

Chapter 4

Results of the Study

This chapter reports the results of the data analysis that has been described in Chapter 3. The results are reported in two parts: the communicative skills in writing of the participants and their attitudes towards using collaborative blogging. In the first part, the results are classified and discussed under the writing codes, namely, creativity, critical thinking, voice and comments and contributions. The second part discusses the participants' attitudes and experiences before and after the collaborative blogging project.

4.1 Communicative Skills in Writing

As described in the data collection procedure, the blog assignments of the participants were used to study in what way collaborative blogging contributes to the communicative skills in writing of Thai university EFL students. The findings from the blog assignments were classified into the following codes: creativity, critical thinking, voice, and comments and contributions. The scores allotted to the participants are show in Table 1 below.

Table 1

Communicative Skills in Writing

Participant	Creativity	Critical thinking	Voice	Comments
1	12	13	10	10
2	11	14	10	11
3	9	12	8	5
4	6	5	6	5
5	8	5	6	7
6	7	6	7	8
7	10	11	10	6
8	12	10	11	12
9	6	5	5	5
10	10	11	10	5
11	7	6	5	5
12	6	5	5	5
Total	104	103	93	84
Mean	8.66	8.58	7.75	7
Percentage	36.08	35.75	32.29	29.16

The results presented in Table 1 show that creativity accounted for 36.08%, showing that the participants displayed a low degree of creativity. Critical thinking accounted for 35.75%, which was also a low score. The results of voice and comments were 32.29% and 29.16% respectively. Thus, the participants showed a low degree of communicative skills in writing, with a higher degree of creativity and critical thinking, compared to voice and comments.

4.1.1 Creativity

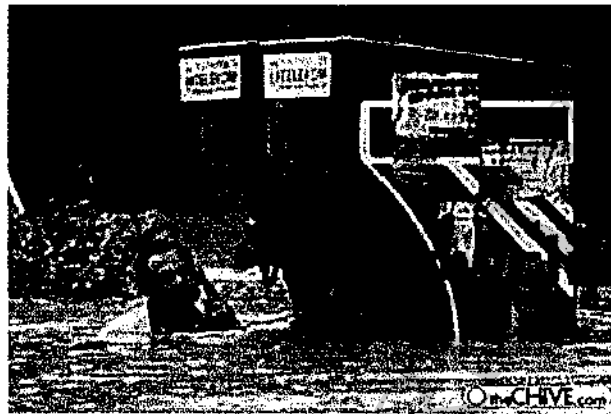
This part of the study reports results of the participants' creativity in their blog assignments and how it contributed to their communicative skills in writing. The participants took the first few weeks to get into the mode of blogging and get familiar with it. Once they understood how it worked and grew more confident of posting and commenting on others' blogs, they started getting more comfortable to write creatively in their blog posts.

4.1.1.1 Creativity Using Metaphors

One of the participants posted the title, "Water floods body, not floods heart" in his blog about the Bangkok floods. The title is an example of creativity that caught the attention of the reader. The participant used a metaphor to describe the feeling of a person who was caught in the floods. A metaphor is essentially a figure of speech where two things that are unlike are compared because they have a common connection. So here although water as an external thing can flood the body it is not capable of flooding the heart. This is because the writer feels that the heart is flooded with love and can overcome the superficial submersion in water. The two things that are compared here are body and heart. Though the heart belongs to the body as a physical entity the connection stops there. The heart is filled with love even though the body is submerged in water (see Figure 9).

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 2011

Water floods body, not floods heart



pings.com

Although water was flooding his body, he still called to his honey. Anyway, He just wanted to know that she was still great and happy. By the way, I could not imagine how sweet they were, but I had already known that he really loves her. Moreover, I thought his darling would be the most beautiful girl in the world for him forever. Finally, I wish they could meet each other again soon and live happily ever after.

Figure 8. A metaphor used in the title of a blog assignment

The following responses were generated bringing about communication between the writer and his classmates. This communication was fruitful since it gave the participants an opportunity to express their ideas and opinions on the writer's creative blog post.

R: Those are great thoughts. What do you think he said when he called his honey?

P: I think he would miss her when he was so sad while his house was flooded.

