s in Thailand, even an ordinary sales job, not relating to gender, you don’t have to present yourself like “I’m Mr this and that, I’m Ms this and that,” but if you talk to them seriously, they may say “I only want men.”

	Feminine pronouns	Epicene pronouns	Total
Personal narratives	77	609	686
Opinions	65	291	356
$\chi^2 = 9.85, df = 1, p = 0.001697$			

Table 5.7: Chi square test of feminine and epicene pronouns

Table 5.7 shows the comparison of the frequency of feminine and epicene pronouns. Since the masculine pronoun *phom* is used infrequently and only in constructed speech in the dataset, it is excluded from the comparison here which focuses on only the other two categories of pronouns (the infrequent use of *phom* will be discussed later in this chapter). As seen in Table 5.7, epicene pronouns are used significantly more than feminine pronouns in both personal narratives and opinions. At first, it may look like the participants prefer not to show their gender, and so they use epicene pronouns. However, a closer look at the participants’ pronouns use reveals that this may not be the case, or at least not always. Different pronouns are available to different participants in the interview context. Certain participants have limited choices for gendered pronouns due to certain social factors which limit their self-referencing choice. Not all of them have a gendered pronoun as one of the

appropriate choices of self-reference. Therefore, not using a gendered form does not necessarily indicate that the participants are unwilling to identify with a gender or try to cover their gender. Also, some pronouns have a wider range of meaning than others, and that enables them to be used more frequently. These issues will be discussed further in the next section.

Comparing the proportion of feminine and epicene pronouns, feminine pronouns cover 11.22% of the total of the two pronoun types in personal narratives, and 18.26% in opinions. This indicates that feminine pronouns are used more frequently in opinions than narratives. This contradicts the predicted pattern discussed earlier, where feminine pronouns were anticipated to be favoured in personal narratives as the participants focus on their own experience, particularly in terms of gender and sexuality. Such pattern of distribution of feminine pronouns can be explained by the relation between pronoun use and the role of the speaker (Koven 2002). As shown earlier in Table 5.4 and to be discussed later in the chapter, the only feminine pronoun found in the dataset is *nu* and the form is exclusively used by the members of the Undergraduates, as they are younger than me, the interviewer, and the form signifies the lower social position of the speaker. In opinions, the participants mainly play the interlocutory role of speaker, which is the speaker's position as an interlocutor in an interaction. Considering the relation between interlocutors, they are thus to some extent limited to certain forms. For the Undergraduates, the feminine pronoun *nu* is an appropriate form while the form is not available as an option for other participants. However, in personal narratives, the participants do not only play the interlocutory role, but also the authorial role of speaker – the role of speaker as a narrator or storyteller. That is, they are not only an interlocutor at the current speech context, but also a narrator who narrates stories. The epicene pronoun *rao*, apart from indicating certain kinds of relation between interlocutors, also particularly serves such authorial function indicating a “neutral position” as a narrator. The pronoun is also available for all participants as a way of signifying the authorial speaker role, hence its high frequency of use. This means that, in personal narratives, the members of the Undergraduates have more self-reference options apart from the feminine pronoun, which indicates the relation between interlocutors, and they are able to use an epicene pronoun, which is more neutral, as part of storytelling. The members of the Undergraduates therefore use the feminine pronoun more frequently in opinions than personal narratives due to different speaker roles they play in the two discourse types. The relation between the role of speaker and the use of epicene pronouns will be discussed in more details later in this chapter.

In the next section, I will discuss the comparison of the use of self-reference terms among the three friendship groups and other individual participants. I will begin with my prediction of their use of self-reference terms based on several factors such as power and social distance between them and me as the interviewer, and their physical appearance. Then I will move onto their actual use of self-reference terms which consist of both predicted and unpredicted forms. The comparisons among groups and participants, and between the predicted forms and forms which are actually used, make it possible to see which factors or dimensions are important for the participants in choosing self-reference terms, what the self-reference choices they have for the interview context are, which forms they use and whether each group behaves similarly or differently in choosing self-reference terms.

5.3.2 Comparison across groups

The participants in this study are a very diverse group of Thai men who identify with non-normative male roles. They are popularly seen as belonging to the same category of being non-normative men. However, they are different in many respects. Their age relative to me is different. They got to know me through different ways and in different roles. They have known me for different lengths of time, and hence the level of intimacy differs. Also, they present their gender differently through physical appearance such as hairstyle, make-up and outfit. Even within the same friendship group, the members differ in these respects. That is, belonging to the same friendship group does not mean that the members have the same kind of relationship with me, or present themselves in the same way. The extent to which the members present themselves as masculine or feminine can be different. In this study, the members of the same friendship group are unified as a group by sharing the same educational path or goal, and/or spending a lot of time together as a group, i.e. excluding other outsiders of the group, both for achieving the goal and for personal reasons. Individual differences and group differences determine how the participants are predicted to refer to themselves. Particularly, certain forms of self-reference terms are predicted to be used by certain participants. Some of the forms are used as predicted, some are not, and some other forms, which are not predicted, are found to be used instead. In order to illustrate why a particular form is predicted to be used by a particular speaker, I will now explain the participants' relevant characteristics which, I hypothesise, could potentially influence their choice of overt self-reference terms.

The four members of the Undergraduates who are included in this study are all younger than me. They were all aware of my older age and that I graduated from the same school

that they were attending at the time of my fieldwork. I am, therefore, not only older than them, but also more senior in terms of university year of graduation. The relationship between them and me is thus non-reciprocal. Since the members of the Undergraduates are younger than me and presented themselves as non-normative men and, to differing extents, feminine, I expected them to use the feminine pronoun *nu* as a way of showing their identification with femininity. However, the masculine form *phom* was also expected as they could technically use the form, especially Shane and Pong who wore masculine uniform and did not wear make-up, which means that their presentation of femininity was not as obvious as that of the other two members. Besides, the relationship between the group members and me is not intimate, despite them having met me several times before the interview. *Phom* could potentially be used as a way for the group members to show the distance between them and me, and to sound polite as they are younger than me. Apart from the two pronouns, the members of the Undergraduates were also predicted to refer to themselves with their name, which is also appropriate for speakers who are younger than their interlocutors.

The members of the Postgraduates are of different ages. Yoot is the same age as me. He and I have been friends for several years since our undergraduate years. We are not close friends but relatively familiar with each other. Yoot was, therefore, predicted to refer to himself with epicene pronouns *chan*, *rao* and his name. The other two group members Tor and Tony are older than me. They were very familiar with me at the time the interviews were conducted. With the non-reciprocal power between them and me due to their older age, they were predicted to refer to themselves with the kin term *phi* 'older brother/older sister' indexing their older age. Similar to Tor and Tony of the Postgraduates, Mik and Max of the Professionals are both older than me. They met me several times before the interview. Like Tor and Tony of the Postgraduates who are older than me, Mik and Max were predicted to refer to themselves with the kin term *phi*. Even though the members of the Postgraduates were in the educational context like the Undergraduates, and some of the members of the Postgraduates and the Professionals presented themselves in public as being masculine rather than feminine, the masculine pronoun *phom* was not predicted to be used by the Postgraduates or the Professionals. This is partly because the relationship between me and these two groups was more intimate as compared to the relationship I had with the Undergraduates. Also, being older than or the same age as me, it was less likely that the participants in these two groups would want to sound polite by distancing themselves from me using *phom* in the same way the Undergraduates might have done.

Individual participants consist of those who are the same age, or older, than me. Lek, Win, Nan and Dew are all older than me. They were predicted to use the kin term *phi*. Mod is the same age as me. Like Yoot of the Postgraduates, as someone who is the same age, Mod was predicted to refer to himself with the epicene pronouns *chan*, *rao*, or with his name.

Note that of all the participants, only the members of the Undergraduates have the choice of gendered terms, which are the feminine pronoun *nu* and the masculine pronoun *phom*, in the context of the interview. These forms were predicted to be used by the Undergraduates due to the non-reciprocal power relationship between them and me, more specifically their younger age compared to my age. For other participants, there is no option of gendered term predicted to be used by them in this context. In other words, they were predicted to use the kin term *phi*, which indicates their older age for those who are older than me, and the epicene pronouns *chan*, *rao* and names for those who are the same age as me. Therefore, although the power, which is determined by relative age here, is the main factor influencing the self-reference choice for all participants, it was only possible and predicted among those who are younger than me to present their gender through their use of self-reference terms. Brief details about the participants, the predicted overt self-reference terms to be used by them and some of the actual terms they use are summarised in Table 5.8. The table includes only self-reference terms used in non-constructed speech. However, the context of constructed speech will be considered in the analysis in the following sections.

	Self-reference options predicted to be used	Actual terms used
<p>The Undergraduates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Younger than the interviewer, wearing masculine uniform, openly presenting themselves as <i>kathoey</i> in the university context, having met the interviewer several before the interview 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>nu</i> • name • <i>phom</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ <i>nu</i> ✓ name ✗ <i>phom</i> ✍ <i>rao</i>
<p>The Postgraduates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yoot: same age as the interviewer, presenting himself in public as 	<p>Yoot</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>chan</i> • <i>rao</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ <i>chan</i> ✓ <i>rao</i>

<p><i>kathoey</i>, having been friend with the interviewer for several years</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tor and Tony: older than the interviewer, presenting themselves with masculine appearance, having met the interviewer several times before the interview 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> name <p>Tor and Tony</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>phi</i> 	<p>✓ name</p> <p>✓ <i>phi</i></p> <p> <i>rao</i></p>
<p>The Professionals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Both participants are older than the interviewer and have met the interviewer several times before the interview. Mik: dressing in feminine outfit, presenting himself as <i>kathoey</i> Max: dressing in masculine outfit, presenting himself as a gay man 	<p>Mik</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>phi</i> <p>Max</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>phi</i> 	<p>✗ <i>phi</i></p> <p> <i>rao</i></p> <p>✓ <i>phi</i></p> <p> <i>rao</i></p>
<p>Individual participants</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lek: older than the interviewer, living fully like a woman. Win, Nan and Dew: older than the interviewer, dressing themselves in masculine outfit despite their being open as <i>kathoey</i> Mod: same age as the interviewer, dressing in masculine outfit despite presenting himself as <i>kathoey</i> 	<p>Lek</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>phi</i> <p>Win, Nan and Dew</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>phi</i> <p>Mod</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>chan</i> <i>rao</i> name 	<p>✗ <i>phi</i></p> <p> <i>phi+name</i></p> <p>✓ <i>phi</i></p> <p> <i>rao</i></p> <p>✗ <i>chan</i></p> <p>✓ <i>rao</i></p> <p>✗ name</p>

✓ predicted form being used, ✗ predicted form not being used,

 unpredicted form being used

Table 5.8: Predicted overt self-reference terms and actual terms used in interviews

As predicted, the members of the Undergraduates use the feminine pronoun *nu* and their name to refer to themselves as speakers. However, they do not use the masculine pronoun *phom* as predicted. Also, they use the epicene pronoun *rao* which is an unpredicted form. For the Postgraduates, Yoot uses the epicene pronoun *rao* but not *chan*. He also uses his name as predicted. Tor and Tony refer to themselves with the kin term *phi* as predicted.

Unexpectedly, they also use the epicene pronoun *rao*. Similar to Tor and Tony, Max of the Professionals uses the kin term *phi* as predicted but also the epicene pronoun *rao* which is not predicted. Mik of the Professionals uses *rao* as well. However, he does not use *phi* even though he is older than me, as Max, Tor and Tony are. For the individual participants, Win, Nan and Dew have the same trend of self-reference term use as Tor, Tony and Max. That is, they use the kin term *phi* as predicted, and the unpredicted epicene pronoun *rao*. Lek does not use *phi* individually but uses it together with his name in the form of *phi+name*. Mod also has the same trend of pronoun use as Yoot. That is, he uses the epicene form *rao* but not *chan*. However, Mod does not refer to himself with his name.

In sum, relative age is a significant social factor determining the choice of self-reference terms. The members of the Undergraduates, who are younger than me, are the only participants to whom the masculine pronoun *phom* and the feminine pronoun *nu* are available. However, they only use the feminine pronoun *nu* in the interview. The participants who are the same age as me use the epicene pronoun *rao* and their name. Those who are older than me use the kin term *phi*. Interestingly, the epicene pronoun *rao*, while being used by the participants who are the same age as me (as predicted), is used by almost every participant, even in unanticipated cases.

As discussed in this section, self-reference terms used by the participants consist of both predicted and unpredicted forms. In the following sections, I will discuss three issues which arise out of the predicted self-reference terms and the terms actually used by the participants. I will begin with the choice of the feminine pronoun *nu* of the Undergraduates, their non-use of the masculine pronoun *phom* and how their self-referencing choice reveals their gender identification. Then I will discuss the lack of gendered forms predicted and used by the Postgraduates and the Professionals. I will argue that the two groups do not have a gendered choice available for them in this particular context of the interview and it may not be the case that they avoid showing gender through self-reference terms as such. Finally, I will discuss in detail the use of the epicene pronouns *rao* and *chan* in regard to both style and frequency.

5.3.3 The use of the feminine pronoun *nu* of the Undergraduates

The members of the Undergraduates are all younger than me. Because of that, they were predicted to use the feminine pronoun *nu*, the masculine pronoun *phom* or their names as self-reference terms. These three self-reference terms are appropriate to be used by the Undergraduates as younger people talking to an older interlocutor. The results discussed

earlier indicate that the members of the Undergraduates use *nu* and their name as predicted, but not *phom*. As discussed in the beginning of the chapter, *nu* is a feminine first-person pronoun, and *phom* is a masculine first-person pronoun. I argue that the members of the Undergraduates identify themselves with femininity, and hence use the feminine pronoun *nu* as a way to directly index their femininity. To justify the argument, linguistic and non-linguistic evidence is discussed in this section. The evidence illustrates how the identification with femininity of the members of the Undergraduates is shown through both linguistic and non-linguistic means, and that their choice of the feminine pronoun is one of the ways of presenting their femininity.

Nu is the only feminine first-person pronoun found in the data. As discussed earlier, the pronoun indicates non-reciprocal power between interlocutors where the speaker is younger in age or lower in seniority than the addressee. The association between *nu* and femininity is implicitly mentioned in the interview. The extract in (5.18) is derived from Gift's interview. Gift talks about how he used language during secondary school. He mentions two types of linguistic resources here: polite final particles and pronouns. Both polite final particles and pronouns are direct indexes of gender in Thai. Like pronouns, there are different sets of masculine and feminine final particles. *Kha* is a feminine polite final particle. Gift says that he did not use either *kha* or *nu* even though he realised that he was a *kathoe*y and people in the school knew he was a *kathoe*y. Gift sees a contradiction in the way he did not use the feminine forms in secondary school when he was known to be a *kathoe*y. However, as can be seen in this extract, Gift uses *nu* in the interview. The extract shows that Gift associates the two linguistic variables with *kathoe*y identity. He sees them as a possible way of showing his gender. Using feminine final particles and feminine pronouns is a way of using the type of language predicted for *kathoe*y.

(5.18) Gift: tae kokhue tonnan kokhue **nu** mai kla (.) **nu** mai khoei phut kha na tonnan na ton matthayom mai khoei mai khoei phut kha loei sak ka khrang diao

But like, back then I wasn't (.) I never used *kha* back then during secondary school. Never, never used *kha* even once.

cham mai dai wa na cha mai khoei riak tua-eng wa nu duai baep cham mai dai wa riak yangngai muean kan tae kokhue pen kathoe y khue thuk khon ko ru wa pen tut ngia

I can't remember if, I never referred to myself as *nu* either. Like, I can't remember how I refer to myself. But I was *kathoey*. Everyone knew I was *tut*.

