

THE INTERPERSONAL METAFUNCTION AND TRANSLATION OF POWER RELATIONS: A CASE STUDY OF *FIFTY SHADES OF GREY*

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Abstract

This article aims at analysing how Systemic Functional Linguistics' interpersonal metafunction can inform us about the notion of power relations expressed in both the original English version and its Thai translation in a case study of the popular contemporary novel Fifty Shades of Grey written by E.L. James in 2011. The study analyses conversations between the two main characters, Christian Grey and Anastasia Steele, taking place during their intimate acts which clearly demonstrate the two main characters' power relations. Systemic Functional Linguistics' interpersonal metafunction is concerned with the social role relationship between text participants and is applied as an analytical tool in order to see how it can explain the notion of power relations when one communicative participant has more power than the other. Analysing the mood structure of lexico-grammar (Eggins, 2004) at the textual level has found two

types of clause, imperative and declarative, that are used to construct the notion of power relations between the two characters. Examining interpersonal metafunction's tenor regarding power, contact and affective involvement further explains the notion of power relations occurring on the contextual plane. Although the findings demonstrate a certain degree of difference in the representation of power in the Thai translated version of the novel, that is, in the use of final particles; it is a characteristic of the Thai language that does not exist in English.

Introduction

Power Relations is a topic that attracts scholarly attention in various areas of study and there is extensive literature pertaining to this specific topic in areas such as in political science (Lukes, 2005; Magaly Sanchez, 2006), sociology (French and Raven, 1959; Emerson, 1962), marketing (Brown et al., 1995; Zhao et al., 2008), public health (Wang et al., 2007), education (Niroomand, 2012), tourism (Pedregal, 2008) and many others. Power relations is mostly studied in terms of non-reciprocal power relations, that is, between the one with power and the one without, and the focus usually falls on the power relations in groups, organisations, communities or general public contexts.

On the small-scale of interpersonal power relations, that is, between two people, power relations are based on a role relationship between two communicative partners. It typically involves control of one over the other. The authority is

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conducted through the person with power-making decisions with determined outcomes to the person without power (Galinsky et al., 2003).

According to French and Raven (1959), a specific type of relationship between two individuals becomes the basis of power and determines a particular base of power between the two. They define five common and important bases of power, each of which is dynamic; that is, the base of power can constantly change from one to another depending on the changing variables in a given relationship. The five bases of power are: a. *reward power*: the ability of one person with power (P1) to reward the one without power (P2); b. *coercive power*: the ability of P1 to punish P2 if the latter fails to perform and/or achieve a given task; c. *legitimate power*: the way in which P2 feels that P1 has a legitimate right to influence him/her and P2 is obliged to accept this particular influence; d. *referent power*: the concept of an identical entity; that is, P2 has a feeling of oneness with P1 and desires to gain P1's identity. P2 thus behaves, believes and perceives as P1 does; and e. *expert power*: a perception P2 has of P1 as an expert or knowledgeable person in a particular area.

In the context of Translation Studies (hereafter TS), the notion of power relations has attracted a number of translation scholars' attention. The discipline investigates how power relations affect transfer of meaning from the source text (ST) to the target text (TT) to achieve certain determined communicative purposes. In other words,

power relations are seen as bringing forth the manipulation of the ST that can be seen in the TT. In TS, power relations have been scrutinised either between translation agents (translator, editor or publisher) and the ST. For example, Siponkoski (2013) has examined the interpersonal cooperation and negotiation of the three translation agents: translators, copyeditors and a consultant on the editing process of the translation of Shakespeare from English to Finnish; Chueasuai (2010) has explored the translation shifts in the Thai translation of the American women's magazine *Cosmopolitan* whose explicit sexual content has been toned down by the editor-in-chief of the Thai version to suit the local audience and society, where sexual topics still relatively belong to the private sphere; Montenegro (2005) has examined power relations between the ST authors and readers, the ST and TT writers and the ST author and the translator of the English-Portuguese health pamphlet to find out the power each agent has and how they negotiate and legitimise their own ideology in the text.

A number of research studies in TS have also investigated power relations between agents and authority (state or government) such as Garnemark (2012), Gómez Castro (2008), Keratsa (2005) and Merino & Rabadan (2002) who have looked at how the Franco dictatorship in Spain affected translations of books, theatrical and fictional works and films from foreign languages into Spanish. The studies show that censorship by the authorities had a considerable impact on the re/production of these works in order to conform to the uniformity of the nation during the regime.