P2: Wow. The best lover of the flooding. ^^lol^^

P: 5555

R: Yes, I guess the most dedicated lover.

P: Ycs, he is.

4.1.1.2 Creativity through Poems

Another participant wrote a poem about money and this attracted readers as the poem contained many questions being put across to the reader, and made them think about various aspects of money. The writer put across his thoughts about money in such a way that stirred the emotions and imagination of the reader. It got the readers to think about the importance of money in their lives and what it actually brings to people. The writer understood that it is one of the most important things in life, but was not sure if it is the only most important thing. He made the readers ask themselves and answer this question. He seemed absolutely certain that money could buy various things in life, but not feelings such as love, sincerity and friendship. Life did not seem to be complete by having only money.

How is it important in our life?
Some said... Money can buy everything.
Some said... We cannot lack money.
Some said... Money is the one of the most important thing of life.
I think...
Money is the thing that we assume
It is need for human either much or less
Does money buy everything?
Can we lack money?
The money is the one of the most important thing of life, isn't it?
* *
However
...Money...
Cannot buy Love
Cannot buy Sincerity
Cannot buy life
* *
How is the money important for you?

The following comments were generated from the readers, in response to the above question that the writer put across "How is money important for you?" The comments exchanged between the participants were beneficial in communicating their ideas about the value of money in their lives.

- R: I think money is very important in our lives and it can make or break relationships. How is money important to you?
P: For me, money is the thing used to exchange what we want only! ^ ^
P2: For me, money is just a thing, but money can change many things. ^
P: 555^^I think so
R: We need money to survive!
It's all about the money, money, money!
P3: because of money my parents and I don't live together!
P : Oh! Let it be, your family and u finally love each other. ^ _ ^
P3: yeah I know :)

4.1.1.3 Creativity through Non-fictional Writing

This type of creativity was expressed by a participant who wrote about her feeling on Valentine's Day and engaged the audience in the way that generated heartfelt comments. The participant also attached a picture of a black cat holding a rose in her blog page. This generated the feeling of sadness and despair on Valentine's Day to the readers.



clippings:

I feel nothing on Valentine's Day. I have no boyfriend. I don't care. **NO!** I need someone to share every breath. When I see people fall in love, I'm so jealous. And deep inside,.... oh, my prince where are you now?

Figure 9. A blog assignment about Valentine's Day

The following responses were generated bringing about communication between the writer and other participants. The communication encouraged feedback from other participants and provided the learners an environment in which they could provide empathy to the writer, through their comments. According to Young (2011), empathy is vital in communication, and it also provides us with the ability to connect with readers.

R: Don't feel jealous, be happy that you have not experienced it and your heart is still fresh and waiting for love! If you wait, you will find the right person.

P2: Your prince is gonna be with you when the time is suitable.

P3: The right person will come in the right time Aele^^.

P4: Dont be sad my friend. Your love will come to you in the proper time. Then your love will be more jealous^^

P: Thanks everyone :)

P4: you're welcome^^

4.1.2 Critical Thinking

The four different types of critical thinking that were found based on the above criteria were analytical critical thinking, evaluative critical thinking, critical thinking through enumeration and critical thinking through internalization.

4.1.2.1 Analytical Critical Thinking

Analytical critical thinking is defined as thinking that involves one to sort, screen and select ideas, based on the information that is at hand. It is seen as being absolutely necessary for being creative as it requires one to decide which idea to take forward. With regards to writing, this could involve the writer to select and share the best idea on his or her blog, such that it displays creativity and generates communication with the readers. One of the participants wrote the following in her blog about Valentine's Day, "Anyways I should get used to with my loneliness on this day and be happy of seeing the other people's love (--- ____ <)". This was an example of analytical critical thinking in which the participant was able to identify with her feelings on a day when love is celebrated and concluded that she should come to terms with her own situation on Valentine's Day. She was able to make inferences and embody her point of view.

Another example of critical thinking by one of the participants was shown in the following excerpt, where the participant analyzed her thoughts and wrote the following, "Certainly, money is important for live, but happiness is important too. I would like to have happy, and money in the same time". She was able to raise questions, make assumptions and generate implications. This third example of critical thinking by one of the participants is displayed in the following sentence, "I cannot buy everything although I am a rich woman. I think money cannot buy healthy and love". The participant analyzed the importance of money in our lives, and offered the other participants an opportunity to question their own insights.

