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LANGUAGE, WESTERN MEN AND THAI WOMEN ON THE DATING SITE

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Abstract

This research studied the language of men on the Thai women dating site. The purpose of the study were 1) to investigate the kind of language being used by men on the dating site and 2) to study western men on the dating site's social status. Data were collected from online dating sites randomly. There were 73 case studies for this research. The result of the study revealed that western men used a lot of positive adjectives to describe the desire characteristics of Thai women. They also used the pronoun 'I' and the possessive pronoun 'My' frequently. This illustrated the self-centric and the superiority feeling of men on the dating site. On the aspect of social status, the majority of these western men were divorced and middle aged. They did not mention their occupation as if they found it not important for the relationship.

Keywords

Language, Dating Site, Western Men, Thai Women

1. Introduction

In the globalization era, people were connected from every part of the world via technology. Media had high impact on people and constructed so called 'popular culture' (Ruenruthai Satjapan, 2017:41). The convenience of connecting people via technology and the

hectic living under the pressure of capitalism made online dating popular. According to Nipaporn Yongkhamporm (2004), online dating and marrying foreigners through dating agency became popular among Thai women, especially Northeastern Thai women since 2001(Nipaporn Yongkhamporm,2004:51-52). There were many dating websites launched in the past few years for instance, dateinasia.com and lovethaiwoman.com. These dating sites were used by a vast number of Thai women as marrying western men became popular among Thai women in the capitalist period. Kaewta Jantranusorn (2010) confirmed that marrying western men became new value of Thai women as they believed that those men will help solving economic problems and bring them to a better living condition. (Kaewta Jantranusorn, 2010:19). The study of Walker & Ehrlich (1992) emphasized that the main reasons for these women seeking western men for marriage were ‘love and citizenship’ because Thai women hoped to go and work in their husbands’ home countries to make more money to send back to their families in Thailand. In addition, the study of Rattana Boonmattaya (2005) concluded that Thai women, especially widows and divorcee, gained more power and self-esteem back when western men married them because being divorcees in Thai society made them feel inferior as Thai men did not respect them and treated them as ‘used’ objects. Contrasting to Thai men, western men accepted Thai widows or divorcees and respected their bodies by caring about their feeling and desire (Rattana Boonmattaya, 2005:31-33). Apart from feeling ‘loved’ and happy, the study of Chaipon Ponyiam (1999) and Patcharin Lapanan (2007), indicated that Thai women marrying western men had a better living standard. However, while Thai women seeking western men concerned about financial help and better living from the western men, the western men seemed to concern about good ‘care’ and ‘service’ from Thai women which was the general characteristic of oriental people.

2. Research Objectives

- 2.1 To study the language being used by western men on the dating site
- 2.2 To study the social status of western men on the dating site

3. Research Methodology

This study focused on western men seeking Thai women on the websites. Data were collected randomly from the dating sites. There were 73 samples being analyzed.

4. Research Results

4.1 Language and Western Men on the Dating Site

Language being used by western men on the dating sites was interesting. The frequent adjective used was the adjective to describe the characteristics of the Thai women desired by western men and the pronoun 'I' to refer to the western men. The detail analysis of the research results were as followed:

4.1.1 Adjectives

The most frequent adjectives being found in the western men's posting on the dating websites were 'nice lady' and 'caring for others'? This indicated that most western men seeking a nice lady to take care of him. There were 27 men using the adjective 'nice' and 'care' directly. The rest of them used other adjectives; however, share the similarities in the meaning i.e. 'loving', 'good'. The interesting thing about this finding was western men still optimistic about getting true love and nice Thai ladies via dating site channel despite the myth about old western men being ripped off by sweet Thai ladies. The following poem by Dean Barrett (2005) was an illustration of the phenomenon:

The Silly Old Man with the Young Thai Girl in Texas Lone Star Saloon

He must be twice her age at least
With mottled, wrinkled skin
His hair is dyed a bottle-black
His face is wintry thin.

Blue veins snake down his bony hands
Like roots of ancient trees
He wears a pair of checkered shorts
Above his scrawny knees.

The girl he's with is beautiful
Her shoulder-length black hair
Surrounds and frames her dark brown face

Her shoulders soft and bare.

He drinks his Mekhong whiskey down
And orders yet again
The girl he's with just sighs and sneaks
A smile at other men.