Additionally, their identification with femininity is also indicated through the fact that they prefer using this feminine pronoun rather than other forms that they could possibly use in this context and which do not index gender. In other words, the members of the Undergraduates could, in the context of the interview, refer to themselves with their name, which is a way of referring to themselves without identifying with any gender. Using a name, specifically a nickname, is the option of self-referencing preferred by one of the members, Pong. Unlike the other members, Pong does not use *nu* at all during the interview. He mainly refers to himself with his name. Based on my personal experience as a native speaker of Thai, there is no explicit rule determining the use of a name as a self-reference term regarding the speaker's age but it is more common for speakers of the same age or with a relatively younger age to refer to themselves with their name. Also, the kind of name that is commonly used as self-reference terms is a nickname.

It may at first look like Pong avoids indicating his gender or his alignment with femininity, and hence he uses his name, and not *nu*. Pong may find the context of the interview with me relatively formal and using *nu* can be inappropriate in the sense that it does not match society's expectation of him being masculine. Pong's non-use of *nu* and his preference for referring to himself with his nickname may at first look like it indicates his avoidance of identifying with femininity. However, I do not argue for that to be the case here. Pong presented himself openly as *kathoey* to me and to other people in general in the university context where he was and where the fieldwork was mainly conducted. He was aware that I knew his gender identification. There seems to be no particular reason why he would want to avoid showing his gender through the feminine pronoun. Although using his nickname allows him to not identify with any particular gender, it is unlikely that that was his intention. In addition, based on the data analysed, there is no discernible difference between the use of *nu* and name in general. Therefore, using name as a self-reference term can be just a choice of personal preference rather than the avoidance of gender identification.

Although the group members have different preferences for either *nu* or name, Shane, Gift, June and Pong all share the same preference for not using the masculine pronoun *phom*. Belonging to the masculine pronominal system, *phom* is a direct index of masculinity. It is a

masculine pronoun available to be used in various situations including one where the relationship between interlocutors is non-reciprocal, like the one in the interview where I have more power than the Undergraduates because of my older age, i.e. where *nu* would be used in the feminine system. Despite presenting themselves openly as *kathoey*, the members of the Undergraduates were in the educational context and maintained the normative masculinity to some extent. For example, they wore masculine university uniforms. Since conforming to the norm of masculinity is more or less expected among the members of the Undergraduates in their educational context, *phom* was one of the self-reference terms predicted to be used by them in the interview as it can be a way of conforming to, and indexing, masculinity. The fact the members of the Undergraduates do not use *phom* at all corresponds with their use of the feminine pronoun *nu*. This suggests that they do not identify themselves as masculine, at least when they were talking to me during the interview, and do not conform to society's norm of masculinity in terms of self-reference.

The members of the Undergraduates also present their femininity through non-linguistic means. Their femininity can be seen in their appearance and personality. In terms of appearance, femininity is shown most clearly in June's case. June is the only member who wore feminine uniform and feminine outfit in general. He was also relatively more feminine-looking than other members. The shape of his breasts was visible. He had long hair and wore make-up. Shane, Gift and Pong, in contrast, wore masculine uniform. They also wore masculine clothes outside university. However, their "masculine" outfits hinted at their femininity. For example, Gift mentions in the interview that he prefers wearing small shirts which look similar to women's blouses rather than men's shirts. Also, Gift wore light make-up both inside and outside the university. Apart from their appearance, their personality is the kind of personality stereotypically associated with femininity and *kathoey* identity. The extract in (5.19) is Pong's answer to the question of how he thinks people recognise him as a non-normative man. Pong mentions his walking style and the gestures he makes when talking. Walking with the two legs being close to each other and speaking with a lot of hand gestures are typically associated with femininity, or more accurately non-masculinity in Thai culture. For Pong, this is how his femininity is shown and how people detect his non-masculinity.

(5.19) Pong: tha doen phro **Pong** ko baep oe doen baep kha ko khwai khwai man ko baep oe cha du baep mai dai phayam baep oe (.) kha cha baep chit chit

bit bit arai yang ngia laeoko baep (.) kan phut kan cha bang khrang arai
oe oe a a suanyai mue **Pong** a cha ok dai mak thisut

Walking style, because like, I walk like, with legs crossing. It's like, looks
like, I don't try to, like (.) My legs are like closed and twisted. And like (.)
the way I talk sometimes blah blah. Mostly **my** hands are the most
obvious.

In addition, the members of the Undergraduates also mention their gender explicitly in the interview. For example, in (5.20), Shane says that he is very feminine. He identifies himself as *tut*, a casual term for *kathoey*, and he is open about his being *kathoey*. Note that the intensifier *mak* 'very' in *sao mak* 'very feminine' is pronounced with lengthened vowel, which, as discussed in the previous chapter, is associated with the identity of *kathoey* and gay men. However, in this extract Shane refers to himself with the epicene pronoun *rao*, of which use will be discussed in more detail later in this chapter. That is, here when Shane mentions his femininity and *kathoey* identity, he does not use the feminine pronoun to directly index his femininity, but he makes use of vowel lengthening, which indirectly indexes femininity. In (5.21), Gift compares himself to men and women, and says that he looks more like a woman. He thinks he looks more feminine than masculine despite not wearing feminine clothes. Such explicit comments confirm that these participants are identifying with non-masculinity, femininity, and *kathoey* identity.

(5.20) Shane: sao ma:k **rao** pen tut ue ko **rao** ko bok thuk khon wa **rao** pen tut

I'm very feminine. I'm *tut*. I tell everyone that I'm *tut*.

(5.21) Gift: khue **nu** mi khwamrusuek wa **nu** (.) **nu** du pen- maithueng sing thi
sadaeng-ok ma man du pen phuying mak kwa thi cha pen phuchai a (.)
rue wa kathoey thi mai taeng ying mak kwa

I feel that I (.) I look like- I mean the way I behave, I look more like a
woman rather than a man (.) or more like a *kathoey* who doesn't wear
feminine clothes.

In this section, I argue that the members of the Undergraduates use the feminine pronoun *nu* as a means of indexing femininity. The pronoun is preferred by most of the members even though they have other options of self-reference including one which does not specify the gender of the speaker. *Nu* is a feminine pronoun in Thai directly indexing femininity. Therefore, their choice of *nu* signifies that they are identifying with femininity. This is

supported by other non-linguistic evidence including their appearance and personality as observed during the fieldwork. They also mention their femininity and *kathoey* identity explicitly in the interview.

5.3.4 The non-use of gendered self-reference terms of the Postgraduates and the Professionals

Table 5.8, discussed earlier, shows that the members of the Postgraduates and the Professionals were not predicted to use any gendered self-reference term in the interview context and the results confirm this prediction. That is, the two groups do not use any self-reference term which signifies gender. In this section, I argue that this is not because they avoid identifying with a particular gender by using gender-neutral forms but because there is no self-reference option which can do the job of signifying gender and is appropriate for them to use in the context of interview.

The Postgraduates consists of the members who are older than me and the same age as me while the members of the Professionals are both older than me. These two groups are therefore different from the Undergraduates in terms of the relative age of the members compared to my age. Being older than me or the same age as me, the members of the two groups do not have any gendered form of self-reference option available for them in the interview context as shown in Table 5.8. Yoot of the Postgraduates is the same age as me, as is Mod, an individual participant. Both Yoot and Mod use *rao*, the epicene pronoun indicating reciprocal power, as predicted. The form accounts for the majority of overt self-reference terms used by the two participants. Yoot also refers to himself with his name. Tor and Tony of the Postgraduates, and Mik and Max of the Professionals, are older than me. They were predicted to use *phi* 'older brother/older sister,' the kin term indicating the speaker's older age relative to that of the interlocutor, regardless of the level of intimacy between them and me, or their gender presentation. As shown in Table 5.8 earlier, *phi* is used, as predicted, by the Postgraduates. The term accounts for 54.08% of all overt self-reference terms used by the group. The kin term *phi* is also used, as predicted, by some individual participants who are older than me. Win refers to himself with this kin term frequently. The term accounts for 66.27% of all overt self-reference terms used by him. Lek also uses *phi* but he prefers using it together with his nickname, resulting in the form of *phi+name*. Lek does not use *phi* or his name independently at all. He always uses the two terms together as *phi+name* which accounts for 48.61% of all overt self-reference terms he uses and is the form he uses most frequently. However, there is no discernible difference

between *phi* and *phi+name* found in the dataset. It is a matter of personal preference even though *phi* is normally more common than *phi+name*. However, not all older speakers use or prefer *phi* when talking to me during the interview. *Phi* is used infrequently by the Professionals, and more specifically only by Max (13.95% of all overt self-reference terms used by the group). Mik does not use *phi* at all despite being older than me. Nan, an individual participant, uses *phi* but also infrequently (11.76% of all overt self-reference terms used by him).

Generally, the results indicate that the Postgraduates and the Professionals' choice of self-reference are as predicted. That is, they did not use gendered forms because of the lack of gendered self-reference options available for them in the interview context, as governed by Thai social conventions. Clearly, this does not necessarily mean that they are intentionally avoiding signifying their gender, or that they are purposefully trying to cover up their non-normative identity because, as discussed, they indexed their non-normative identities in other ways. The reason why the Postgraduates and the Professionals do not have an option of gendered form in the interview context is mainly because of their relative age to me as an interlocutor. As younger interlocutors, the Undergraduates have both masculine and feminine forms as their options. In contrast, the relative age to me of the Postgraduates and the Professionals does not allow the members of the two groups to signify gender through self-reference terms. This indicates the importance of age and seniority in Thai society. People of younger age and lower seniority are usually more restricted in terms of what they can or should do. They are expected to behave in a particular way in a situation in order to be considered as behaving appropriately. Those who are of older age and higher seniority are also expected to do things in certain ways but have relatively more flexibility in terms of what they can do when in the company of those who are younger and have lower seniority. Relative age and seniority determine almost every kind of behaviour including speech. For example, younger people generally are expected to speak more politely when interacting with older ones, while older ones can be relatively less polite. Younger speakers are expected to use polite final particles when speaking to older ones while older ones may or may not use the particles.

Considering the case of self-reference terms in the dataset analysed here, the participants' age and seniority relative to me restrict their options of self-reference. For the Postgraduates and the Professionals, because of their older age, they were predicted to refer to themselves with the kin term *phi*. This way of self-reference is very common for Thai speakers in general when talking to younger interlocutors in informal situations. Thai kin

terms do not distinguish between masculine and feminine forms of *phi*. Therefore, referring to oneself as *phi* does not allow gender identification for the speaker. To use pronouns which can signify gender, there is no “right” form for the Postgraduates and the Professionals to choose. The masculine pronoun *phom* would sound too formal or too polite as it indicates distance between interlocutors. Note that *phom* was a predicted form for the Undergraduates because it is more typical or more anticipated for younger speakers to be formal and polite when talking to older interlocutors. The feminine pronoun *dichan* would be too formal whereas *nu* indicates a lower social position for the speaker which is not the case for the Postgraduates and the Professionals. Therefore, linguistic tools for self-reference available for the two groups do not provide the means for them to signify gender. This also indicates that *kathoey* and gay men do not always have the linguistic resources or options to do gender. Even though the self-reference system in Thai has the distinction between masculine and feminine forms, such a distinction is not available for the speaker in every situation. The choice of self-reference is context-dependent. Non-use of gendered self-reference forms in certain situations suggests a lack of appropriate linguistic options for gender identification rather than the speaker’s intention to avoid doing gender.

Despite the argument discussed above, there is actually a small use of self-reference terms which can indicate gender in these circumstances. The two terms of this kind – *che* and *i ni* – are used by Nan, together accounting for 8.82% of all overt self-reference terms used by him. *Che* 'older sister' is a Chinese kin term derived from the Teochew dialect, the Chinese dialect most commonly spoken among Chinese Thai people in Thailand (Lewis, Simons & Fennig 2015). It is therefore a borrowed term and not part of Thai basic kin terms. The term is used by speakers with a Chinese family background, which is very common in Thai society. However, *che* is available to Thai speakers in general, including those who do not come from a Chinese background. Like Thai kin terms, *che* can be used as a pseudo kin term among those who are not kin. *Che* is nonetheless less common than the Thai kin term *phi*. *I ni* is a term used to refer to a person or thing recoverable from context. The term *i* itself is usually put in front of feminine names or other terms to signify femininity, and potentially insults. Combined with certain adjectives or nouns, *i* functions as part of condemnatory expression. *Ni* 'this' itself can be used as a demonstrative determiner or pronoun referring to something within close proximity to the speaker. *I ni* then signifies the femininity of a person in a derogatory fashion.

Nan is one of the participants who uses such terms. Like other older participants, Nan mostly refers to himself with *phi* in the interview. This Thai kin term does not specify the

speaker's gender, and therefore does not allow gender identification. But at times, Nan uses *che*, which allows him to identify himself as feminine. Nan has a Chinese background and, therefore, this form of self-reference indexes his ethnic background, his older age and his identification with femininity, a meaning which is not signified by *phi* 'older brother/older sister' and *nong* 'younger brother/ younger sister' in the system of Thai kin terms. The extract in (5.22) shows the way Nan uses both *che* and *phi*. Here Nan talks about a friend of his who he saw on that day. Nan notices that his friend looks darker than he usually is. Nan finds the way he comments on his friend's skin colour unusual as he does not normally pay attention to skin colour. While describing the situation, Nan uses *che* before switching to *phi*. There is no discernible difference between the use of *phi* and *che*. That is, apart from the gendered aspect, the two pronouns are interchangeable in terms of their function as a self-reference term.

(5.22) Nan: oe **che** ko bok wa oe pokkati rueang khao dam a man cha mai khoei pen feature lak nai chiwit wa khon ni khao khon ni dam **phi phi phi** cha pen khon mong mai hen wa khrai khao khrai dam ngai

Right, I said, well, normally the skin colour is never a main feature in my life, that this person is white, this person is black. I, I, I'm the kind of person who can't see who is white or who is black.

As *che* is a kin term which exclusively refers to an older sister, when used as a self-reference term, it is typically associated with feminine speakers. I argue that the Chinese kin term *che* is used here as a direct index of femininity. Nan has an option of referring to himself with the Thai kin term *phi* which allows him to signify his older age. He actually uses *phi* more frequently than *che*. However, Nan switches his self-reference term to *che* a few times when he could have stuck to the Thai kin term *phi* throughout the conversation. This suggests that at least he is comfortable and open about identifying with femininity. This is not to say that such kin term choice is intentional. The infrequency of the term makes it impossible to see why *che* is used at a particular point in his speech. I do not either claim that Nan uses *phi* to avoid identifying with either masculinity or femininity, as *phi* is more common for Nan and Thai speakers in general. After all, Nan does not use *che* consistently and actually uses *phi* more frequently. What is important is the fact that Nan uses *che*, even infrequently, while he does not have to. With or without intention, referring to himself with *che*, therefore, shows to certain extent that Nan identifies himself with femininity. Nan selects and makes

use of a particular linguistic tool available in the Chinese dialect for self-reference in showing his femininity.