4.1.2.2 Evaluative Critical Thinking

Evaluative critical thinking is considered to be a type of critical thinking that involves a writer to evaluate information that is at hand. This information could have been gathered from any source for example, experience, observation, reflection, reasoning or communication. It further involves evaluating thinking in order to find ways to improve it. One participant wrote the following excerpt about the color white,

“But many people think this color is kind of boring and empty. I don’t know why they think like that. Maybe because they like colorful, and they don’t want to look at one color and enjoy it”. This participant was evaluating and critiquing the color white. This was done by clarifying people’s opinions about the color white in the blog comments section, and by asking questions and thinking out loud. Here the participant was able to defend her position of her liking the color white by voicing plausible assumptions.

Another good example of evaluative critical thinking was shown by one of the participants, who wrote, “I have no boyfriend because I choose to leave him. If asking why I left him, by my reason is if it surely to know that we are not the couple, there is no reason to keep this love.” The participant evaluated her own situation and also identified reasons in order to justify why she left her boyfriend.

4.1.2.3 Critical Thinking through Internalization

Internalizing one’s thoughts through critical thinking is seen as one of the affective domains that affects one’s way of thinking (Bloom, 1956). This type of thinking involves the writer to internalize and carefully reflect on different thoughts. The following two excerpts of internalization are found in the participants’ writing. In the following excerpt the participant was internalizing his own stand by questioning his choices for the future. He has to eventually make a decision about prospective career plans:

What way is my target of my life. I asked in that time that was the second choice. On the other, I asked myself again that is it too fast of my life. I really want to prove my beloved skill. It is English.

In the next example, the participant was internalizing her thoughts by showing and displaying a mature philosophical attitude:

Everyone wish born to be perfect in everything in life. But sometimes they disappointed with it. What do they do? Many things on earth are ready to serve you with happiness. Love is one of thing in this world that can string the heart of humankind together.

4.1.2.4 Critical Thinking through Enumeration

The skill of enumerating thoughts in critical thinking is also seen as one of the affective domains in thinking skills as mentioned by Bloom (1956). The following excerpt is an example of a participant displaying critical thinking by enumerating the value of money against that of time. The participant was thinking about the importance of money against time, and reflecting on his thoughts one by one, about money and time:

Money is an important thing but it is not the most. There are a lot of people said if I could change all my money to time, I would change all of my money to time. I really think like this because ten month ago I really wanted to work for getting money. But now I will finish my bachelor degree in a month. I do not want to finish at all.

4.1.3 Voice

This section reports results of the participants' voices found in their blog assignments and how it contributed to their communicative skills in writing.

4.1.3.1 Informative Blogging Voice

Informative blogging voice is seen as one of the most common writing styles in blogs, and bloggers of this kind like to give facts and information clearly to the audience. This type of blogger needs to write interesting points in such a way that it informs the audience about something. A very important rule for informative bloggers, as suggested by Chibuzor (2013), is to do detailed research on others' inspirational blogs, which in turn gives ideas to write one's blog. Another important thing for this type of blogger is the use of contractions in the blog posts for effective flow of words and sentence, and trying to use the personal pronoun "you" when addressing a particular blog reader, to make it more informative, personal and interactive (Chibuzor, 2013). One participant wrote, "I love listening songs. I began to listen English songs when I was 11 years old. Nowadays I have many favorite songs and artists such as such as Savage Garden, Westlife... I also like Russian, Arabic, Hindi songs. I can sing many songs but my voice is bad". The participant was conveying facts and information honestly to the audience about her personal taste in songs and music.

4.1.3.2 Friendly Blogging Voice

This type of blogger makes the audience feel comfortable when reading the blogs and adds a personal touch to the writing, which gives the audience an impression that they are having a real conversation when reading the blogs. According to Stewart (2013), when writing with a friendly blogging voice it is important to remain authentic and just be yourself, since blogging is an online extension of a personal conversation. The following is an example of a friendly blogging voice displayed by one of the participants when describing his experience of student life at the university:

This studying journey made my best friends and me feel very happy, fun, tired and love each other much more.....now we are thinking about traveling a new special place and we have wonderful memories of our journey..... we are not good students, but we are good people because we never do the bad things.

