Chapter 5
Conclusion

This research has been done with an attempt to apply both some discourse analysis and some translation approaches to compare the language of some traditional Thai love songs with the language of a Thai translation of the *Song of Solomon*. The following sections provide a summary of the findings from the communication of the songs, the various functions of referring expressions, and the participant tracking among the songs. Then, the evaluation of the methodology, the significance of findings, and further research are discussed.

5.1 Summary of findings

Because the *Song of Solomon* has some unshared cultural expressions, uncommon comparison (parallelism), unknown experience, worldview or values, as well as different/unknown location, time, or occasion for the Thai readers, there are challenges in communicating in the translated text. There are various ways of adjustment of the text, without changing its meaning, such as adding footnotes, providing a study guide, etc. that can help reduce the readers' processing effort to understand the Song. Also, another problem is the representation of the poetic elements in the prose of the *Song of Solomon*. The adjustment to this issue should be that of the addition of some poetic values to help the reader see the same beauty in the Song as the original reader did.

The Thai love songs analysed in this research draw on some different linguistic functions of referring expressions from Thai prose. They utilize various kinds of references which are kin terms, proper nouns, body parts as referents, NPs with numerals, NPs with particles, NPs with possessor phrase, NPs with nonrestrictive relative clause, NPs with restrictive relative clause, deictic pronouns, anaphoric pronouns, pronouns with complex modifiers, and zero anaphora. Each of these referring devices has its own functions in terms of identifiability, activation status, definiteness, and specificity.

It is found that the inventory of some functions is different between the Thai songs and the *Song of Solomon*. Also, the proportional use of some referents is different as well. Participant identification analysis shows that pronouns are utilized in the *Song of Solomon* in higher proportions than in the Thai love songs, which tend to use ten times more zero anaphora as shown in chapter three. The participant tracking analysis which provides the rules for each subject and non-subject context shows the same result, that there is higher amount of pronouns and possessive NPs in the *Song of Solomon* than in the Thai songs, which make use of zero anaphora in most subject contexts. A feature of over-translation could be found, for example in the *Song of Solomon* chapter 4, with 29 possessive NPs in 16 verses. Also, the result shows that possessive NPs are used in the subject contexts in the *Song of Solomon*, while in the Thai songs, they appear in the non-subject contexts. These phenomena do not determine if the translation will be understandable, as they are not directly involved in semantic level, but they can give some idea about the naturalness of the translation as being compared to the original Thai love songs.

5.2 Evaluation of methodology

Because Thai love songs utilize fewer referring expressions than Thai narratives, it is difficult to draw a percentage of usage in each song. Some songs give enough data to be analysed, while others give none. Other types of discouse analysis (rather than the participant reference) could be used profitably with Thai songs in the future.

In discussing reference patterns, Givón (1983) provided a framework from which Dooley and Levinsohn (2001) developed their method, and on which Somsonge (1991, 1993) based her analysis. Givón's lookback strategy (also called sequential strategy as defined by Dooley and Levinsohn) provides a way to track the referents by noting who was mentioned most recently. This is a good methodology to be used in order to find distributions of participant patterns in chapter four. Also, Givón's scale of coding devices from the least to the greatest amount is helpful when determining the patterns that are more or less than the default encoding patterns.

Dooley and Levinsohn's (2001) method is a useful tool to assign the participant rank such as major, minor, and props, as well as to identify the proposed default

pattern for each participant role according to the proposed contexts for each activated subject and non-subject. However, the method is slightly adjusted as suggested by Osborne (2009) and Tebow (2010) in order that the nonthematic participant patterns can be analyzed as well. But some issues arise when the distributions show that the Thai songs make use of a lot less non-subject references than in Thai narrative. In consequence, there are significantly fewer instances of non-subject identifications to be analysed than of subject identifications. The rules determined in the non-subject contexts are then only tentative and cannot be set as standard rules.

However, there are some challenges in a comparison of the song lyrics with the translation prose. Although the translated *Song of Solomon* is rich in poetic values, it has more flexibility in the choice and the length of word forms that the Thai songs simply do not have. But there is no Thai poetic or prosaic work that would share the exact pattern as the translated *Song of Solomon* which follows some of the Hebrew poetic features. The Thai traditional love songs are chosen to be compared in this research because they share the topics, the figurative language, the emotion portrayal, and the moral values with the *Song of Solomon* as much as possible. Yet more research is needed to identify what kind of writing is most suitable to be compared with the translated song into prose from another language.

5.3 Significance of findings

This study has a primary contribution to the translation team of Thai Bible Standard Version (2011), by the Thailand Bible Society, and/or Bible commentators and any translators involved in Thai Christian literature organizations. Also, this study can benefit those who seek to understand the linguistic function of Thai participant reference in further translation work of the songs. This study focuses on only a few areas that would help to make translation of song lyrics into Thai more natural. In chapter 2, the different ways of communication between the Hebrew *Song of Solomon* and the Thai love songs show the limitations the translator works under and the processing effort the reader would need to employ. Then in chapter 3, the translator can have a greater understanding of the discourse functions for various referring expressions, as well as the comparative occurrence which illustrates that zero

anaphora is the major strategy used in the Thai songs. Finally in chapter 4, the default encoding patterns can assist the translator to know what patterns are appropriate to be used in different contexts and what exceptions are to be allowed for the non-default patterns.

5.4 Further research

This research has chosen only four love songs in Thai out of which the participant default patterns are drawn. They are the songs that only share some similar focus and characteristics with the original Hebrew *Song of Solomon*. An additional complication is involved in that the poetry of the original Hebrew *Song of Solomon* is rendered in Thai prose. Therefore, the default patterns found in the selected songs (There are more than 500 Thai traditional love songs) may be different from those from other kinds of songs. So it would be good to investigate more Thai love songs or prose (like love stories), ones similar to these and some that are not so similar. Also, research using other parts of the *Song of Solomon* would add to the data and perhaps lead to different generalizations.

In the analysis of participant identification that occur in the *Song of Solomon*, there are some referring expressions that have not been discussed and compared with any Thai songs. Some of those references are: classifier phrase, NP + prepositional phrase, NP with embedded clause (such as relative clause), and pronominal phrase. More research is needed to determine what functions they have in the song discourse level and whether they are compatible with the Thai songs. And finally, the testing and the suggestion of new translated verses, especially for the parts from which the problems arise (such as those in this research that do not follow the functions or the rules), can be made for much further benefit to the future translators and readers.

There is quite the range from a prosaic translation to poetic verse. It is marked by many instances of the noted features along the way. It is possible to make a prose translation of poetry from another language to be more poetic in form, however this is not an easy task. The addition of poetic features in similar Thai songs to the prose translation of the *Song of Solomon* can be understood as a step forward in this direction. This study has aimed to break light onto the particular idea of assembling a more accurate and faithful to the reader version, however much more study has yet to be done.