5.3.5 The use of epicene pronouns *rao* and *chan*

In the dataset, there are two epicene pronouns used – *rao* and *chan*. They do not signify either masculinity or femininity. Considering the schematic use of self-reference terms in Thai as shown earlier in Table 5.1 and Table 5.2, these two pronouns are used in certain similar situations. The two pronouns share the common feature of being used in informal situations. They are used slightly differently in the masculine and feminine system. In the masculine system, *chan* and *rao* are used when the balance of power is reciprocal, and the distance between interlocutors is neutral, that is when they are not particularly intimate with each other. In the feminine system, the two pronouns cover a somewhat wider range of use including situations where the relationship between interlocutors is either neutral or non-intimate. *Rao* is used when the balance of power between interlocutors is reciprocal, while *chan* can be used either in situations of reciprocal power or non-reciprocal power when the speaker has higher social status. In other words, while the masculine pronoun *phom* is used for non-intimate interlocutors in the masculine system, such a situation is covered by *chan* and *rao* in the feminine system.

In spite of sharing certain common features, the two forms have a very different amount of use. *Rao* is used frequently (49.44% of all overt self-reference terms and 71.77% of all personal pronouns) by every friendship group and every participant while *chan* accounts for only 7.58% of all overt self-reference terms and 11% of all personal pronouns. It is therefore interesting why the two pronouns, which theoretically are expected to be similar, have such a huge difference in the frequency of use, and it will be interesting to explore whether they are used in the same way. In this section, I delve into the use of the two pronouns. Differences in the usage and meanings of the two forms will be described and analysed. The analysis will explain the big difference in their frequency. I will argue that the huge difference between the frequencies of use of the two forms lies in a broader possible range of use of *rao* compared to that of *chan*.

	Undergraduates	%	Postgraduates	%	Professionals	%
1	<i>rao</i>	44.72	<i>phi</i>	54.08	<i>rao</i>	66.99
2	<i>nu</i>	43.79	<i>rao</i>	33.42	<i>ku</i>	19.42

Table 5.9: Two most frequently used overt self-reference terms
by the three friendship groups

As shown earlier in Table 5.8, the epicene pronoun *rao* is expected only among those participants who are the same age as me – Yoot of the Postgraduates, and Mod. This is because *rao* indexes a reciprocal power between interlocutors, which is a characteristic of the relationship between me and the two participants due to our same age. The pronoun is, however, used by all of the participants, including those who are not predicted to use the form. Table 5.9 shows rates of occurrence of the two most frequently used overt forms in the three friendship groups. The epicene pronoun *rao*, which is not predicted to occur among the Undergraduates and the Professionals, is, in fact, used most frequently by these two groups. It is used by the Undergraduates approximately as much as the epicene pronoun *nu*, which is a predicted form. Together the two pronouns cover over 80% of all overt forms of self-reference terms used by the Undergraduates. The Professionals have the very high percentage of use of the epicene pronoun *rao* (66.99%). For the Postgraduates, more than half of the overt forms used are the kin term *phi*, the predicted form used by Tor and Tony. *Rao*, which is predicted to be used by Yoot, is actually used by all members of the Postgraduates. However, the percentage of use of *rao* by the Postgraduates is lower than that of the other two groups. Among the individual participants, *rao* is only predicted to be used by Mod who is the same age as me. It is revealed in the data that Mod uses *rao* most frequently among other overt self-reference terms he uses (94.70%). The other individual participants also use *rao*, although they are not predicted to. The use of *rao* by Nan and Dew accounts for more than half of all instances of overt self-reference terms they use, 52.35% and 74.16%, respectively.

The use of *rao* can be classified into two speaker roles – an interlocutory role and an authorial role. According to Koven (2002), interlocutory speaker role refers to the speaker in the current context where the act of speaking occurs. It is the role which the speaker occupies the ‘here and now’ (Koven 2002: 180) at the point where the interaction is going on. The interlocutory role allows the speaker to position himself/herself in relation to the addressee or the audience in the ongoing interaction. The interlocutory use of *rao* can be either singular or plural. (5.23) - (5.28) are examples of singular interlocutory *rao*. Despite referring to oneself as the speaker and conveying the singular meaning, interlocutory *rao* can be used in an inclusive sense as shown in (5.25) - (5.28). The use of inclusive singular *rao* is discussed in Kullavanijaya (2000). It refers to the instances where the speaker does not only refer to himself/herself but also, through the use of *rao*, implies that the situation he/she is talking about is general and can be applied to anyone. Such instances of *rao* are translated into *we* in English. In addition, in the data analysed here, *rao* is also used as a

singular pronoun with the inclusive sense in the way that the statement can be applied to the category of men who identify with non-normative male roles, either *kathoey* or gay men. As shown in (5.27) and (5.28), *rao* includes the category of *kathoey* or gay men instead of people in general. The speaker refers to himself and, by choosing the pronoun *rao*, suggests that what he talks about can be applied to other *kathoey* or gay men.

(5.23) Mik: **rao** a nai khwamkhit **rao** phuchai phuying pen phuean kan mai dai

I, in **my** opinion, men and women can't be friends.

(5.24) Mod: **rao** mi fafaet chai pa faet **rao** pen phuchai fafaet **rao** ko pai te bon **rao** ko len ka phuean bon hong

I have a twin, right? **My** twin is a man. **My** twin played football. **I** played with friends indoors.

(5.25) Pong: thuk thuk phet maiwa cha pen kathoey gay phuchai phuying tom lesbian arai ngia ko man ko tong mi thang khon thi di lae mai di **rao** cha mong wa phro pen kathoey loei yae ko mai dai

Every gender – *kathoey*, gay men, men, women, *tom*, lesbians and so on – must consist of both good and bad people. **We** can't judge someone as being bad because of being *kathoey*.

(5.26) Yoot: laeo suanyai **rao** mai khoei hen chiwit khong okay gay **rao** yang pho hen bang wa gay kae kae rue gay ayu yoe yoe thi baep mi tang yoe yoe liang pay phuchai yang ngi man ko yang pho mi tae tham wa **rao** monghen kathoey Alcazar ayu ha sip rue hok sip mai **rao** mai hen phap trong nan

And mostly **we** don't see the life of ... okay, **we** sometimes see that old gay men who have a lot of money can pay for men. There are some like that. But do **we** see *kathoey* at Alcazar, 50 or 60 years old? **We** don't see that kind of image.

(5.27) Tor: phasa **rao rao** cha wela **rao** phut kap klum phuying kap klum phuchai kap klum ik klum nueng **rao** cha chai khon la yang kan loei

Language, **we**, **we**, when **we** talk to a group of women, a group of men or another group, **we** speak totally differently.

(5.28) Dew: ching ching laeo a nai nai nai khwam pen kathoey khwam pen kathoey khue man muean man ko mi khwam baep pen lai lai yang nuek-ok pa chen baep rue thueng **rao** cha baep samat baep thamngan dai di **rao** ko cha talok laeo **rao** ko cha mi part thi pen phuchai

Actually being *kathoey*, being *kathoey* is like, it's like being different things, you know what I mean. For example, like although **we**, like, can, like, work well, **we** are funny and **we** have a masculine part.

The inclusive use of singular *rao* can be seen as a way the speaker shows alignment with the public or certain groups of people. According to Du Bois (2007), intersubjective alignment between two or more speakers takes place in dialogues where a speaker takes a stance, and aligns or disaligns with a stance taken by another speaker. When taking a stance using *rao*, the speaker shows his own position towards certain things. Since the pronoun has an inclusive meaning, it suggests that the public or the entire category of non-normative men shares the same stance. Such use of *rao* indicates that the speaker is not the only person who takes the particular stance, but the stance is also one expected or assumed to be taken by people or the category in general. In other words, *rao* indicates the self-positioning of the speaker and at the same time other-positioning (Jaffe 2009) of the general public or the category of non-normative men, which is assumed by the speaker.

(5.29) Tor: man chai pen phuean kan yang **rao** chai pa taewa tha man pen thueng khan arai ik praman nueng thi baep achan arai praman nia khao ko yomrap mai dai pen khru pen rai yang ngia

It's fine being friends like **us**. But if it's another level, like being lecturers or something like that, people can't accept it, being teachers or something like that.

(5.30) Max: mai **rao** da pho da mae ro

Mik: da ka i Nui ngai ton mo ton yapkhai talot wela

Max: mai phro Nui da rue pao **rao** mai da rok

Mik: da

Max: No. Did **we** talk shit about others' parents?

Mik: We did it with Nui during secondary school. Always rude.

Max: No. Did we do it because Nui did? **We** ourselves wouldn't do it.

Mik: We did.

The interlocutory *rao* can also be used as plural, both inclusive and exclusive. The inclusive plural *rao* refers to those instances where the speaker includes the addressee in the meaning of *rao*. In (5.29), Tor mentions that he and I, the interviewer, are friends. The pronoun *rao* includes Tor, who is the speaker, and me, who is the addressee. In contrast, the exclusive plural *rao* does not include the addressee. In (5.30), Max uses *rao* to refer to himself and Mik, as they were interviewed together. The pronoun does not include me, who is the addressee.

Apart from the interlocutory role, *rao* can also be used for an authorial role. The authorial speaker role is one where the speaker plays the role of a narrator or a storyteller within an interaction (Koven 2002). When playing the interlocutory role, the speaker projects his/her self in a particular ongoing interaction. The interlocutory self relates to and influences that of the addressee. When playing the authorial role, the speaker projects his/her self in a story. Therefore, the self in the narrative does not affect the audience of the narrative. As an interlocutor playing the interlocutory role, the participants have to consider the formality of the situation and the power and distance between him and me as the interviewer in order to select an appropriate self-reference term to be used in the interview. Hence, the interlocutory *rao* was only expected among certain speakers and not among others. However, *rao* is used by all participants and overall with a very high frequency. I argue that it is because *rao* is used frequently for the authorial role. It is then used by those who do not have the reciprocal power with me. This is possible because within the context of a story, the participants distance themselves from me as an interlocutor in the context of the interview. They do not place themselves in relation to me as their interlocutor following the scheme of power, distance, and formality, and do not choose a self-reference term based on their relation with me. That is, the kind of self-selection by the participants as the speaker when narrating a story does not relate to or influence the self of me as the addressee or the hearer of the narrative (Goffman 1981). Using *rao* for the authorial role, the participants refer to themselves as a narrator rather than my interlocutor in the ongoing interview. This use of *rao* here explains why it occurs with a very high frequency in the data among all participants. The interview involves a lot of narratives. The participants use a lot of *rao* when telling their stories as a way of distancing themselves in the act of storytelling and this is regardless of the kind of relationship they have with me as the interviewer. (5.31) - (5.33) are the examples of the use of authorial *rao* found in the data.

(5.31) Shane: cham dai wa chuang nan khue (.) **rao** eng a mai dai mi withichiwit (.) pai thang tut thaorai **rao** kokhue **rao** ko pen dek pokkati thi baep phomae sang arai hai tham **rao** ko tham chai ma

I remember that back then (.) I didn't quite have the lifestyle (.) of being *tut*. I was, I was a normal kid who, like, whatever the parents wanted me to do, I did it, right?

(5.32) Max: lae ko rusuek wa baep **rao** ko na cha (.) **rao** ko kae kaekhai dai

And I felt like, I could (.) I could handle it.

(5.33) Dew: khue muean ka wa tonraek **rao rao** mai dai khit arai **rao** mai dai pai khit thueng loei wa baep wa **rao** chop phuchai rue mai chop phuchai rue **rao** on-aen rue **rao** arai yang ngia

It's like at first I, I didn't think about anything. I didn't consider if I liked men or not, or if I looked effeminate, or I was something like that.

Chan is another epicene pronoun used in informal situations. While *rao* can be used as both singular and plural, *chan* can only convey the singular meaning. It can be used for the interlocutory role yielding the same meaning as the interlocutory singular *rao* with no inclusive sense. Examples of the interlocutory *chan* are shown in (5.34) and (5.35).

(5.34) Nan: ui **chan** copy mae **chan** keng mak

Oh, I copied **my** mum very well.

(5.35) Dew: rue **chan** yu nai sangkhom ka- kathoey thi mai di

Or am I in the *kathoey* circle which is not good?

Chan is also preferred for the character speaker role. The character role refers to the role of the speaker speaking from the perspective of characters in the stories he/she is telling (Koven 2002). It is through constructed dialogue (Tannen 1986) which the speaker reports the thoughts or feelings of characters in his/her story. In the data, the participants report their own speech, thoughts and feelings, and those of the characters in their stories. The self-reference term most preferred in constructed dialogue is *chan*. 63.19% of 114 tokens of all self-reference terms used in constructed speech are *chan*. This pronoun is also used more in constructed speech than non-constructed speech. 79.13% of 115 tokens of *chan* are those occurring in constructed speech. This suggests a strong relationship between constructed

speech and the pronoun *chan*. That is, *chan* is more likely to be used in constructed speech and constructed speech tends to prefer *chan*.

Constructed speech can be indicated by quotative constructions such as those in (5.36) - (5.40), where the quotative construction is underlined. The extract in (5.41) is an example of constructed speech which is not indicated with any quotative marker. Apart from the quotative construction, constructed speech can also be signified by the change of self-reference terms, as shown in (5.37) - (5.41). In the examples, the speaker uses a self-reference term he normally uses or is expected to use for the interlocutory or authorial speaker roles, and switches to *chan* when reporting constructed speech, and after the quotative markers for (5.37) - (5.40). In (5.37), Gift, a member of the Undergraduates, uses *nu* signifying his younger age, and then switches to *chan*. Tor and Tony of the Postgraduates, and Win in (5.38), (5.39) and (5.41), respectively, are older than me and refer to themselves frequently with the kin term *phi*. They switch from *phi* to *chan* in constructed speech. Similarly, in (5.40), Mod, who is the same age as me, switches from the epicene pronoun *rao* to another epicene pronoun *chan* in constructed speech. The preference for the character role of *chan* in constructed speech can be partly due to its neutral and specific meaning. Both *rao* and *chan* are neutral in a sense that they are used among speakers of reciprocal power and neutral or non-intimate distance. However, *chan* has a narrower range of meaning. It cannot be used for plural. Also, unlike *rao*, no sense of generality or alignment can be conveyed by *chan*. Therefore, *chan* somehow can be more specific in a sense that it can refer to an individual speaker only. Such a neutral and specific meaning of *chan* can be helpful when used in constructed speech. The use of *chan* can make it clear whose thoughts/feelings the speech belongs to as *chan* can only refer to one speaker or character.

(5.36) Shane: pen phuchai khon raek ko klaipen wa hui fan salai laeo **chan** cha mai dai
yu kap faen laeo rai ngia ko tong yai kokhue mae hai yai kokhue yai

He's my first boyfriend. It turned out that "Oh, my dream falls apart. I won't be with my boyfriend anymore" something like that.

(5.37) Gift: **nu** wa andap nueng man ma chak khwam kla kon khwam kla thi cha
sadaeng-ok wa **chan** pen baep ni

I think firstly it comes from courage, courage to show that "I'm like this."

(5.38) Tor: oe laeo phuying khon thi len la khao suai mak oe **phi ko loei baep** ey phuying khon ni l- len wonlebon suai laeoko len keng duai **chan** ko yak pen yang ngan idol [laughter]

One of the women who played volleyball was very beautiful. I then like “This woman plays volleyball. She’s beautiful and plays well. I want to be like that.” My idol [laughter].