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Other researchers include Calzada Pérez (2007) who has called for translators' contribution and empowerment to conflict settlement, particularly in localising international advertisements; and Baker (2007) who has looked at community translators as a party who can manipulate translation either to support or resist a capitalist regime; to name but a few. These studies are mostly concerned with power relations between translators, translation agents and relevant authorities by means of the role each party plays in producing, negotiating, altering and legitimising media and political texts conveying certain ideologies to their audiences.

This paper, however, takes a different approach. It attempts to analyse how the notion of power relations expressed in a genre of contemporary literature which has been neglected by previous TS scholars can be informed by applying Systemic Functional Linguistics' (henceforth SFL) *interpersonal metafunction* as an analytical tool. This is because in the context of SFL that regards language as a purposeful means of communication, the interpersonal power relations demonstrates the social role relationship between two communicative partners in specific communicative settings. Language used in this particular relationship requires certain lexico-grammatical choices to manifest the specific attitudes one communicative participant has towards the other. From SFL's perspective, this can be realised in interpersonal metafunction which is one of the three metafunctions of language for which the paper will give an overview in the next sub-section. Therefore, this

specific metafunction is applied as the analytical tool.

The interpersonal metafunction, which the author will discuss in detail in the next section, is employed to explore the expression and translation of power relations occurring at the level of the intimate interpersonal relationships presented both in the source and target texts of the contemporary novel *Fifty Shades of Grey* written by E. L. James in 2011 and its Thai translation. The story revolves around an intimate relationship between a newly graduated college student, Anastasia Steele, and a handsome young business tycoon, Christian Grey, who proposes a contract of sexual acts consent to Steele since he wants to have her as his new sexual partner. Their relationship is specifically and primarily manifested through intimate acts that are initiated by the sexually experienced male partner on the sexually naïve female character. Their conversations taking place during these specific occasions thus clearly demonstrate their power relations, especially when erotic role play is involved.

The intimate interpersonal relationship lies particularly in the erotic practices of these two characters that tend to belong to *BDSM*, which stands for three pairs of role play: Bondage and Discipline; Dominance and Submission; and Sadism and Masochism (Barker, 2013). This variety of erotic acts involves the use of control, role play and restraint. The term also suggests a pairing with mutual consent between the partner with more power (Discipline, Dominance and Sadism) and the other

with less, if no, power (Bondage, Submission and Masochism). Exertion of power seems to be obvious in particular between the Dominant (Dom), the partner who dominates or controls erotic acts, and the Submissive (Sub), the partner who is submissive or controlled.

The type of relationship appearing in the novel connotes a power relationship between the male dominant (Dom), or P1, and the female submissive (Sub), or P2, particularly in erotic settings. Since intimate acts between the Dom and the Sub that convey power relations between the two characters both via verbal and nonverbal means are abundant and described in great detail, the study therefore examines the conversations taking place during these acts. However, although other types of communicative act such as eye gazing, gesture, posture, etc., can be used to manifest power, this study intends to focus only on the first type of communication: verbal language.

In the next sub-sections, the paper provides an overview of the SFL's notion of interpersonal metafunction, before proceeding to how SFL has been applied in TS.

Systemic Functional Linguistics' interpersonal metafunction

To study interpersonal relationships in society including this specific type of relationship that communicates via verbal communication, a strand of linguistics, SFL offers detailed systematic analytical tools to help explain the social role relationship between communicative interactants (Halliday and Matthiessen,

2004; Eggins, 2004). Systemic Functionalists state that language simultaneously performs three social functions, or "metafunctions" which consist of ideational, interpersonal and textual metafunctions. Firstly, language represents the knowledge and experience about and of the world of the language user through text (both spoken and written) or the ideational function. The meaning generated from this function is called ideational meaning. Secondly, language engages in expressing social role relationships between communicative partners or the interpersonal function. This particular function constructs interpersonal meaning. Thirdly, language constructs and organises the text according to the requirements and conventions and relates the text to the relevant social context, or the textual function. This last function creates textual meaning. To examine power relations that mark a type of interpersonal relationship, the interpersonal metafunction thus seems to be the most relevant and will be applied in this study.