They sit in silence, the silly old man
And the girl who stole his heart
Someone should whisper in his ear
"Too many years apart!"

Someone should whisper in his ear
"Your girl is bored to death!
Your eyelids droop, your shoulders stoop
There's whiskey on your breath!"

Someone should whisper in his eye
That if he didn't pay
He might just find his lady love
Would soon be on her way.

He wallows in her loving gaze
So puppy-dog serene
Serenity for her of course
His ATM machine.

But he might whisper in our ears
"Well, don't you think I know?
I made my choice and so will you
With fewer years to go."

I'm not sure what to make of him
There is no guiding rule
I wonder if he could be both
A wise man and a fool.
He turns his head to pay the bill
And suddenly I see
It's a mirror on the wall
The silly old man is me.
(Barrett, 2005:17-18)

The above poem was a good illustration of the classic relationship of Thai women and western men. However, the optimistic posting of western men on the dating sites could be interpreted that 'a nice Thai girl' did exist. These men must have met and known somebody who succeeded in the relationship with 'nice Thai girl'. The 'silly old man' as in Dean Barrett (2005) must be those who were unfortunate.

4.1.2 Pronoun

Apart from expecting Thai girls to be nice, these western men using a lot of words to indicate their self-centric characters like 'I like', 'I love' and 'I enjoy'. Reading these men's posting out aloud, the readers would hear the pronoun 'I', 'I' and 'I' all the time. These words illustrated that these men liked to do things they enjoyed and expected Thai women to please them without caring whether the women 'like' or 'love' or 'enjoy' the same things like them or not. The exemplifications were as followed:

"I am a Canadian businessman who likes adventure and enjoy a good laugh. Seeking a nice and pretty Thai lady" (Informant number 17)

"I like fishing and camping plus shooting. Seeking a woman with farming background and need to like animals because I have pets." (Informant number 4)

Both of the above examples illustrated that western men have their own agenda and would like Thai women to accept it. They did not look for somebody to join their hobbies or ways of life, just somebody to be 'pretty', 'nice' and to 'look after the pets'.

None of the men seeking Thai women ever mentioned their need for 'a woman to share a good laugh', 'a woman to go out diving together' 'a woman who enjoys fishing and camping'

or even ‘a woman who had been living a hard life in the past and now want to help him spending money he had safe all his life’ as that would make him popular on the dating site.

4.2 Language and Men’s social status

4.2.1 Ages and Countries

The language being used to indicate men’s social status found in this study were the Nouns to indicate men’s ages, their home countries and their jobs. The majority of the informants were 41-49 years old. Their home countries were various, including America, Canada, England, France, Italy, Norway, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Russia, Iran and Australia.

4.2.2 Marital Status

The majority of the informants (94.1%) did not mention their marital status. Only 7 men mentioned they were divorce or have children. The phrases being used were ‘I was married twice’, ‘I have 1 daughter’, ‘I have two children’, ‘My 3 Kids have left home with partners’ and ‘I do not have children’. There was only 1 informant who was single and had never been married before. His age was 43.

4.2.3 Occupation

There were only 6 men out of 73 men mentioned their occupation. The phrases being used were ‘knowing about computers and technology’, ‘I am a Canadian businessman’, ‘I do and develop serious engineering projects’ , ‘working as a coordinator for public transportation’, ‘I am a dedicated journalist and photographer’, ‘Recently medically retired from the chemical factory’ and ‘I own a business and have a job’.

This could be analyzed as the majority of western men on the dating sites found occupation was not important and did not integrate anything to the relationship with Thai women. This was contrast to some previous study mentioning Thai women’s purpose of marrying western men for economic reason.

5. Conclusion

The results from this research revealed that western men on the dating sites frequently used the adjectives to describe the characteristics of the Thai women desired by western men and the pronoun ‘ I’ to refer to the western men to indicate their self-centric characters. They

expected Thai women to be 'nice and pretty' 'caring' and 'sweet' in order to look after them while they just wanted to have a good time by going out to do what they 'like', 'love' and 'enjoy'. Despite the myth about old western men being ripped off by sweet Thai ladies, western men on these dating websites were still optimistic to be successful in seeking 'true love' from 'nice and pretty' Thai women. In addition, these western men seemed to be romantic as they found their occupation had nothing to do with the relationship. They did not mention their work or financial status as if they expected Thai women to love them as a person, not their jobs or money.

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