(5.39) Tony: **phi mi khwamrusuek wa chan** mai (.) **chan** mai tang arai chak khun na (.) phiangtae **chan** chop phuchai

I have a feeling that “I’m not, I’m not different from you. Just that I like men.”

(5.40) Mod: mi ngan nueng khao (.) require bok khian phasa angkrit dai phut phasa angkrit dai oe **rao ko** okay **chan** ko tham dai mot

There’s a job which (.) requires the skills of writing and speaking English. I then “Okay. I can do all that.”

(5.41) Win: phuak phuying ko cha baep (.) chai ma ko mi lup kraprong **phi** ko cha mai khue sai kraprong rok na tae **chan** ko cha tham rai yang ngia

Girls were like ... Right? They touched their skirt. I then, I didn’t wear a skirt but “I will do it” something like that.

In sum, the epicene pronouns *rao* and *chan* are used by the participants for the purposes of different speaker roles, which lead to the differences in frequency of use, even though they share some common features. Both *rao* and *chan* can be used for the interlocutory role for the speaker to refer to himself/herself and present the self in the current interactional context. The self presented as an interlocutor in an interaction relates to the self of another interlocutor. Particularly, *rao* and *chan* are used for the interlocutory role by the participants whose relation with me, as an interlocutor or addressee, matches the schematic rule of the two pronouns shown in Table 5.1 and Table 5.2. *Rao* is used for the authorial speaker role as a way of referring to the speaker as a narrator. By using *rao*, the speaker distances himself away from me, who is the addressee in the current context of interaction, and projects his self in the narrative. *Chan* is preferred for the character role where the speaker speaks as a character in a story. It is used as part of constructed dialogue to fulfil this function.

While the data from interviews is comparable and allows us to see the participants' use of self-reference terms in more or less the same situation, it limits the participants' choice of self-reference terms to certain situations only. In the next section, self-reference terms in self-recordings are analysed. Certain self-recordings are selected for the analysis in order to complement the kinds of situations uncovered in interviews.

5.4 Self-reference terms in self-recordings

In the analysis of interviews, the use of self-reference terms is examined in comparison to the predicted pattern of use. As shown in Table 5.8, the participants, despite all being in the interview context, were predicted to use different forms depending on the relationship they have with me as the interviewer. The data from interviews is therefore limited to only one type of situation, and does not allow us to see how the participants use self-reference terms in other situations interacting with different interlocutors. In contrast to interviews, self-recordings obtained from the participants are more diverse. The data from self-recordings consist of various topics of conversation. However, they all share certain characteristics. They are all informal as they are casual talk among friends. The relationship of those participating in an interaction is intimate. In terms of age, some interactions are among those of same age but some others are among those of different age. Therefore, the power among the participants in each interaction can be either reciprocal or non-reciprocal.

The aim of examining self-reference in self-recordings is to complement the data from interviews. Certain self-recordings were selected for the analysis because they provide the analysis with different kinds of situations and social factors. In this section, I will look at both more informal and more formal self-recordings. This allows us to see a fuller picture of the participants' use of self-reference terms, and to further test the prediction in Table 5.8. The analysis in this section confirms that the participants' choice of self-reference terms changes according to contexts and interlocutors. That is, a participant may prefer one term in interviews and another in self-recordings. This is due to the context of interaction. Therefore, the use of self-reference terms cannot be considered independently without taking context into account. Table 5.10 provides the information regarding interlocutors in each self-recording, the self-reference terms predicted to be used and those which are actually used. The table includes only self-reference terms used in non-constructed speech.

	Self-reference options predicted to be used	Actual terms used
The Undergraduates <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conversation among group members who are all the same age 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>chan</i> • <i>rao</i> • <i>ku</i> • name 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ <i>chan</i> ✓ <i>rao</i> ✓ <i>ku</i> ✗ name
The Postgraduates <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conversation among group members who are of different age 	<p>Yoot</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>chan</i> • <i>rao</i> • <i>nu</i> • <i>phi</i> • name <p>Tor and Tony</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>chan</i> • <i>rao</i> • <i>ku</i> • <i>phi</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ <i>chan</i> ✓ <i>rao</i> ✗ <i>nu</i> ✗ <i>phi</i> ✓ name <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ <i>chan</i> ✓ <i>rao</i> ✗ <i>ku</i> ✓ <i>phi</i> ✍ <i>nu</i> (Tony)
The Professionals <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mik: conversation with colleagues who are the same age and older • Max: conversation with colleagues who are all younger than Max 	<p>Mik and Max</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>chan</i> • <i>rao</i> • <i>ku</i> • <i>nu</i> (Mik) • name (Mik) • <i>phi</i> (Max) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ <i>chan</i> ✓ <i>rao</i> ✓ <i>ku</i> ✓ <i>nu</i> (Mik) ✗ name (Mik) ✓ <i>phi</i> (Max)
Individual participants <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lek, Win, Mod: conversation with close friends who are the same age • Nan: conversation with close friends who are the same age and younger • Dew: conversation with a close 	<p>Lek, Win and Mod</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>chan</i> • <i>rao</i> • <i>ku</i> • name <p>Nan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>chan</i> • <i>rao</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ <i>chan</i> (Lek, Win) ✓ <i>rao</i> ✓ <i>ku</i> (Win, Mod) ✓ name (Lek) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ <i>chan</i> ✓ <i>rao</i>

friend who is younger	• <i>ku</i>	✓ <i>ku</i>
	• <i>phi</i>	✗ <i>phi</i>
	• name	✗ name
	Dew	
	• <i>chan</i>	✓ <i>chan</i>
	• <i>rao</i>	✓ <i>rao</i>
	• <i>ku</i>	✓ <i>ku</i>
	• <i>phi</i>	✗ <i>phi</i>

✓ predicted form being used, ✗ predicted form not being used,

 unpredicted form being used

Table 5.10: Predicted overt self-reference terms and actual terms used in self-recordings

In interviews, the Undergraduates mainly use the feminine *nu* as a self-reference term when speaking to me. This pronoun signifies their femininity and lower social status, mainly due to their younger age relative to me. The self-recording of the Undergraduates selected for the analysis here involves them in interaction among the group members. It allows us to see how the members of the Undergraduates choose their self-reference terms when talking among themselves, i.e. with people of the same age and social status. In such situation, the epicene pronouns *chan*, *rao*, *ku* and personal name were the predicted forms for the Undergraduates. *Chan* and *rao* are used when the interlocutors are not particularly close to each other, while *ku* indicates an intimate relationship between interlocutors. *Ku* is therefore very common among close friends. In the self-recordings, the members of the Undergraduates use *chan*, *rao* and *ku* as predicted but do not use their name as a self-reference term. The Undergraduates use *ku* most frequently. This pronoun accounts for 66.67% (24 out of 36 tokens) of all overt self-reference terms used by the Undergraduates. In (5.42), for instance, June refers to himself with *ku* and also addresses the interlocutor with *mueng*, the second-person counterpart of *ku*. *Ku* does not signify gender. The Undergraduates' use of *ku* here shows that the members of the group do not always show their femininity in interaction. In situations such as self-recordings, they do not have a feminine form as an option, and instead use the epicene form to signify intimacy. This shows the significance of context in determining the possible ways of self-reference.

(5.42) June: phro **ku** mi rian angkhan kap pharue hat mueng khaochai mae

Because I have classes on Tuesday and Thursday. Do you understand?

The self-recording selected for the analysis of the Postgraduates is the interaction among Yoot, Tor, Tony and other group members, who are women. In addition to the interviews, here Yoot interacts with people who are older and younger than him, while Tor and Tony interact with those who are younger and the same age. Like in the interview, Yoot was predicted to use the epicene pronouns *chan* and *rao* and his name as self-reference terms. In the self-recording, he had another option of the feminine pronoun *nu* when addressing those who are older as he presents himself in public clearly as *kathoey*. He could also refer to himself with the kin term *phi* to signify his older age when addressing those who are younger. Yoot, however, only uses *rao* and his name in the self-recording, and does not use *chan*, *nu* or *phi*. Tor and Tony were also predicted to use, and actually do use, *chan* and *rao*. In addition to that, they had the epicene pronoun *ku* and the kin term *phi* as other options. Tor and Tony use *phi* as predicted. However, they do not use *ku* in the self-recording. Yoot and Tor use the epicene pronoun *rao* more frequently than other overt forms of self-reference. As discussed earlier, *rao* is the epicene pronoun used in situations where the balance of power between interlocutors is reciprocal. In this case, the balance of power between Yoot, Tor, and the other members is not reciprocal. However, *rao* is an acceptable choice. This is because the pronoun is a “neutral” form. That is, it is a compromise option for Yoot when talking at the same time to those who are older and younger than him. Similarly, Tor uses *rao* as a “neutral” way of talking to people of different age. Also, Tor is older than all members apart from Tony. As an older person, he is more flexible in choosing a self-reference term because, as discussed earlier, older people are less restricted in how they should behave in certain respects.

In addition, Tony uses the feminine pronoun *nu* in the self-recording. In terms of the relative age, *nu* was not predicted to be used by Tony as he is not younger than Yoot or Tor. Nor does he have a lower social status. However, Tony addresses Yoot and Tor with the kin term *phi* (*phi+name*) and refers to himself with *nu*. There are other group members participating in the interaction, who are women and are younger than Tony, but Tony does not refer to himself with *nu* when speaking to those members. He uses *nu* only with Yoot and Tor, who are in the same non-normative masculine category as Tony. Using *nu* here, Tony positions himself as a younger feminine person among those identifying with non-normative men, despite his older age and masculine appearance. In (5.43), Tony addresses Yoot as *phi Yoot* and then refers to himself with *nu*.

(5.43) Tony: khon chin kha nang baep ni loei kha khotot na kha phi Yoot nia kha **nu**
thamhai du

Chinese tourists. They sat like this. Excuse me Yoot, like this, I'll show you.

For the Professionals, the data consists of two self-recordings. One of them is the interaction between Mik and his boss and colleagues who are the same age or older than him. In such situation, Mik was anticipated to refer to himself with the epicene pronouns *chan*, *rao* and *ku*, and by his name when addressing those who are the same age, and with the feminine pronoun *nu* when addressing those who are older as he presents himself in public clearly as *kathoey*. Apart from his name, Mik uses other self-reference terms as predicted. In the self-recording, Mik refers to himself with the feminine pronoun *nu* when addressing his boss and older colleagues. In (5.44), for example, Mik is teased by one of his colleagues. He responds to the tease by addressing the particular colleague with the kin term *phi* in the form of *phi+name* (*phi Pim*) and refers to himself with *nu*. In this case, the situation allows Mik to show his femininity through the use of the feminine pronoun. The other self-recording from the Professionals is the interaction between Max and his colleagues who are all younger than him. I am aware that the situation in the self-recording obtained from Max is not much different from that in the interview as in both interactions Max talks to those of younger age. Due to practical reasons, Max did not give me his self-recordings in other kinds of situations. However, the self-recording selected here shows that his use of self-reference terms in similar situations is consistent. That is, Max uses the kin term *phi* when addressing his younger colleagues, in the same way as he does when talking to me in the interview. Max also uses the epicene pronouns *chan*, *rao* and *ku* in the self-recording.

(5.44) Mik: phi Pim chairai ka **nu** baep nia **nu** mai (dai) tham rai phi Pim loei na

Pim, why are you mean to **me** like this? I didn't do anything to you.

For the individual participants, the self-recordings obtained from Lek, Win and Mod are their conversation with friends who are the same age. In Nan's self-recording, he interacts with those who are the same age or younger, while in Dew's self-recording, the friend he talks to is younger than him. Despite the differences in self-recordings, Lek, Win, Nan and Dew use the epicene pronoun *chan* more frequently than other overt self-reference terms, 43.48% (10 out of 23 tokens), 59.46% (22 out of 37 tokens), 56.52% (13 out of 23 tokens) and

66.67% (16 out of 24 tokens) of all overt self-reference terms, respectively. In interviews, *chan* is mostly used to indicate the character speaker role. However, it is used in non-constructed speech more frequently in self-recordings than in interviews. Examples of *chan* used in self-recordings are shown in (5.45) and (5.46). Also, in contrast to the interviews, Nan and Dew do not use the kin term *phi* at all in the self-recordings. They prefer to refer to themselves with *chan*.

In the self-recording obtained from Mod, the situation is in a way similar to his interview. That is, he talks to his friend who is the same age. However, Mod has an intimate relationship with his friend, but not with me and this difference could explain the fact that the self-reference term he uses most frequently in the self-recording is *ku*. It accounts for 73.33% (44 out of 60 tokens) of all overt self-reference terms used by Mod. As discussed earlier, this pronoun is used by the Undergraduates in the self-recording. The interaction between Mod and his friend, and that among the Undergraduates are similar. Both are conversations among close friends. Therefore, *ku* is used in both interactions. *Ku* is also used in the self-recordings obtained from Win, Nan and Dew. The use of *ku* indicates the intimate relationship between Win, Nan, Dew and the interlocutors, as opposed to their non-intimate relationship with me, who is the interviewer in the interviews.

(5.45) Win: sommut wa dai chet sip kao chut ha ngia **chan** pat a hai dai tae **chan**
tong dukon na wa song ngan khrop mai arai yang ngia

If one gets 79.5, for example, I can give him/her an A. But I have to check if he/she submits all assignments for example.

(5.46) Nan: kae ya khit wa **chan** ru rueang thang na

Don't expect **me** to know the direction.

The previous discussion shows the importance of context in determining the choice of self-reference terms. The participants' choice of self-reference terms in interviews and self-recordings differ according to different situations and social factors. Self-recordings compliment the kinds of situation which are not covered by interviews, and enable us to see how similar or different the use of self-reference terms in self-recordings are compared to that in interviews. Apart from the self-recordings which have already been discussed, I further look at additional self-recordings from relatively more formal situations, which could offer additional insights because the contextual circumstances are not covered by the situations discussed so far. Three self-recordings from Tor, Nan and Mod, from formal

situations are included. In the self-recordings, Tor is discussing his project with his teacher in a private meeting also attended by another group member. Nan, similarly, is discussing his thesis with his supervisor during supervision. Mod is discussing work with his senior colleague.

The situations in the three self-recordings are relatively more formal than the other self-recordings among the participants and their friends discussed previously. The topics are very specific and involve their study or work project. The general tone of the interaction is more serious. The interlocutors play specific social roles relating to Tor, Nan and Mod. However, the interlocutors, who Tor, Nan and Mod are talking to, address them with their nicknames. The interlocutors are older and in a higher social position than them. Addressing the participants with nicknames suggests that the interlocutors are attempting to decrease the distance, show intimacy and be casual. In these more formal situations, Tor, Nan and Mod were predicted to use the masculine pronoun *phom* as a way of conforming to the masculine norm. Tor presented himself as masculine, while Nan and Mod as *kathoey*, although they each expressed their femininity to differing extents. However, they all presented aspects of non-normative masculinity while maintaining certain levels of masculinity. For example, despite their differences, they all wore masculine clothes. Therefore, using the masculine pronoun was predicted to be another way of maintaining masculinity in formal situations. However, Tor, Nan and Mod use different self-reference terms. Tor uses *phom* consistently in his self-recording, as predicted, while Nan and Mod refer to themselves with their nicknames.

(5.47) Tor: **phom** ko ma ha khwam muean khwam taektang laeo *phom* ko ma tham pen tarang

I looked for similarities and differences. Then I put them into a table.