4.1.3.3 Humorous Blogging Voice

This type of blogger likes to add humor to their writing and gives the audience a few laughs now and then when they read the blogs. According to an online blogger, Hess (2012), having a tone of humor in one's blog post will be naturally sensed by the reader, and the writer doesn't have to try too hard to bring in that humor. Having humor in one's blog voice is necessary when it is called, but depending on the topic

that the blog post is about, it is understandable to have a serious tone to it sometimes. One participant wrote the following about what he gauged from a photo of a man standing in the floods and using a public telephone booth which was also under water:

He was calling for help, but the person who was talking asked him a question What shirt were you wearing? He answered honestly that he was wearing a white shirt. The person said that he was sorry because he would help red or yellow shirt only.

The participant brought about wit and humor by bringing politics into this blog assignment and gave the readers a good laugh. The political situation that he referred to was the massive protests and fighting that took place between the red shirt and the yellow shirt groups in Thailand.

4.1.3.4 Inspirational Blogging Voice

The inspirational type of blogger has the ability to write in a style that inspires and uplifts the mood of the readers. One of the participants wrote the following about friendship in her blog:

Because the word 'friend' teaches me many things. It is one part of my life. Did you remember when you and I be friend?...Likewise when I laugh I see you always join me. I would like to thank all of you that make me happy and understand the word 'friend' clearly.

The participant wrote a moving story about the value of friendship and inspired the audience to develop strong bonds of friendship in life.

4.1.3.5 Sentimental Blogging Voice

This kind of blogger is seen as writing in an emotional way about the good and bad experiences in life and keeps the reader engaged. The writer tries to develop a connection with the reader, as he tries to dream about and imagine the situation that is given in the writing. The following example displayed a sentimental and dreamy voice when the participant wrote about their experiences in love. It made the reader imagine and try and visualize the situation that the participant wrote about, with a probability of reflecting on one's own experiences:

He is a pretty boy and one year younger than me. Even though we had a short time with each other, he gave me good memories and I can say that is the time falling in love. However, my love is ended and now he is gone from me. I can't go back to change everything but I won't forget. I hope one day is these words remind him about us. I will miss you.

4.1.4 Comments and Contributions

The examples of different types of comments displayed by the participants' in their blog assignments and their description are given below.

4.1.4.1 Disputative Comments

Disputative comments are those which disagree with the blogger or other commenters, thereby giving scope for an online debate. A participant is seen as making the following disputative comment:

P1: That's all right! You can explain this picture clearly. I totally agreed every words that you wrote. You can be journalist surely! cheer up ^^

P2: Atipong we shouln't belive every words that someone writes criticize and think twice before it should be great for every reader. ;-)

The first participant complimented the writing of a blogger on her post about the description of a man standing in flooded waters. The second participant, in turn, disagreed with the idea of journalists necessarily giving accurate information, even though they wrote in a clever and convincing way. She disputed that one should not necessarily believe every word that journalists wrote.

4.1.4.2 Non-disputative Comments

Comments that are in agreement with the blogger or other commenters are called non-disputative comments. These comments are generally seen as going hand in hand with what the blogger writes, thereby giving no chance for any dispute online. One participant wrote the following positive comments in reponse to her friend bloggers giving her advice on how to tell someone that she liked him:

P1: Atipong, I'm too shy to say that. Next time I'll try. ;-)

P1: Shiiakasaki, thank you very much. now I know what I should do.

The participant took the suggestions from other participants and agreed with what they said. She did not add to any debates or further conversation.

4.1.4.3 Critical Comments

Critical comments are usually those statements that make the writer's point clearer and more emphasizing. They are usually analytical statements and make any matter move forward. An example of a critical comment given by one of the participants is, "Yes, but first of all we need money, haha^^". The participant responded to the researcher's comment about making a trip to Italy. She analyzed the comment and responded by saying that that the idea of going to Italy maybe good, but money was essential. The participant made the point clear to the researcher, that dreaming was good, but it was also important to be practical.