In order to explain the interpersonal meaning simultaneously occurring on the textual plane, it is necessary to explore further to the lexico-grammatical layer of text where words and structures in text are constructed. SFL refers to this specific configuration as mood² which is defined as "the organization of a set of functional constituents" Eggins (2004: 147) consisting of *Mood* (the essential part of the clause) and *Residue* (the part that can

² To differentiate between these two different terms, *Mood* as clause component is in italics.

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be left out). The necessary component of a clause, or *Mood*, is referred to as the main point of argument that is repeatedly mentioned between communicative participants. The *Mood* component consists of Subject (a nominal-type element) and Finite (a verbal-type element). The less important clause component, or *Residue*, consists of Predicator (content parts of the verbal elements), Complement (a nominal participant in the clause) and Adjuncts (adverbial and prepositional elements which add extra information to the clause consisting of Circumstantial Adjuncts which add ideational content to the clause; Modal Adjuncts which add interpersonal meanings to the clause; and Textual Adjuncts which deal with the organisation of the clause, respectively).

This particular lexico-grammatical pattern of mood suggests how the text producer establishes his or her relationship with the text receiver through four basic “speech functions”, namely, statements, questions, offers and commands. These four types of speech functions are presented in three structural mood types: the declarative clause (to make a statement), the interrogative clause (to question or offer) and the imperative clause (to command).

From the SFL perspective, the metafunctions of language operate within the realm of two contexts: the immediate context of situation and the larger context of culture. The first context occurring next to text is the context of situation. It operates through the construct of register, consisting of three register variables: *field* (the topic of the text or what the text is

about), *tenor* (the relationship of the text communicators) and *mode* (the type of language used and role the language plays).

Whilst the framework allows the interpersonal relationships to be scrutinised on the textual plane through the mood pattern of the interpersonal meaning, it also elaborates the relationships in the tenor variable of the situational context. Based on previous studies of language variation and role relationship variables, Eggins (2004: 99-101) applies Poynton’s (1985) classification of tenor, which states that the specific choice of language a communicative partner alters simultaneously relies on three related dimensions: *power*, *contact* and *affective involvement*, defined and exemplified as follows.

- A. Power refers to the role between communicative participants, whether they have equal (reciprocal) or unequal (non-reciprocal) power. Friendship is an example of an equal power, whereas boss and employee exemplifies an unequal power relationship.
- B. Contact indicates frequency of contact between the speech interactants, whether they have frequent or infrequent contact. Spouses tend to have constant and frequent contact in contrast to the occasional and infrequent contact between acquaintances.

- C. Affective involvement points to levels of emotional commitment, whether it is high or low. Lovers or friends tend to have high affective involvement while low affective involvement can be witnessed in work colleagues.

Apart from these three dimensions that play a significant parts in how one chooses to use language, the formal or informal situation also determines the language choice (Eggins, 2004). In an informal setting, participants tend to be of equal power, with frequent contact and high affective involvement. On the other hand, in a formal situation, participants seem to have unequal power, infrequent contact and low affective involvement. These two different situations affect lexical choices; that is, in informal situations, the language tends to be more attitudinal, colloquial, abbreviated or even vulgar. In formal settings, however, the language appears more objective, written, complete and polite.

Both text and context of situation are situated within the gigantic sphere of the context of culture that operates through the conceptualisation of genre. In the SFL sense, genre is defined as a purpose-orientated social process that is socially conventionalised and sequentially operated (Halliday, 1978). It is considered the most abstract level of context in which meanings are ideologically constructed.

From the brief definitions given to the constituents of text and context and their interrelationships above, to specifically

analyse power relationships, SFL allows scrutiny from the expression plane of mood structure of the lexico-grammar that realises the interpersonal metafunction on the textual plane, which is determined by tenor of register variables that are again shaped by the genre of the cultural context on the content plane.

This sub-section has attempted to give an overview of SFL that is applied to explain the notion of power relations. In the next sub-section, the article discusses SFL briefly in the context of TS.