In the self-recording, Tor is reporting the progress of his project to the teacher. In Thai culture, the status of teacher and student is very distant from each other. Tor is aware of this and sees the situation as a formal one. Therefore, during the meeting, he follows social norm of referring to himself with the masculine pronoun *phom* when talking to the teacher, as shown in (5.47). I argue that *phom* is a direct index of masculinity. But it is used by Tor as a means of presenting himself as masculine in this context only in order to be “appropriate.” Tor’s use of *phom* indicates that he takes the situation as a formal one but it cannot be taken to infer that he is actually identifying himself as masculine. Tor mentions in the interview that he has never thought of himself as a man and during the fieldwork Tor groups

himself with Yoot and Tony, who are non-normative men, despite their differences in presentation. All of this clearly shows that Tor does not identify himself as masculine, and yet his use of the masculine pronoun in this formal context shows that he is aware of the norm and feels compelled to conform to it. This is another piece of evidence which shows the influence of context in determining self-reference choice.

(5.48) Nan: tae ching ching a **Nan** pai tham khao wa ha roi mai khao ko pai loei ton
 la ha roi **Nan** ko wa yoe laeo na

 Actually I asked him if he was okay with 500, and then he left. 500 per
 episode I think it's a lot already.

(5.49) Mod: k khrap ngan diao (.) **Mod** cha long tam blogger si khon ni sak athit
 nueng

 Right. So (.) I'll follow these four bloggers for a week.

Nan and Mod, in contrast, do not follow the norm and refer to themselves with their nickname in the self-recordings, as shown in (5.48) and (5.49). I argue that using nickname as a self-reference term in this context is as a way to avoid identifying with masculinity. It is a “safe” way of referring to themselves without having to identify with either masculinity or femininity. Both Nan and Mod identify themselves as *kathoey* in spite of their masculine appearance and presentation. In these formal contexts, Nan and Mod talk with interlocutors who are older and have higher social status than them. Technically, they can refer to themselves with the feminine pronoun *nu*. However, the use of feminine pronoun would contradict the masculine norm. At the same time, using the masculine pronoun *phom* may sound “too masculine” for Nan and Mod. Therefore, using their nickname is a “neutral” way of self-reference. Nevertheless, in the self-recordings, Nan uses the feminine polite final particle *kha* while Mod uses the masculine polite final particle *khrap* in “*k khrap*,” as shown in (5.49). This shows that Nan and Mod, despite using the same type of self-reference term and having similar gender presentation, do not behave in the exact same way linguistically. Nan shows his identification with femininity through the feminine final particle. Mod does not identify with masculinity through his self-reference term but maintains the masculine norm he was expected to conform to through the use of the final particle.

The main factor influencing the use of the masculine pronoun *phom* here is the formality of the context. In interviews, *phom* was only predicted to be used by the Undergraduates as a way of conforming to the masculine norm. *Phom* is not used at all in interviews, apart from

a few instances occurring in constructed speech. The non-use of *phom* in interviews is due to the fact that the interview context is relatively informal, as discussed earlier in the chapter. Although the question-answer format is applied, the interview is pretty much a casual talk between me, the interviewer, and the participants. The age and status difference between me and the participants is not a big one. The physical setting of the interview itself does not give a serious type of atmosphere. Therefore, the interview is not a formal context where the participants would want to conform to the norm of being masculine and use the masculine pronoun as an appropriate way of self-reference. In contrast, in the self-recordings from formal contexts, the norm for these three participants is to use the masculine form. Such contexts encourage and influence the participants to conform to the masculine norm. That is why Tor refers to himself with *phom* during the meeting with his teacher. The context is therefore very important for the choice of self-reference. Nan and Mod are aware of the norm in this situation but they do not use *phom* because they avoid identifying with masculinity.

In the previous section where self-reference terms in interviews were discussed, the participants' choice of self-reference terms was limited to those appropriate only for specific contexts. Self-recordings allow us to see the participants' use of self-reference terms in various other contexts while interacting with different people. A speaker may use one self-reference term in the interview but prefer another one in the self-recording. A self-reference term may be used frequently by one speaker in the interview but is preferred by another speaker in the self-recording. The data from self-recordings reveal how the participants select their self-reference terms according to situations and interlocutors. It is not the case that a speaker always uses a self-reference term to project one kind of self in every situation. The participants, like other Thai speakers, choose their self-reference terms based on several social factors determining the formality of situations and the relationship between interlocutors. The choice of self-reference term is never independent from the context.

In this chapter, the use of self-reference terms among Thai men who identify with non-normative male roles are analysed and discussed. The self-reference choice among each friendship group and the individual participants is examined considering social factors and the context of the interactions. The detailed analyses can be generalised and summarised into three main points – the difference between the self-reference terms predicted to be used and those which are actually used, the importance of gender in selecting a self-

reference term, and the role of self-reference terms in doing gender and avoiding doing gender.

First, there is a discrepancy between the self-reference terms an individual participant or a friendship group was predicted to use, and the actual terms used. As discussed, I frame my analyses around the differences between my prediction of which self-reference terms would be used, and those which were actually used. This way of looking at the data allows me to see more clearly which social factors the participants attend to. In order to arrive at the prediction, I consider the formality of the situation, the power and the distance between interlocutors. Some forms are used as predicted. However, some are not, and also some that are used are not the predicted forms based on the three dimensions I considered. This happens because the participants do not conform to the expected linguistic norm. For example, in interviews, the members of the Undergraduates do not refer to themselves with the masculine pronoun *phom* at all. Even though their identification with femininity is obviously shown to me, they were predicted to use the masculine form as they were in an educational setting which requires them to maintain their masculinity to some extent. Also, the relationship they have with me is non-intimate. They may want to use the masculine form to show distance with me. However, they do not follow such a norm and do not use *phom*. Another example is the way Mik of the Professionals does not use the kin term *phi* at all in the interview. As an older speaker, Mik was predicted to refer to himself with the kin term which indicates an older age. However, he does not use it and prefers using the epicene pronoun when talking to me.

One of the reasons why the participants sometimes do not follow the norm and use the forms they were not predicted to use is that they attend to certain features and project a particular kind of persona which cannot be projected through the predicted form. For example, in the self-recording among the members of the Postgraduates, Tony refers to himself with the feminine pronoun *nu* when addressing Yoot and Tor. He was not predicted to use this pronoun not only because the form indexes femininity, but also because he is not younger or in a lower social status than Yoot and Tor in a way that a speaker would normally use *nu*. Also, he only uses the pronoun when speaking to Yoot and Tor, and not with other members who participate in the interaction. His use of *nu* is interpreted as a way he constructs himself as a younger feminine person among the members who are also non-normative men. Such a persona cannot be projected through other forms in the Thai system. In other cases, a predicted form is not used and an unpredicted form is used due to the range of use and meaning of a form itself. *Rao*, for example, is a predicted form only

among some participants. It is, however, used very frequently because it has a wide range of use covering both the interlocutory and the authorial role of speaker. However, *chan*, another epicene pronoun which was predicted to be used in interviews by those who are the same age as me, is not used as predicted as it is preferred in constructed speech. Such particular usage and preference may make the form be used less frequently in the non-constructed speech and influence the frequency of use of the form in general. The different uses of *rao* and *chan* show that the choice of self-reference does not only depend on the social factors of interlocutors and situations, but also varies according to the use and meaning of a form. That is, for *rao* and *chan*, the speaker does not only focus on the relative age and status between interlocutors, but also attend to what kind of role he/she wants to contribute to a conversation. This illustrates the fact that self-reference terms in Thai are context-dependent and sensitive to interactional factors too.

The second point which can be drawn from the analyses is the significance of gender in determining the choice of self-reference terms. Men who identify with non-normative male roles in Thailand are stereotypically associated with femininity. In terms of language, they are believed to be using feminine forms. Winter (2003) argues that Thai has gendered first-person pronouns and polite final particle, and that *kathoey* invariably use feminine pronouns and polite final particles. In popular understanding, *kathoey* and gay men are seen as the group of speakers who always create new words and use their own vocabulary among themselves. Gender, particularly non-normative gender, is seen by the public as an important factor which determines how people use the language. In terms of self-referencing, as argued by Winter (2003) and perceived by the general public, non-normative gay men, especially *kathoey*, are expected to use feminine forms. However, as revealed in the analyses in this chapter, this is not always the case. In fact, for self-referencing, gender does not seem to be as important as the stereotype suggests while age seems to play a more significant role in the participants' choice of self-reference terms.

In the analyses, the participants were predicted to use certain self-reference terms. As previously discussed, this prediction was based on several social factors including age and gender. Relative age plays an important role in determining the expectation and the actual use of self-reference terms among every group and every individual participant. Gender is only relevant among participants who are younger than me. Thus, in this case, gender only applies after age. This is because the system of self-reference in Thai only allows gender to be indexed in certain situations, as shown earlier in the chapter in Table 5.1 and Table 5.2. Even though the system of first-person pronoun in Thai is gendered, there are only a few

terms which are gendered, and first-person pronouns are not gendered across the board. Gendered forms are only available in certain situations. The feminine pronoun *nu* is only available when the power between interlocutors is non-reciprocal, more specifically when the speaker has less power than the addressee. Another feminine pronoun *dichan* is limited to formal contexts. The masculine pronoun *phom* is to be used in the context where the relationship between interlocutors is non-intimate. Therefore, despite the previous literature and the general assumption of non-normative men using feminine self-reference terms, their actual use of self-reference terms is not that simple. Gender is an important social factor but not important to the extent that it always determines self-referencing choices. It cannot be assumed that non-normative men always use feminine forms of self-reference terms as it is possible to do so only in certain contexts. Gender is only one of the social factors which need to be taken into account for selecting self-reference terms, alongside other factors such as age and the situation itself.

Although gender does not always determine the choice of self-reference terms, and is not as important for self-referencing as it is typically believed, the analyses confirm that self-reference terms are used as a linguistic tool for doing gender and also to avoid doing gender. In the data, the feminine pronoun *nu* and the Chinese kin term *che* are used to index femininity. The feminine pronoun *nu* is used by the Undergraduates during the interview with me, and Mik of the Professionals also uses it when talking with his boss and older colleague. For these two participants, *nu* is used when they are younger than their interlocutor and the power between them is non-reciprocal. Their use of *nu* in these situations, where they actually have other possible gender-neutral options of self-referencing, also indicates their alignment with femininity. For the Undergraduates, they also have a choice of using the masculine pronoun *phom* during the interview. They, however, do not use the form at all. This suggests that they do not want to identify with masculinity. This corresponds to their other non-linguistic ways of identifying with femininity such as wearing make-up and feminine clothes. As the pronoun indicates the speaker's younger age and femininity, it is used by Tony of the Postgraduates when talking with Yoot and Tor as a way for Tony to construct himself as a younger feminine person, although he is not younger than Yoot and Tor. Apart from *nu*, femininity is also constructed through the use of the Chinese kin term *che* 'older sister' in the data. The term is used only by Nan who has a Chinese family background. The counterpart *phi* in the system of Thai kin terms does not allow him to signify his identification with femininity. Therefore, femininity is done, not only through personal pronouns, but also kin terms.

The participants' identification with femininity is only done through *nu* and *che*. The other feminine pronoun *dichan* is not used at all in the data. This disagrees with the findings of my previous study (Saisuwan 2016) where I examined and compared self-reference terms used by *kathoey* and women on webboards. In this previous study, I found that 11.21% of all tokens used by *kathoey* were *dichan* and its phonological variants. There I argued that, in the webboard context examined, *kathoey* used *dichan* repetitively until the pronoun was reanalysed as part of their habitual pronoun use. The pronoun became less associated with formality while being used for the gender purpose of indexing femininity by *kathoey*. *Kathoey* who participated in the questionnaire section of my previous study also attended to the femininity aspect of *dichan* more than women did. Such use of *dichan* does not seem to be the case in the dataset examined in this thesis where it is not used at all. This is partly due to the difference between the participants of the webboard in my previous study and those in this study. Although it is not possible to know the participants of the webboard in person, the general characteristics of the *kathoey* participants can be assumed to a certain extent from the content they discuss in the webboard.

In the webboard, the *kathoey* participants frequently discussed feminising methods such as taking hormonal pills, breast surgery and sex reassignment surgery. They also discussed whether and how they should tell their partner that they are not women. Such discussions suggest that the participants in the webboard were mainly those who were feminine-looking or those who were interested in feminising themselves and looking as feminine as possible. Referring to themselves as *dichan* can be seen as part of the feminising process. It is how the *kathoey* webboard participants construct their femininity which is shared among them. They use *dichan* frequently and the pronoun is reinterpreted as a feminine form not particularly associated with formality. In the dataset examined in this thesis, in contrast, most of the participants who identify as *kathoey* are not feminine-looking and not interested in feminising themselves. They even maintain their masculinity in certain situations. Therefore, unlike those in my previous study, they do not make use of *dichan* as a linguistic tool for presenting their femininity. The four participants who are more feminine than the rest do not use the pronoun, either. This suggests that the *kathoey* participants in this thesis consider *dichan* as a feminine pronoun for formal situations. *Dichan* here is not part of the participants' habitual pronoun use and is still highly associated with formality. Hence, they do not use the pronoun because they do not particularly want to explicitly express their femininity in the same way the participants in my previous study and the

contexts of the interview and the self-recordings are not formal enough for *dichan* to be used.

The masculine pronoun *phom* is not used at all in the interview, as discussed earlier, and is only used by one participant in a formal situation. Tor uses the form when he is talking with his teacher, but not in other situations. This suggests that a particular gender is selected to be shown in a particular situation, and the choice of self-reference terms is a way the speaker can present their gendered self in the particular circumstance. In this case, Tor uses *phom* as a means of maintaining his masculinity in the formal situation where he was expected to conform to the norm of masculinity.

Self-reference terms can also be used as a means of avoiding identification with a particular gender. Instead of using *nu* or *phom*, certain participants in some situations have other possible options of self-reference which allow them not to specify their gender. Pong of the Undergraduates, for example, during the interview refers to himself with his name instead of *nu* (used by the other members) or *phom*, even though both forms were predicted to be used by the Undergraduates. Although it is unclear whether using his name is intended by Pong as a way to avoid identifying with a gender, by using it, he covers his gender automatically, and this shows that self-reference terms can be used for avoiding or covering identification with a particular gender. The use of self-reference terms in both doing gender work and avoiding gender identification shows that self-reference terms are part of a wide range of linguistic resources shared by all Thai speakers, and each speaker can select certain terms in certain situations, following or not following the norm, in order to construct and present the self they want in those situations.

This chapter has shown how men who identify with non-normative male roles, the participants of the study, select their self-reference terms in different situations. The participants' choice of self-referencing is not straightforward in the way that they only use feminine forms to indicate their non-normative masculinity, which is typically believed to be the case anecdotally. In order to select an appropriate form of self-reference term for a particular context, various social factors of the speakers and situations have to be taken into consideration. Gender can, but not always or necessarily, be signified through the use of self-reference terms.

Chapter 6

Conclusion

This thesis has examined the use of language among Thai men who identify with non-normative male roles in Thai society. It aims to investigate the relationship between the way language is used by this group of speakers and their gender identification. The data analyses were collected from 14 participants during the ethnographic fieldwork in Bangkok through the techniques of participant observation, interviews and self-recording. The participants consist of three friendship groups – the Undergraduates, the Postgraduates, and the Professionals – and five individual participants. The participants' speech during the interviews and other various contexts was analysed. The analyses reveal that vowel lengthening and self-reference terms are some of the linguistic tools which contribute to the construction and expression of their gender identity. *Kathoey* and gay men use language variably to position distinct presentations of their gendered selves while also taking other interactional and social factors into account.