4.1.4.4 Subjective Comments

Subjective comments are those that are usually personal and consist of such phrases as “I don’t think so”, “In my opinion”, “I think so”. They are usually biased in nature. A participant commented, on being told by the researcher that crocodiles might be floating in the water, in the picture that was shown for the first blogging assignment, “I think no have crocodiles behind the booth. I think it’s water or other things under the water”. Here the participant made a personal comment and was quite convinced that there were no crocodiles in the flood waters.

4.1.4.5 Postive Comments

Positive comments are comments that are usually not productive and do not add much to the debates and conversation threads. The following was an example of a positive comment made by one of the participants and did not add to any further debate, “You’re not alone. I’ll stand by your side because I have no boyfriend too. T_T”. Here the participant empathized with the feelings of another fellow participant and showed support to her, since the participant was in the same situation as her.

4.1.4.6 Negative Comments

Negative comments are those that have a tinge of non-constructive criticism and generally do not add positive feedback to the conversation. One of the participants made the following negative comment.

P1: Yuck! Do you really like them?”.

P2: Yes, I like them of course. Because books are open my eyes to see the world.

P1: U’r NERD! 0_0

The participant responded negatively to another participant’s blog post regarding her fondness of reading books. She wrote in her post that she used money to buy books. She was a little disturbed by the negativity of the statement, as she did not continue communicating directly with the participant on the blog.

4.2 The Results from the First Questionnaire

The first questionnaire aimed to find out personal data about the participants, for instance, their English learning experiences, and their experience in using the Internet and blogging. The results showed that the participants started studying English since they were in primary school and three out of 12 participants had also learnt English at home. The participants responded that they wrote generally about themselves, their feelings, everyday experiences, travel experiences, their friends and insights on love. They also communicated with foreign teachers on Facebook, by sending short notes to their teachers. The results showed that eight out of 12 participants had never kept a journal. The five participants who stated that they had kept a journal wrote in their journals once or three times in a week. The participants

wrote in their journals about activities with which they were impressed, stories in which they had overcome a problem, traveling, and anything new that they learnt.

With regard to using the internet, all 12 participants used the internet to find information in English and also for logging onto social networking websites like Facebook. All participants, except for one, had been using Facebook for at least four years. Eighty-three percent of the participants said that they used Facebook essentially for communicating with their friends. In addition to Facebook the participants also visited other websites such as YouTube, hi5, Google, Puntip and Hotmail.

Lastly, the results of the first questionnaire also showed that only two out of 12 participants had used blogs before the current study took place. One of those two participants wrote in the blog once a week and shared interesting information. The other participant wrote in the blog twice a week about their favorite songs and hobbies among other things.

4.3 Participants' Attitudes

The second questionnaire was distributed to the participants after the blogging project was over and was used to find out the students' attitudes toward collaborative blogging. The questionnaire comprised of Likert scale questions as well as open ended questions. The following results were deduced after analyzing the responses from the Likert questions and reported in Table 2 below. The Likert scale was accounted for frequency, and the results expressed as percentages.

The results from the second questionnaire revealed that 84% of the participants found the collaborative blogging project to be enjoyable. Regarding the usability of Blogger, half of the participants found the software difficult to use. The reasons for the difficulty were mentioned in the open-ended questions as well as the interviews and are reported below.

The process of reading and commenting on blogs was found to be interesting by 75% of the participants and 84% of the participants felt that reading others' blog assignments helped in writing their own. All the participants agreed that reading others' comments on their blog assignments helped them in writing their own assignments. In relation to this, commenting on others' blog assignments, helped 84% of the participants in writing their blog assignments and also improved their general writing skills. Having others comment on their blog assignments motivated 92% of the participants to write better.

Moreover, the process of writing the blog assignments helped 86% of the participants in improving their writing skills. Seventy-seven percent of the participants felt there was enough time to finish writing all the blog assignments. Finally, 84% of the participants said that they would like to continue blogging collaboratively. The results from the open-ended questions and interviews were reported under the following categories discussed below.

Table 2

Results from the Likert scale questions in the second questionnaire

Questions	Frequency (Percentage)			
	1 Strongly disagree	2 Disagree	3 Agree	4 Strongly agree
1) The collaborative blogging experience was enjoyable	1 (8%)	1 (8%)	5 (42%)	5 (42%)
2) The blogging software (Blogger) was easy to use	1 (8%)	5 (42%)	4 (33%)	2 (17%)
3) Reading and commenting on others' blog assignments was interesting	1 (8%)	2 (17%)	7 (58%)	2 (17%)
4) Reading other's blog assignments helped in writing my blog assignments	1 (8%)	1 (8%)	3 (26%)	7 (58%)
5) Commenting on others' blog assignments helped in writing my own assignments	1 (8%)	1 (8%)	7 (58%)	3 (26%)
6) Reading other students' comments on my blog helped in writing my blog assignments	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	9 (74%)	3 (26%)
7) Writing the blog assignments helped improve my writing skills	1 (8%)	1 (8%)	5 (43%)	5 (43%)
8) Reading others' blog assignments helped improve my writing skills	1 (8%)	1 (8%)	6 (51%)	4 (33%)
9) Commenting on others' blog assignments helped improve my writing skills	1 (8%)	1 (8%)	3 (26%)	7 (58%)
10) Having others comment on my blog motivated me to write better	0 (0%)	1 (8%)	8 (66%)	3 (26%)
11) There was enough time to finish writing all the blog assignments	0 (0%)	3 (26%)	6 (51%)	3 (26%)
12) I would like to continue blogging collaboratively	1 (8%)	1 (8%)	8 (66%)	2 (18%)

4.3.1 Reflections from the Collaborative Blogging Project

The collaborative blogging project was found to be enjoyable by 84% of the participants. The following excerpts from the participants' interviews were found to support the results revealed in the questionnaire. One of the participants expressed how blogging helped her to think about her friends and teacher, while connecting with them, and thus enjoy the experience of sharing ideas, "Yes I enjoy the blogging project because I think I know about...thinking of friends... for me, for blogging...thinking of teacher for blogging".

The comments from another two participants revealed that the participants found the process of commenting on blogs enjoyable, and also looking at others following up on their comments, "I will read another story that my friend wrote, then I will read the comment in the second and then I will comment and I will give a joke to friends. I think it's funny, it's funny, funny for me", "It's very funny to comment, comment, comment, comment... yes".

Following this, another participant stated that he found it enjoyable to read all the comments on his blog. In addition, he pointed out during the interview, that the comments by the researcher had been more serious than those made by his friends. The participants felt comfortable in connecting with their friends through blogs, and found the process of commenting to be fun, "Sometime it's funny, sometime it's serious... from you it's quite serious but from friends it's quite funny".

4.3.2 Reading Others' Blog Assignments

The questionnaire revealed that 84% of the participants felt that reading others' blog assignments helped to improve their writing skills. The participants stated the following in their interviews, regarding their attitudes towards reading other participant's blog assignments. One participant expressed that reading others' blog assignments helped improve reading skills, since he had to analyze and understand the text fully, before commenting on the blog. Commenting also helped him to improve his writing skills, because he had to be careful about what he commented on his friend's blog:

I think in the blog help me about the writing and reading, and analyzing because sometime I think... my friend, when he write the blog, they will use expression in the Thai style. But sometimes when I read, I don't understand what he want to tell in the blog. So I must sit a long time and analyze it and then I will comment them.

Ideas from three other participants confirmed that by reading others' blogs, they had an opportunity to learn new ideas and tried to use them in their daily lives, "I want to read others' story and exchange experience to learn something new and apply to use my daily life like so they may think like this", "I honestly, I hope the reader really like it and I want to share my experience through some ideas that same or different from others. I want to read others' story and exchange experience to learn something new", "I feel good because it's teacher idea or friend idea...make me know more". Thus, they could also share their own experience, and exchange ideas with each other.

Another participant revealed that reading other's blogs helped her learn new vocabulary, which she could try and use in her own writing, "When I read others friends' blogs I can know about word choice and vocabulary sometimes".