For the analysis of vowel lengthening, the selected parts of the interviews and self-recordings were segmented into intonation groups, and all syllables receiving stress in an intonation group were coded. The coding included both internal and external features. Out of the entire dataset of 6778 stressed tokens, 7.48% occur with vowel lengthening. The Professionals have the highest frequency of use of vowel lengthening compared to the other two groups. While the internal features of different types of vowel, tone and rightmost position in an intonation group are positively correlated with vowel lengthening, both of the external features – friendship group and genre (interview or self-recording) – do not turn out as significant predictors. The dataset was further analysed regarding the stylistic use of vowel lengthening among *kathoey* and gay men through the model of stance triangle (Du Bois 2007). The analysis demonstrates that vowel lengthening is used by *kathoey* and gay men for interactional purposes as part of the act of stance-taking. At the interactional level, vowel lengthening serves as a tool for enhancing the force of epistemic and affective stance, both separately and simultaneously. The interactional meanings become more established through the repetitive use of vowel lengthening for stance intensification. The process of stance accretion (Rauniomaa 2003) leads to the association of vowel lengthening with the permanent personality types of the speaker conveyed through the interactional use of vowel lengthening. That is, using vowel lengthening, speakers are associated with the

characteristics of being overly confident, affected and entertaining, and with male femininity. These characteristics, signified by vowel lengthening, match the stereotypical perception or expectation of *kathoey* and gay men in Thai society. The ideological link between vowel lengthening and non-normative men via the affected and entertaining personalities, and the stereotypes of non-normative men available in the society, allow vowel lengthening to become associated with the broad social category of non-normative men.

The participants' use of self-reference terms, both overt and zero forms, in the interviews was examined in two discourse types – personal narratives and opinions. Overall, zero forms of self-reference are used most frequently accounting for 45.96% of all self-reference terms. Zero self-reference is used in narratives more frequently than in opinions. This is arguably because zero self-reference can be recovered from the context more easily in narratives than in opinions due to participants focusing on themselves in narratives. Considering only overt self-reference terms, personal pronouns are used in the dataset most frequently accounting for 68.89% of all overt self-reference terms. The comparison of feminine and epicene pronouns shows that the latter is significantly preferred in both discourse types. This pattern of distribution, I suggest, is a result of the differences of the relationship between each participant and me, particularly in terms of age difference. To be more specific, the pronoun *nu*, which signifies both femininity and younger age of the speaker, can only be used (and is only used) by the Undergraduates, who are younger than me, the interviewer. The other participants are either older than or the same age as me. They therefore do not have *nu* as a self-reference option, but instead tend to use the kin term *phi*, signifying older age, or the epicene pronoun *rao*. *Rao* covers both the role of the speaker in the current context and, regardless of the relationship between interlocutors, as a narrator of a story being told. Its wide range of use is argued to account for its frequent use among several participants, and the high frequency of *rao* in the dataset overall. The analysis of the data from self-recordings confirms that the participants' use of self-reference terms vary across different contexts as the participants change their self-reference terms in accord with interlocutors and the formality of the context. In general, the analyses of self-reference terms demonstrate the significance of speech context, which determines the possible self-reference options. Each participant has to take several social factors, and not only gender, into account to select an appropriate self-reference term, especially relative age which is very significant and relevant in many contexts. Therefore, non-use of feminine forms, for example, does not necessarily indicate the speaker's intention to cover their

gender identification, but can be a result of the limited self-reference options available in the particular context. Nevertheless, certain self-reference terms found in the dataset illustrate that self-reference terms can be used as a tool for doing gender, as well as avoiding it.

In this final chapter, I go back to the research issues raised in Chapter 1 as the motivation for this thesis. The research questions consist of those involving the participants' gender identification in general and those focusing on their linguistic practices for gender purposes. In the next section, I discuss the gender identification of *kathoey* and gay men in Thai society, and their position in the Thai conceptualisation of sex, gender and sexuality, based on the data in this thesis. Then, in the following section, I discuss how language participates in their gender indexation focusing on the individual variation of the two linguistic variables, and the way they are used together in combination to form a specific style. At the end of the chapter, I conclude this thesis with some suggestions for future research and discuss the contribution of this thesis to the study of gender and sexuality, and of language and identity.

6.1 *Kathoey* and gay men's gender identification

One of the research issues this thesis addresses is how Thai non-normative men identify or categorise themselves based on the system of sex, gender and sexuality available in Thai society. I have discussed in detail in Chapter 2 the origins of *kathoey* and gay men, the development of and the distinction between the two categories, including their heterogeneity and unclear boundary. Briefly, *kathoey* and gay men are both male homosexuals, i.e. men who are sexually attracted to other male bodies. *Kathoey* are stereotypically associated with feminine expression. They are male homosexuals who are perceived as completely feminine. Gay men are, in contrast, associated with masculine expression and perceived as completely masculine. *Kathoey* and gay men are stereotypically perceived with certain distinctive characteristics. Even though *kathoey* and gay men tend to be seen typically as two completely distinct categories based on their gender performance, in reality their gender presentation is more complicated. The distinction is not always clear-cut and the two categories are often conflated.

In reality, some *kathoey* prefer not to express femininity too much especially in certain formal contexts, despite identifying themselves as *kathoey*. Some gay men clearly have affected gestures and speech, which are associated with femininity and *kathoey* identity, even though they maintain their identification with the gay category. This means that those who identify with the same category may differ in their gender presentation. Also, those

who have the same or similar gender presentation may in fact identify with different categories. Such heterogeneity within a category and the blurred distinctions which sometimes arise between *kathoey* and gay men are evidenced in the data obtained from the fieldwork. The following discussion will illustrate the participants' perception of the categories of *kathoey* and gay men; the complicated relationship between the two categories; and the complexity of the participants' own identification and gender expression, which reflects the complexity of *kathoey* and gay men more generally.

(6.1) Yoot: khue tha khun khit tha khun khit cha chop phet diaokan tha khun khit cha pen homosexual nai mueangthai khun pen gay khun haichai ok tae tha khun pen kathoey pup nia o ho okat dai khun noi mak

If you think, if you think you like people of the same sex, if you think you're homosexual in Thailand, if you're a gay man you can breathe (.) But if you're a *kathoey*, oh well, you have a few chances of having sex.

(6.2) Tony: khwamkhit khong thuk thuk khon loei na kathoey khue arai nueng ba phuchai song wit wai krit krat song prama- ao sam chop thamtua hai muean phuying mua phuchai tong raeng khon pen kathoey saita thuk khon loei mong na mong wa khun tong pen baep nia

What everyone thinks, what is *kathoey*? One, crazy about men. Two, loud and noisy, li-, uh, three, behave like women. Promiscuous. Have the extreme personality. *Kathoey* are looked at by everyone, thinking you have to be like this.

tae phit kap phit kap gay gay nia cha yu sabai gay ni khue yaek no gay muean thi pen phuchai gay pen phuying to hai khao raeng khae nai tae khao ko yang taengtua phuchai khao mai dai baep (.) ma taeng pen kathoey loei a

It's diff- different for gay men. Gay men live comfortably. Gay men are divided, right? Gay men who look like, who are men, and gay men who are women. No matter how extreme they are, they still dress as men. They don't, like (.) dress as *kathoey*.

During the interviews, I asked the participants whether *kathoey* and gay men are different, and if so, what they thought the differences between the two categories were. In general, as shown in (6.1) and (6.2), the participants recognised the categorisation of both *kathoey* and

gay men as homosexuals, and made a distinction between *kathoey* and gay men based on the expression of masculinity and femininity. That is, *kathoey* are typically perceived as those who express their femininity explicitly through their appearance and affected behaviours, while gay men are those who maintain their masculinity in public. The excerpt from the interview with Yoot shown in (6.1) clearly shows that he classifies *kathoey* and gay men as the same category of being homosexual by mentioning differences in homosexual life as *kathoey* and gay men. In (6.2), Tony explains the distinction between *kathoey* and gay men saying that *kathoey* are stereotypically seen as those who behave like women. Tony points out the distinction between two types of gay men based on their gender performance of either masculinity or femininity, which corresponds to the distinction between *gay king* and *gay queen*, the distinction based on sexual roles but also associated with gender performance. For Tony, gay men do not express themselves in terms of clothing in the way *kathoey* do, regardless of the diversity within the category. Such a distinction is consistent with Jackson's (1995, 1997a) claim of the opposition between *kathoey* and gay men in Thai society, as opposed to the gay/straight and gay/heterosexual man oppositions.

Apart from the view of the distinction between *kathoey* and gay men, the excerpts from the interviews with Yoot in (6.1) and Tony in (6.2) also reflect Thai society's stereotypical perception of *kathoey* and the difficulty of being *kathoey*. In (6.2), Tony mentions the obsession with men, promiscuity and loud and extreme personalities as the typical characteristics of *kathoey*. Such negative images contrast with the image of gay men, who perform masculinity, hence, "can breathe," as said by Yoot in (6.1), have an easier life and are not treated as harshly as *kathoey* are by society. This shows that although gender non-normativity is now more widely accepted in society than it was in the past, the masculine norm for male-bodied individuals is significant as it leads to a more tolerant attitude of the society towards non-normative men. A similar view is also shown in the interviews with Gift and June. Gift, who identifies as *kathoey*, mentions that he in fact wants to dress like a woman but does not do so as he is concerned about applying for a job after his graduation. June expresses his frustration at the way people tend to admire male couples who are both masculine, but, in contrast, think that *kathoey* impair the men they pair up with. According to June, masculine male couples are more accepted in the society than couples of *kathoey* and men.

Despite the awareness of the stereotypical distinction between *kathoey* and gay men, the data from the interviews illustrates the fuzziness between *kathoey* and gay men. The two categories are seen by some participants as not always clearly separated, and in fact as

related. In (6.3) and (6.4), June and Win, like Tony in (6.2), mention the distinction between *kathoey* and gay men, which is based on the difference in gender expression of masculinity and femininity. June says in (6.3) that *kathoey* are more extreme, i.e. more feminine, than gay men in terms of their presentation while gay men are uncertain about how to present their gender. Both June and Win agree on the completely feminine expression of *kathoey*. For Win, gay men have to show no sign of femininity at all. In (6.4), Win mentions that some *gay queens*, which he describes in the interview as those who show some signs of femininity, are actually *kathoey*, while “real” *gay queens* have to completely hide their femininity. In other words, both June and Win recognise the difference in gender performance between *kathoey* and gay men, but at the same time acknowledge the connection between the two categories.

(6.3) June: tha pen gay khue mai dai taeng ying thueng cha riakwa gay [laughter]
 tae tha ngi khue kathoey rai ngia tae ching ching gay ma chak kathoey
 na

Gay men are those who dress in a feminine way. They’re called gay men [laughter] But this [himself] is *kathoey*. But actually gay men are derived from *kathoey*.

khue nu rusuek wa (.) khue phuenthan khong gay lae kathoey ma ma chak thi diaokan khue mai pen phuchai lae thuk ma tae kathoey cha pen khon thi (.) ma hai sut thueng trongni loei [...] khue kathoey cha ma baep lueak thang dai thang nueng tae gay man cha yangngai di wa arai yang ngi ngai

I think (.) the basis of gay men and *kathoey*, they’re from the same origin, which is that they’re not men, right? But *kathoey* are (.) those who go to the extreme end here [...] *Kathoey* are like, they choose one of the ways. But gay men are “how should I be?” something like that.

(6.4) Win: kathoey kokhue phuchai chai mae thi sadaeng ok baep pen phuying
 yang gay queen bang khon na samrap phi phi ko wa nankhue kathoey
 [...] phi mi khwamrusuek wa gay queen na tong tong niap a tong pit hai
 mit kwa nan

Kathoey are men, right? Who present themselves like women. Some *gay queens*, for me, I think they are *kathoey* [...] I think *gay queen* have to be neat, have to hide it more effectively.

khue ching ching laeo thoe pen kathoey ma kon tae thoe khae- khue phi mi khwamrusuek wa khon phuak nia khue khon thi khoei pen kathoey ma kon laeoko plian pai pen gay taengtua pen phuchai phuea thi yak cha dai yak cha mi sex kap- phrowa tonni man mi s- man mi trend thi baep (.) nuek-ok ma phuchai kap phuchai mi arai kan kathoey khai mai ok laeo arai yang ngia [laughter]

Actually, you're *kathoey* before but you only- Well, I think these people used to be *kathoey*. Then they switch to be gay men, dressing as a man, because they want to have sex with- Because now there- there's a trend which is (.) do you know? Men have sex with men. *Kathoey* are unwanted, something like that [laughter]

(6.5) Shane: duai pharuetikam khon thai man du plaek khue (.) khon thi pen gay a man thaep cha mai mi loei na [...] tae thuk wan nia klai pen wa (.) i tut na man yoe (.) tut man yoe chon man mak (.) laeoko mai mi phuchai thi chop tut man ko cha mi tae (.) tut thi thamtua hai klaipen phuchai (.) laeoko chop kan-eng [...] khue mai mi gay a

Thai people's behaviours are weird (.) There's hardly anyone who is a gay man [...] These days it turns out that (.) there're a lot of *tut* (.) there're a lot of *tut*, a lot (.) And there's no man who likes *tut*. There is only (.) *tut* who turn themselves into men (.) and pair up among themselves [...] There's no gay man.

June mentions as shown in (6.3) that both categories share the same basis of not being "men." The idea of the connection between *kathoey* and gay men is also pointed out by Win in (6.4) and Shane in (6.5). Both Win and Shane talk about gay men who used to be *kathoey* and turn themselves into gay men for the purposes of sex and relationships. Win says that this is currently a trend which makes *kathoey*, i.e. those who are completely feminine, become unwanted. He also talks in the interview about some of his friends who used to be *kathoey* and later changed themselves to become gay men as it is easier as gay men to find a partner. Shane goes a bit further by saying that there are no gay men or hardly any gay

men in Thai society, and those who identify as gay men are in fact *kathoey* who transform themselves to become more masculine so that they can pair up as gay couples. The excerpts in (6.3), (6.4) and (6.5) demonstrate that *kathoey* and gay men are not perceived as completely separated but are connected to each other. The identification with either of the categories can change over time. Additionally, the excerpts also echo the perception of society's more tolerant attitude towards gay men, and the easier life men have as gay men compared to *kathoey*, the issues also mentioned by Yoot and Tony in (6.1) and (6.2), respectively, as discussed previously.

The interviews with the participants, as discussed above, has shown that the participants are aware of the distinction between *kathoey* and gay men, and the fuzzy boundary between the two categories. The complexities between them are reflected in the participants' own gender identification and presentation, which reveal the heterogeneity among *kathoey* and gay men. There is a diverse range of presentation among people who identify with the same category of either *kathoey* or gay men. Also, people with similar gender presentation in terms of masculinity and femininity may identify differently. In other words, the participants' identification may not always match society's expectation in terms of gender presentation of people who identify with a particular gender category.

During the interviews, I asked the participants about their gender identification. However, I also obtained the information about the participants' gender identification through participant observation and in some cases from my friendship with the participants prior to the fieldwork. In this study, most of the participants identify as *kathoey*, such as the four members of the Undergraduates, Yoot of the Postgraduates and Mik of the Professionals. Despite identifying as *kathoey*, they vary in terms of their masculine or feminine expression. June, Mik and Lek represent stereotypical *kathoey* in Thai society. Lek has undergone sex reassignment surgery while the other two have not. However, they all behave in a completely feminine fashion. They live a feminine life consistently in all situations. Shane, Gift and Yoot, in contrast, only selectively perform their masculinity and femininity in accordance with situations they are in. Yoot mostly wore feminine casual smart outfits. Some other times when he did not have to be in any formal situations or meet a lot of people, such as when he met the rest of the Postgraduates at Tor's apartment, he wore masculine casual clothes. Shane and Gift both wore masculine uniforms and masculine outfits in general. At the same time, they had certain feminine characteristics such as showing affected gestures. They used some slang terms which are typically perceived as "belonging" to *kathoey*. Gift wore light make-up and his masculine outfit showed a trace of

femininity. Also, Shane told me the he was more masculine when he was not among his friends from the same school. The gender presentations of Shane and Gift in particular combine both masculinity and femininity.

Such a mixed or in-between gender presentation can cause confusion about the categorisation of someone as either a *kathoey* or a gay man, and about the assumptions people may make about the person's sexual role. As discussed earlier in Chapter 2, the feminine presentation of *kathoey* is typically assumed to be an indicator of their passive sexual role. The same kind of assumption works with gay men. *Gay kings* are expected to be masculine and play the active sexual role, while *gay queens* are expected to be relatively more feminine and play the passive sexual role. The combination of masculine and feminine presentation shown in the case of Shane and Gift makes it more complicated, if it is possible at all, to know someone's gender identification and sexual role based on the person's gender performance. In the interview with Shane, he mentions the potential misunderstanding of his gender identification and sexual role caused by his masculine presentation in certain contexts, particularly when he was outside his school. As shown in (6.6), Shane identifies clearly as *kathoey* or a *tut*. He said in the interview that people tend to misunderstand him, so he always says clearly to his potential partner in the first place that he identifies with *kathoey*, femininity, and the wife role. Shane's case demonstrates that sexual roles have become more important in the Thai system of sex, gender and sexuality in general, as previously discussed in Chapter 2 regarding the relatively recent distinction between *ruk* (sexually active) and *rap* (sexually passive). Heterosexuality cannot be assumed based on normative gender performance. Masculine and feminine presentation cannot always indicate gender identification and sexual role, either, as gender presentation can vary across different contexts and does not always correspond to the ascribed sexual role.

(6.6) Shane: sao ma:k rao pen tut ue ko rao ko bok thuk khrang wa rao pen tut khue suanyai tonni ni ko thi yang mai mi faen ni ko phrowa rao a (.) tha rao cha khop rao ko cha bok loei wa ni rao pen tut na [...] rap dai: ro laeo hai loei

I'm very feminine. I'm a *tut*. Yes, I said every time that I'm a *tut*. Mostly, the reason why I still don't have a partner is because I'm (.). If I'm going to date someone, I'll say straightaway that "I'm a *tut*. [...] Can you accept that?" And the person's gone.

chatche:n wa nia tha koet wa rao pen faen kan ni rao kho pen mia na

I'm being clear. I said "if we'll be dating, I want to be the wife."

The previous discussion has shown that people who identify with the same gender category can vary in their gender presentation. In addition, the same gender presentation does not always indicate the same gender identification. For example, Tor, Tony, Nan, Dew and Max have the same presentation towards masculinity. However, they do not try to conceal their non-normativity or homosexuality in public. In fact, they show some signs of femininity through their relatively more affected gestures and speech compared to normative men. They present themselves in a relatively masculine way, either because they feel comfortable this way or they think it is easier to live a life by conforming to the masculine norm. Under the same presentation, they vary in their gender identification. On one hand, Tony and Max identify as gay men, and state that clearly in the interviews. On the other hand, Nan and Dew identify as *kathoey*. I have also known Dew since my undergraduate years. As discussed in Chapter 3, during that time when I first got to know Dew, he presented himself in a very feminine fashion through his long hair, make-up and body modification caused by hormonal pills. But he turned to be more masculine after his undergraduate years. He wanted to be a university lecturer, and thought it would be difficult as a *kathoey* to have a position in academia. Dew's case demonstrates that one can change his/her gender presentation while maintaining the same gender identification.

Unlike Tony, Nan, Dew and Max, despite sharing the same masculine presentation, Tor, a member of the Postgraduates, does not identify clearly with either *kathoey* or gay men. Actually, the members of the Postgraduates are a good example of the complexity and diversity of the gender presentation and identification of *kathoey* and gay men. This friendship group consists of three non-normative men. As previously discussed, Yoot identifies clearly as a *kathoey*, and Tony as a gay man. Tor did not clearly identify as either *kathoey* or a gay man in the group interactions I observed during the participant observation. He was categorised as a gay man by Tony, who once mentioned in the group interactions that Tor belonged to the same category as him (Tony once referred to himself as *kathoey* when telling a story to the group, but mostly in the group interactions and in the interview he identifies as a gay man). However, Tor once referred to himself when talking to me with the term *sao prophet song* 'second type of woman.' As previously discussed in Chapter 2, the term is normally used to refer to *kathoey*. Tor used the term when he invited me to the group's get-together at his condominium, where they discussed their group

assignment and swam together. He told me to join them so I could observe how *sao prophet song* swam. In this context, Tor referred to himself with the term normally used for *kathoey*. He also included Yoot and Tony in the category, even though Tony identifies as a gay man.

Considering Tor's background, the identification as either *kathoey* or gay men is even more complicated. Tor realised that he had sexual feelings for male bodies from being very young. He maintained his masculine appearance but did not conceal his homosexuality. During the fourth year of his undergraduate degree, he started to become interested in showing femininity, and decided to express more femininity by, for example, growing long hair and wearing make-up. He clearly identified himself and was seen by his friends as a *kathoey* at that time. Later, he applied for an internship at a hotel which did not allow him to show his femininity. Tor, therefore, decided to turn back to a masculine appearance. With his current masculine presentation and his relationship with a male partner, Tor would be generally categorised by the public as a gay man. However, he does not categorise himself clearly as such. During the interview, I asked him about his gender identification. Tor replied that he never saw himself as a man, and actually always felt that he was a woman. He mentioned that to him, the important thing is his feelings inside, rather than how he looked. Tor's life, similar to Dew's discussed above, illustrates the continuum between *kathoey* and gay men. Tor previously identified with the former, but later moved away from the category and went closer to the masculinity associated with the latter category. This shows that the two categories are not completely separate from each other. It illustrates the issues of the fuzzy boundary between *kathoey* and gay men, and the derivation of gay men from *kathoey*, mentioned in previous excerpts derived from some of the participants' responses to the question on the categorisation of *kathoey* and gay men during the interviews.

(6.7) Tor: phi wa man muean kan na [...] phi khit wa phuak phet yang phi a (.)
kathoey thuk khon ma- maithueng wa gay thuk khon maithueng wa mai
chai mai chai an nia mai samat baeng dai wa pen aria

I think they're the same [...] I think people of the same *phet* as me (.) every
kathoey I- I mean every gay man, I mean those who are not this can't be
distinguished.

Tor's answer to the question on the distinction between *kathoey* and gay men in (6.7) supports the conceptualisation of the continuum (and the fuzziness) between *kathoey* and gay men. Tor says that the two categories are the same and cannot be distinguished. Note that in his answer, Tor searches for the right label for a category which includes both

kathoey and gay men. He first uses the term *phuak phet yang phi* 'people of the same *phet* as me.' As discussed previously, *phet* is a general term referring to the concept of sex, gender and sexuality. He then corrects himself saying *kathoey thuk khon* 'every *kathoey*' and *gay thuk khon* 'every gay man,' respectively. In the end, he clarifies that he is trying to refer to those who are *mai chai an nia* 'not this,' which can be interpreted based on the context as those who are not heterosexual men.

The way Tor describes his *phet* has similarities to a participant in Valentine's (2003) study, which focuses on the use of identity categories and the linguistic expression of desire among people participating in an 'alternative lifestyles' support group. Angel, one of the participants in question, is a transsexual woman who described herself to the group with the different identity categories of woman, gay, homosexual, and transsexual. As she expressed her erotic desires, she used phrases such as "my own kind" and "someone like me," suggesting that none of these identity categories could individually account for her erotic desires, and that she could refer to her sexual desire in many ways. Tor does the same thing in (6.7) where he refers to both *kathoey* and gay men when trying to clarify what he means by *phuak phet yang phi* 'people of the same *phet* as me', implying that both categories are possible ways of identifying himself. Angel categorised everyone in the support group, which consists of people identifying as gays, lesbians, bisexuals and transgenders, as homosexuals. Such a manner of classification is similar to that of Yoot, as shown in (6.1), where he refers to both *kathoey* and gay men as homosexuals. Valentine (2003) demonstrates that the way Angel describes and identifies herself has shown the conflation between gender and sexuality, which indicates that the system of the double binary of masculinity/femininity and homosexuality/heterosexuality can be ambiguous and more complicated than it seems. This issue of the unclear boundary between gender and sexuality is echoed in the findings of this study, as shown for example in (6.3), (6.4), (6.5) and (6.7) through the way *kathoey* and gay men are often mingled and taken as being the same category and coming from the same origin.

The discussion in this section has demonstrated how the category of *gay* has been localised and developed in the Thai realm of sex, gender and sexuality alongside the category of *kathoey*, and how the two categories cannot be unambiguously separated as two distinct categories. Jackson (1995, 1997a) argues that *gay* serves as an alternative category for Thai homosexual men who do not identify themselves with feminine expression in the way *kathoey* do. Such a distinction shows how gender performance and sexuality is recognised as separate in Thai society. The distinction is still valid in Thai society as shown in the way

the participants generally differentiate *kathoey* and gay men based on gender presentation. However, the data in this thesis also suggests that the distinction is not always clear-cut, not necessary and may not even be possible. The gender identification as either *kathoey* or gay men, and the presentation of masculinity and femininity are subjective, diverse, and context-dependent.

The data in this thesis has shown that femininity can be constructed by *kathoey* and gay men through various means. Some of the most obvious ways are to dress oneself in feminine clothes, have long hair in feminine style and put on make-up. These are characteristics typically associated with femininity. However, there are certain ways of expression which are employed by the participants but are not associated with typical femininity such as their use of affected gestures, loud voice and their explicit sexual expression for other male-bodied individuals. It is true that affected gestures can be seen as more feminine rather than masculine but they are not the feminine gestures expected among women. This shows that characteristics which are stereotypically associated with Thai *kathoey* and gay men are not necessarily typically feminine. Even though they construct their gendered self using traits generally associated with femininity, their behaviours do not always show the same feminine values held by Thai women. This means that they may express themselves in a way which is not expected for female-bodied individuals. They do not construct themselves as feminine as such but rather as non-masculine, which is not expected among Thai male-bodied individuals. What matters then is not only the construction of femininity or how feminine one is, but also the construction of non-masculinity among *kathoey* and gay men. That is, showing certain non-masculine traits not expected by male-bodied individuals is a way to express one's identification with non-normative male roles. The construction of non-masculinity corresponds to the way different participants show different levels of feminine expression. It conforms to what Jackson (1995, 1997a) called the masculine/non-masculine opposition. As discussed earlier, Jackson (1995, 1997a) argues that such opposition is central to the categorisation of male homosexuals in Thai society. However, the data in this thesis has suggested that *kathoey* and gay men are not fully separate. The *gay/kathoey* opposition in Jackson's (1995, 1997a) *kathoey*-gay-man model may not always be maintained. That is, in contrast to the *gay/kathoey* opposition, *kathoey* and gay men both construct themselves as non-masculine depending on various factors including the context they are in. They may in practice take themselves as the same group of people who do not identify with normative male roles as opposed to normative men.

The fuzzy boundary between *kathoey* and gay men, and between gender and sexuality more generally, allows us to capture the dynamic and complexity of gender identification and presentation. By considering the diversity within the categories of *kathoey* and gay men, gender identity is not seen as a static, unchanging or homogeneous category, but rather as a social position which is available to people in the society and can be variably interpreted. *Kathoey* and gay men are not “ready-made” identity categories which are taken and consistently expressed in the exact same way by everyone who identifies with the same category. The categories of *kathoey* and gay men can in fact be presented as a “made-to-order” product. This means that *kathoey* and gay men can vary individually regarding when and how they want to express themselves. The fuzziness of the categories, therefore, does not force people into rigid categories of *kathoey* and gay men. It instead embraces the heterogeneity and the individuality in gender identification and presentation. The categories of *kathoey* and gay men can be presented differently by different people; language is one of the tools which can be used not only for identifying with one of the categories, but also for doing it in the way they desire. The variation in language allows people to construct and express their different gendered and sexual self as compared to others, and it also allows them to vary the kind of self they identify in one context as compared to that in another context. People demonstrate their personalised version of *kathoey* and gay men through linguistic variation.

6.2 Language and the gender indexation of *kathoey* and gay men

The previous section has addressed one of the research questions focusing on the gender identification of *kathoey* and gay men in Thai society. This section focuses on the other research questions involving the linguistic practices of Thai non-normative men. These questions, introduced in Chapter 1, are:

- How does language participate in their gender indexation?
- How does their linguistic performance vary according to situations? What are the kinds of self or persona they project in various situations through linguistic means?
- Apart from their gender, what are other social factors which influence *kathoey* and gay men’s use of linguistic tools for gender purposes?

This section addresses these questions by discussing the context-dependent characteristic of the two linguistic variables analysed in this thesis; the difference in the frequency of

certain variants used by different participants; and the combined use of the two linguistic variables, constituting a distinctive style.

The analyses of the two linguistic variables – vowel lengthening and self-reference terms – have shown that the relationship between language and gender indexation is not as straightforward as is typically assumed to be the case. *Kathoey* and gay men do not use linguistic forms or features which exclusively “belong” to them. They do not use certain linguistic variants to directly index their categories of *kathoey* or gay men. *Kathoey*, in particular, do not simply consistently use feminine linguistic forms or imitate women’s speech. The use of vowel lengthening and self-reference terms of the participants in this study shows that their language use is highly context-dependent. The participants’ use of vowel lengthening illustrates the association between their linguistic practices and gender work at the prosodic level, showing that the association is not limited to the lexical level of their “own” set of vocabulary or slangs as typically perceived. As discussed in Chapter 4, vowel lengthening is used for certain interactional purposes, which through the process of stance-taking become associated the gender identity of non-normative men. Therefore, the linguistic variable and the participants’ gender identity are not directly related. It is not necessary that the participants use vowel lengthening in order to identify as being *kathoey* or gay men as such. Rather, it is certain interactional uses which provide the contexts for the association between vowel lengthening and non-normative gender identity to emerge. The participants’ use of self-reference terms discussed in Chapter 5 is also context-dependent. Even though self-reference terms are typically directly associated with the speaker’s gender, interactional contexts are very important for the speaker to choose an appropriate self-reference term. The selection of a self-reference term is not based only on gender, but also on other social factors involving in an interaction such as the relative age of interlocutors and the situational contexts of the interaction itself. Different social factors interact with each other. For example, in certain contexts, the age difference between interlocutors does not allow the participants to express their gender through self-reference terms. In addition, the participants’ gender presentation towards masculinity or femininity is also influenced by the formality of the context. Male-bodied individuals who identify with non-normative male roles may construct their gendered self as feminine through the lengthening of their vowels and the choice of feminine self-reference terms. However, as the data has shown, the construction of femininity is only possible in certain contexts. In some contexts, language is instead a tool for constructing non-masculine and non-feminine self. For example, the use of personal name as self-reference terms allows the speaker to avoid identifying with a

particular gender category. Therefore, the analyses have demonstrated that language participates in *kathoe*y and gay men’s gender indexation in a complicated manner. Interactional contexts have to be taken into account when considering the relationship between language and the gender indexation of the speaker. Also, language enables the speaker to construct not only femininity but also their gendered self more generally flexibly depending on contexts.