4.3.3 Commenting on Blog Assignments

Regarding the process of commenting on others' blog assignments, 84% of the participants stated the activity helped them in writing their own blog assignments. Another 84% of the participants felt that commenting on others' blog assignments helped to improve their general writing skills. In addition, having others comment on their own blog assignments motivated them to write better. This participant stated that commenting on others' blogs helped share her own feelings with others, "I share my experience, my feeling to other, yeah. And they comment and sometime they teach me something that...oh, beneficial for me". Another participant revealed that the process of commenting on blogs helped him communicate with others. This communication helped improve his own thinking and find new ideas for what to write in the next blog post, "Yes I think it help in communicate with other people because when friends comment is help improve skill thinking, skill writing on the next blog".

Two other participants revealed that the continuing process of commenting on their friends' blogs was enjoyable, with some humor displayed by the participants from time to time, "I will read another story that my friend wrote, then I will read the comment in the second and then I will comment and I will give a joke to friends. I think it's funny, it's funny, funny for me", "It's very funny to comment, comment, comment, comment...yes". There was one participant, however, who did not seem to enjoy the comments that she received from another participant, which she considered slightly offensive and not positive in any way. The participant stated the following in her interview:

I think some, some parts of my writing and some friends comment is not bad comment...but is not good comment...is...but some parts of comment is a argue comments...thas mean is...I think when I read and I feel bad and uh I think in the parts of the topic and I...the money..teacher ask me in the comment...you use money..more money..for what, what for and I answer her, answer...I use, use a lot of money for the book because I like the book and some of friends, some of friends answer...really?...is that real?...and but I'm not, I'm not uh I don't like, I don't like the book because I'm lazy but yes, I like to read the book because it open my eye all of the world and she..he uh answer me...answer is a not good...he answer me...Oh you are a nerd...why why why.

In response to what the participant said above, the researcher tried to reassure her that the comment given by her friend, that she considered potentially offensive, might be a form of humor displayed by her friend and might not have been an intentional act.

4.3.4 Writing and Speaking Skills

The collaborative blogging project was found to help the writing skills of the

participants. Eighty-four percent of the participants stated that reading others' blog assignments helped improve their writing skills, since they had to check their grammar before they posted on the blogs. If they were unsure of the grammar, they asked their friends or English teachers to correct it. Regarding speaking skills, only one participant found that it helped in improving their skills. The excerpts from the participant's interviews are given below which support the above:

I think in the blog help me about the writing and reading, and analyzing because sometime I think... my friend, when he write the blog, they will use expression in the Thai style. But sometimes when I read, I don't understand what he want to tell in the blog. So I must sit a long time and analyze it and then I will comment them.

Yes, sure because is when a..like I tell you before, when I write, I must to check and when I type (haha)... I think..this is correct or not.....if I think that's wrong I will check and some of the subject, some of the parts..I will ask...ask English teacher some parts... if I don't understand... I cannot change, I will ask... friends or English teacher.

Umm... is make me to good writing skills because umm... before..I post I would check another...check with all of my grammar...

The following quotes from the interviews showed that writing on the blogs helped participants to have a simulation of real life conversation with each other, "Mmmm...yes. It improve skill..writing, skill speaking if uh... when when when we meet other friends, other people... we talk to, like blogging... I think it improve my speaker skills, yeah", "... if we learn and change it everyday..spoken English like written English..it help, it help us to prove our skill in reading skill and writing skill and so I'm... I can learn a lot from this". This led to the improvement of their speaking skills, as participants could use the language from the blogs in their everyday lives.

4.3.5 Communicative Skills in Writing

The results from the open ended questions in the questionnaire revealed that 25% of the participants felt that the blogging project helped to improve their communicative skills in writing. Thirty-three percent of the participants stated that the process of blogging and commenting helped them in interacting with other learners and to improve their relationship with other participants. The following interview excerpts support the above. The participants stated that the blogging project improved their communicative skills in writing through exchanging ideas with others. It exposed the participants to a wider language than what was used in the classroom, and improved their writing:

I think the blogging is a good for to learn the writing process and communication language....when you write in the blog you must to exchange writing with other friends and teacher and you... I think in my opinion if you want it much better..you must to share with other foreigners people and others to

share opinion in topic and... I think is more wide and the people is more, language is to wide, more than study in the class and talk in the class..more than in the past.

Yes it makes a good relationship because I can communicate with friends' comments and share ideas.