		% Vowel lengthening	Total N
Undergraduates	Shane	14.85	357
	Gift	6.57	274
	June	8.50	353
	Pong	6.49	185
Postgraduates	Yoot	4.45	292
	Tor	8.16	196
	Tony	9.37	427
Professionals	Mik	13.33	255
	Max	16.46	237
Miscellaneous	Lek	3.87	362
	Win	4.39	319
	Nan	5.33	319
	Dew	7.04	270
	Mod	2.30	305
Total N	4151		

Table 6.1: Distribution of vowel lengthening in interviews

Vowel lengthening and self-reference terms are two linguistics variables which share the common characteristic of being associated with femininity and gender indexation more generally. The variables are used towards the same interactional goals by the participants as illustrated in Chapters 4 and 5. However, the participants do not use the variables to the same extent. Table 6.1 shows the distribution of vowel lengthening in the interviews of every participant, demonstrating the difference in the frequency of use across different participants. As a group, the Professionals have the highest frequency of use of vowel lengthening (12.46%) overall, including the data from both interviews and self-recordings. Considering the interview data, as shown in Table 6.1, Max, a member of the Professionals,

uses vowel lengthening more frequently than other participants (16.46%), followed by Shane of the Undergraduates (14.85%) and Mik of the Professionals (13.33). In contrast, some participants use vowel lengthening very infrequently such as Mod (2.30%) and Lek (3.87%).

Such variation among the participant shown in Table 6.1 can arguably be accounted for by a few reasons. One of the reasons is the participants' personality. As previously discussed, vowel lengthening is associated with affected and entertaining personalities. It may be more likely for people who have such personalities to use vowel lengthening more frequently than others and there is evidence for this in the study: Shane, Mik and Max, the three most frequent users of vowel lengthening are also participants with particularly affected and entertaining personalities: they are outgoing, humorous and fun, popular among their friends, they tend to entertain people they are interacting with and are often the centre of attention. They also value the humorous characteristic as an important part of their gender identity. Shane said in the interview that he had to be affected and funny when teaching in order to entertain his students and get their attention. Mik and Max, as discussed in Chapter 4, see the humorous characteristic as a way for *kathoey* and gay men to gain acceptance from society. Therefore, Shane, Mik and Max might use vowel lengthening more frequently as they consider affected and entertaining personalities to be an important part of their identity, and pay more attention to it.

Another possible reason is the participants' familiarity with me, the interviewer. It is possible that those who are more familiar with me increase their use of vowel lengthening because they were more comfortable talking to me during the interview, and hence become more emotionally engaged. Shane, Mik and Max, apart from the personality issue discussed above, are quite familiar with me. I met them and hung out with them several times before interviewing them. Also, Shane was the first member of the Undergraduates I got into contact with. He introduced me to the rest of the group. Therefore, Shane had a lot of chances to interact with me prior to the interview. Their familiarity with me may have led them to use vowel lengthening more frequently to express their emotion more powerfully. Yoot, Win, Nan and Dew have known me for several years before the fieldwork. However, we were not really part of the same friendship circles so they were not that familiar with me before the study. This may, therefore, explain their infrequent use of vowel lengthening. In addition, for Yoot, although we have known each other for a long time and hung out often during the fieldwork and before the interview, I speculate further, based on my observation, that he tries to project an academic or knowledgeable persona when interacting with me,

and that makes him use vowel lengthening infrequently in order to maintain the seriousness associated with academics in general. His projection of such persona is shown, for example, in the way he uses English words and expressions in his speech, and the way he likes to talk to me about his assignments and thesis.

Even though these reasons for the variation across the participants in interviews are speculative, the variation demonstrates that the high frequency of use of vowel lengthening does not necessarily indicate a more feminine performance. For example, among the members of the Undergraduates, Shane uses vowel lengthening most frequently but is not the most feminine person in the group. June, who is more feminine than others, still uses it less frequently than Shane does. Moreover, the variation also illustrates that people with the same gender presentation in terms of masculine and feminine expression can vary in their linguistic performance. For example, June, Yoot, Mik and Lek identify as *kathoey* and perform femininity in public. Mik uses vowel lengthening more frequently than the other three participants, while Yoot and Lek use it infrequently. This evidence supports the heterogeneity of gender presentation, including linguistic performance.

	<i>% nu</i>	Total N (excluding zero forms)
Shane	28.97	107
Gift	84.81	79
June	43.43	99
Pong	0	37
Total N	322	

Table 6.2: Distribution of the feminine pronoun *nu* in the interviews of the Undergraduates

Similarly, the participants also use feminine self-reference terms to a different degree. As discussed in Chapter 5 considering the interview data, the members of the Undergraduates are the only participants who were predicted and are eligible to use the feminine pronoun *nu* to refer to themselves as the speaker. *Nu* is a feminine first-person pronoun which also indicates non-reciprocal power and a lower status due to lower age or lower social position between the speaker and their interlocutor. The members of the Undergraduates identified themselves as *kathoey*. They were all younger than me and also occupied lower social status in several respects. They, therefore, had *nu* as an option for self-reference. The members of the group, however, do not use the pronoun with the same frequency. As shown in Table 6.2, during the interviews, Gift uses *nu* more often than other members accounting for

84.81% of all self-reference tokens excluding zero self-reference. In contrast, Pong does not use the pronoun at all and, as also previously discussed, prefers to use his nickname as a self-reference term. I have already discussed in Chapter 5 Pong's preference for his nickname, suggesting that it is his personal preference rather than the intentional avoidance of gender identification. It is difficult to say what the reasons for the variation shown in Table (6.2) are. However, it confirms what has been shown earlier in the variation of vowel lengthening in Table (6.1). That is, that a stronger feminine presentation does not correlate positively with a higher frequency of the feminine pronoun *nu*. Gift uses *nu* twice as frequently as June even though June is more feminine.

In addition, what can also be seen from Table 6.1 and Table 6.2 is that the two variables are not necessarily used by one participant to the same degree. Considering the use of lengthened vowels and the feminine pronoun *nu* – the linguistic variants associated with femininity - in the Undergraduates' interview data, participants have different preferences for the variables. Shane uses vowel lengthening more frequently than other group members, and is the second most frequent user of vowel lengthening overall. However, Shane does not use the feminine pronoun *nu* frequently (28.97%) compared to other members of the Undergraduates. In contrast, among the group members, Gift uses the pronoun more frequently than others (84.81%), while using vowel lengthening for only 6.57% in his interview. His frequency of use of vowel lengthening is almost the same as that of Pong who behaves in the opposite direction to Gift regarding his non-use of the pronoun *nu*. This indicates that even though vowel lengthening and the feminine pronoun *nu* both serve to index femininity, and are associated with the gender identity of *kathoey* and gay men, the preference for, or the high frequency of, one variable used by a speaker does not follow the same pattern for the other variable used by the same speaker.

As both the vowel lengthening and the feminine pronoun *nu* serve to index femininity, it is plausible that the Undergraduates may use the two variables in combination as part of their distinctive "style," which is "a clustering of linguistic resources, and an association of that clustering with social meaning" (Eckert 2001: 123). That is, the two variables do not simply happen to be used by the participants separately for the same social meaning. The participants may not take the variables as two individual unrelated features. Instead, the two variables may be integrated and work cooperatively to function as an index of a style. However, only the data from the interview of Shane seems to support such a hypothesis. There is evidence from his interview which shows that the two variables are used together in the same immediate contexts as shown, for example, in (6.8) - (6.10). In these three

excerpts, vowel lengthening serves to strengthen the epistemic and affective stances Shane is taking. The variable has become associated with femininity as discussed in Chapter 4. Both vowel lengthening and the feminine pronouns are used together by Shane as linguistic tools which signify his feminine expression. In his interview, there are several instances where Shane uses both variables in the same utterance. The way he uses the variables consistently in combination suggests that Shane may not view them separately but may potentially use the variables in a coordinated fashion as part of his style. Vowel lengthening and the feminine pronoun *nu* may work cooperatively constituting to a style, even though such stylistic practice is suggestive from the dataset only at the individual level.

(6.8) Shane: khue **nu** koet ma mai dai pen khon thi baep (.) koet ma la **ma:n** te **futbo:n** rai ngia

I was not born like (.) was born and was so **masculine**, playing **football** or something like that.

(6.9) Shane: **chai:** (.) chop len (.) tae ton dek dek a tham wa **nu** len muean tut (.) thuapai mai ko mai **thuapai: na:**

Yes (.) I liked to play that (.) But when I was a kid, if you ask whether I played like other *tut* (.) in general, I didn't in **general {particle}**.

(6.10) Shane: laeo rongthao nia khao cha sai Changdao kan i si khao khao sen si namngoen laeo mae **nu** ko mai hai **sai:** mae **nu** bok wa (.) mai **dai:** tong sai Scholl

For shoes, they wore Changdao, the one which is white and has the blue strap. **My** mom didn't let me **wear** it. **My** mom said (.) "**No**. You have to wear Scholl."

Note that Shane's responses to the questions regarding the relation between language and the *kathoey* identity during the interview show that he is highly aware of the role of language in signifying his *kathoey* identity. He says that it is possible to guess if someone is a *kathoey* or not only by listening to the way the person speaks. He could not clearly explain in the interview how he and *kathoey* in general speak. However, his demonstration to me involved the lengthening of the vowel of the last syllable of an utterance. The way Shane sees vowel lengthening as significant for his *kathoey* identity makes it more plausible that he may use the variable in combination with the feminine pronoun to indicate his alignment to femininity, which is associated with the *kathoey* identity. However, the other members of

the Undergraduates did not particularly mention the use of vowel lengthening, which suggests that the association between vowel lengthening and femininity is not as salient for these participants as it is for Shane. Hence, it helps explain why there is no evidence of the consistent occurrence of the combination of the two variables, which may constitute a style. This reflects the difference between vowel lengthening and self-reference terms in Thai in general regarding the salience of the association between the variables and gender. Self-reference terms are stereotypically linked to the speaker's gender in Thai society and the association with gender is very salient. People are usually aware of it and think of self-reference terms when thinking about how gender can be indicated in Thai. Vowel lengthening, in contrast, is an unrecognised feature for gender purposes. It is common to hear Thai speakers use vowel lengthening although they do not seem to be aware of the variable or its potential for gender expression. Even though the two linguistic variables work at different levels of language and different levels of recognition, the analyses in this thesis indicate that they both participate in gender indexation.

6.3 Concluding remarks

This thesis investigates the relationship between language and gender indexation among men who identify with non-normative male roles in Thai society. The thesis has tried to illustrate the diversity of *kathoey* and gay men in Thai society through this group of participants, which consists of people with different gender identification and presentation. However, the investigation of the linguistic practices of various other groups of non-normative men is still needed in order for us to understand the heterogeneity more fully. The participants in this study are non-stereotypical in terms of their appearance, education and occupation. It would be interesting to look at those who are more stereotypical and compare the linguistic practices of different groups across various contexts. Doing so will allow us not only to examine the diversity of Thai non-normative men, but also to find out whether the diversity is constructed and expressed through linguistic practices and, if it is, how. Different groups of non-normative men may have different linguistic tools for expressing their gender identity. Comparisons across various groups will demonstrate what the groups have in common both in terms of their gender identification and linguistic practices, and how the different linguistic practices of different groups relate to each other.

The findings in this study have suggested that the distinction between gender and sexuality is possible but not always clear-cut. For some of the participants, being a *kathoey* and being a gay man are not completely separate kinds of identification. In Thai society, *kathoey* are

partly identified in relation to gay men and vice versa. Both gender and sexuality have to be taken into account to fully describe the lived experiences of *kathoeys* and gay men. This relates back to the discussion in Valentine (2003), where he demonstrated that a single identity category may not fully express the lived experiences for some people. In such circumstances, it makes sense for some people to identify themselves with various identity categories because choosing one of them is not adequate, and various identity categories are seen as different possible ways of identifying themselves. Agreeing with Valentine (2003), this thesis has shown that identifying with either *kathoeys* or gay men is not enough for some of the participants. Therefore, it is useful in such cases to bring gender and sexuality together in order to account for their identification, making the categories of *kathoeys* and gay men more fluid. In this sense, the conflation between gender and sexuality does not suggest that the two concepts should be apart. Rather, it shows that the distinction may force people to identify themselves with a category or a label they do not think they fit completely, and treating gender and sexuality as strictly separate may not allow people to express themselves in the way they want. The conflation of the two concepts in some cases may be a way to go about self-identification.

Although *kathoeys* and gay men, and gender and sexuality, are fuzzy categories and concepts which are often conflated, the homogeneity within a category should not be assumed, as suggested by Zimman (2009). In fact, the fuzzy boundary of these categories enables us to capture the individuality and the heterogeneity within the same identity category. It shows how people can make use of an identity category shared with others, interpret it, and present it in the way they want. The unclear distinction between *kathoeys* and gay men supports the approach to study identity as social practices. That is, identity is not a static category which is always taken and presented by people consistently in a unified way. Rather, it is constructed in different ways by different groups of people. Different presentations of *kathoeys* and gay men in this thesis reflect the 'live and let live' attitude (Zimman 2009), which means that people can express the individuality in their gender, bringing diversity to identity categories. It has been shown in this thesis that the individuality and the heterogeneity of gender identification and presentation can be created and reflected through language.

The analyses illustrate the relationship between language and gender indexicality. The study is another piece of linguistic research which contributes to the conceptualisation of language as a shared property among speakers of the same language. It also supports the view that a speaker's creative use of linguistic variables can be a tool for identifying with a

social category. The variation across speakers and contexts in this study has demonstrated that linguistic features themselves do not have social meaning, but they gain social meanings through speakers' linguistic practices. It is speakers who pick up particular linguistic features, assign social meanings to the features, and associate them with gender identities and social categories more generally. Linguistic practices, therefore, serve to signify social meanings which constitute identity categories. In other words, this study contributes to the conceptualisation of constructed gender identity and linguistic practices. It indicates how people vary in their gender identification and presentation, and use language to construct and express such diversity. It is evidenced in this thesis that linguistic variation is a way of tailoring their gender identification and presentation.

Lastly, this thesis contributes to theories of gender and sexuality considering a non-Western culture. The majority of studies on which contemporary theories are based focus on Western conceptualisations of gender identity. This thesis provides evidence on how people imagine and embody gender and sexuality in another culture. Looking at different non-Western cultures is useful because it allows us not only to compare across cultures, but also to observe how the Western and non-Western conceptualisations influence or interact with each other, and how concepts originated in the Western world are localised and integrated into non-Western cultures. Therefore, this thesis contributes both cultural and linguistic findings towards the understanding of gender and sexuality more generally.

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