Another participant revealed that because he had to use English in the blogging project, it improved the participants' communicative skills when writing. They were required to post only in English, in a way that was understood by the researcher and others in the group, as compared to Facebook and hi5 where the participants could communicate in Thai:

Yes..is a help in communication with my friends because when my friends comment that teacher comments...I think I will try to make understand because when you use Facebook, you use hi5, you use in Thai language...but in this course you must to use English language and you...I will try to write like English and who are teacher and friends, understand me... yes.

There was however, one participant who stated that she was not really interested in communicating through the process of blogging, but just wanted to share her own ideas with others. She frankly expressed her views in the interview, "In, for Blogger, I just did not want much to communicate. I just want to share some experience".

4.3.6 Participants' Opinions on the Usability of Blogger

Regarding the usability of Blogger half the participants found Blogger to be difficult to use. Most participants stated in their interviews that they encountered difficulties when leaving comments. This was a problem faced by the researcher too, and it seemed to be a bug on the Blogger website. One participant also suggested that Facebook should be integrated with Blogger to allow for more effective communication among the participants. In relation to this, another participant suggested that Blogger should have a chatbox like Facebook to allow for participants to communicate with each other when they log onto Blogger. The following excerpts are given from the participants' interviews regarding the problems faced with using Blogger.

Yes... sometime...it difficult to comment, yes and difficult to sign in from my blog..yes...just a little problem. Sometimes it cannot comment...yes.

When I first started blogging, it's ok if it's Thai language...I open 2 window, in Thai and English...(chuckling)..and compare it, what does it mean..and first it's for me...it's difficult and after that it's ok..and when comment...and for comment you found that it's difficult, we try 4 times, but no..it can't, can't comment.

I think sometimes we have a problem to comment other people or every topic and yeah.

Uh as I wrote the comments sometimes it doesn't show, show....on the page.

Moreover, five participants confirmed that Blogger was difficult to use in terms of the interface, and it proved to be a tough task to manually add other friends' blog addresses and follow their blogs. One participant also found it difficult to login, since she had never used Gmail, but Blogger required all users to use a Gmail username and password to log in to their accounts. Facebook seemed to have an easier interface to use, and easier to communicate, as confirmed by another participant:

I don't find the blogging..it's difficult for me to find it and enter the system...hmm... when I sent the blog assignments to Aj. Sudha, I will send my page to my friend on chat in Facebook, give my friend to send it again in blog.

I ummm don't know because I know about blog a little. I don't know how can make, how much, don't know how to do, something like this. If I know about that, I can ask some questions.

I think the first is a difficult (haha) and I cannot do...I ask friends a lot... yes, but some part I cannot, I cannot do and is so less..because when I want to do, but I cannot do (haha) and I ask my friend, Aj. Sudha.... I never use Gmail and I don't know about blog, blogging and I don't know how to write it in blog but when my friends told me I'm more understand and I think is good.

I set up my blog in the Thai version and so it is difficult to change my name and how to improve my talent..I am the low technology. So it is difficult for me to put my image, improve my profile and how to comment on my blog. It's difficult, I don't know, I never used this.

I like blogging but sometime have problem about follow friend, I follow friends in this class but sometimes never see friends... too hard to find friend blog to comment..umm..and I think I like to chat Facebook, teacher and friends, easy more Blogger.

4.4 Summary of the Chapter

The chapter described the results of participants' attitudes before and after the collaborative blogging project, from the analysis of the questionnaires and interviews. The participants generally showed a positive attitude to blogging. The process of reading and commenting on other's blogs helped the participants to improve their speaking and writing skills. It also gave them new ideas for what to write on their blogs, and helped in communicating with each other freely outside the classroom. However they did express difficulties in using Blogger for blogging and as a tool for communication, and gave suggestions on how to make collaborative blogging a better experience. The results from the second questionnaire as well as the interviews revealed that the participants experienced problems in using Blogger such as finding it difficult to log in sometimes, finding their friends on Blogger and commenting on the blogs. Blogger seemed to have occasional bugs regarding the above. Some participants were comfortable in using Facebook or other social networking sites for

written communication with others. They had already been using Facebook for a while and had got accustomed to the interface and way of communication.

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