Systemic Functional Linguistics and Translation Studies

SFL has been applied in TS by a great number of researchers (House, 1981; Mason and Hatim, 1990; Bell, 1991; Baker, 1992; Munday, 2001; to name only a few). One reason is that this specific branch of linguistics provides a detailed analytical tool to work on both fictional and non-fictional data. SFL has been well used in analysing not only the language people really use in different settings but also the language found in novels, literature and poems (See, for example, Huang, 2002; Li, 2007, to name only a few.). SFL's three metafunctions – ideational, interpersonal and textual – allow systematic study through their functional lexico-grammatical components to explain how the chosen text is composed (textual), what it is about (ideational) and who the text is produced by and for whom (interpersonal). Furthermore, SFL allows researchers to include contexts in their descriptive textual analyses since systemists see contexts as

the essential meaning-making elements. Although the three metafunctions – ideational, interpersonal and textual – are normally applied in analyses, such as in the work of the aforementioned TS scholars, there are studies that apply a particular metafunction as the analytical tool, such as the configuration of transitivity of ideational metafunction in Huang (2002) comparing process types in, for example, the translation of a Chinese poem and its six English translations; and Chueasuai (2013) examining translation shift between the American magazine *Cosmopolitan* and its Thai version. The mood structure of interpersonal metafunction has been adopted in, for example, Huang (2004) in defining the relationship between the characters of a Chinese poem and its English versions; Li (2007) in studying equivalence in meanings in Chinese poetry and its English translations; Munday (2009) in analysing the construction of the writer-reader relationship in Spanish political texts and their English translations; and Xia (2016) in comparing the differences in the mood system between the Chinese and English languages and potential translation strategies. The thematic structure of textual metafunction has been employed in, for instance, Munday (1998, 2000, 2008) in analysing literary texts between Spanish and English; Ventola (1995) in comparing German academic texts translated into English; and Liu and Yang (2013) in investigating various Chinese translations of a Francis Bacon text into English.

From these few examples of the previous studies that apply SFL in TS, to identify

social role relationship between text participants appearing in the ST and the TT, the mood structure of the interpersonal metafunction has tended to be a useful analytical tool. This article thus attempts to apply this specific configuration to analyse how it can inform us about the power relations between the text participants of the analytical data.

In the next section, the paper demonstrates a brief description of how the analytical data is investigated.

Method

An analysis based on SFL's interpersonal metafunction was carried out with data collected from conversations that take place during intimate contacts between Anastasia Steele and Christian Grey who are the two main characters in the popular contemporary novel *Fifty Shades of Grey*. Conversations taking place outside of this specific context, such as over the telephone, during meals, etc., are excluded from the study since the focus lies only on the notion of power relations that tend to be expressed clearly during their erotic encounters, specifically their *BDSM* role play.

This study attempts to apply SFL's interpersonal metafunction as an analytical tool in order to examine how this specific linguistic concept can inform us about the notion of power relations. As briefly mentioned in the previous section, since SFL tends to lend itself to being applied as an analytical tool to explain linguistic phenomena occurring in communicative

settings through its detailed textual and contextual components, it has been thus applied in the current study. Following the SFL conceptualisation of mood pattern in the lexico-grammar, the social role relationships between text participants can be expressed through four basic speech functions: statement, question, offer and command. The first speech function, statement, is presented in the declarative clause while the second and third speech functions, question and offer, are presented in the interrogative clause; the last speech function – command – is presented in the imperative clause, respectively. Table 1 below illustrates the four types of speech function and the relevant mood structures of the clause and examples.

Table 1 Speech functions and relevant mood structures (Eggins, 2004)

SPEECH FUNCTION	MOOD STRUCTURE	EXAMPLE ³
Statement	Declarative	“I’d like to do that again.” (p. 139)
Question	Interrogative	“... but will you stop biting it?” (p. 156)
Offer	Interrogative	“Why don’t you join me?” (p. 157)
Command	Imperative	“Show me how you pleasure yourself.” (p. 134)

³ The examples are taken from the English version.

The speech functions and clauses above show that the command function and imperative clause relate closely to the notion of power relations in communicative settings. A communicative partner can show his or her power over the other through commanding something that can be expressed in an imperative clause. However, Eggins (2004) proposes that not only can commands or demands for goods and services be manifested in imperatives but they also can be in the forms of declaratives and modulated interrogatives. The study, therefore, analyses these three mood structures (declarative, imperative and modulated interrogative) as the linguistic resources for displaying power relationships between the two main characters of the novel during their intimate acts and how this is transferred to the TT. After identifying and categorising the analytical data in the ST according to its linguistic structure, its Thai translation is analysed based on the same structures and compared with how the power relations are translated in the TT. The author also provides the English transcriptions of Thai sentences according to the Royal Institute of Thailand⁴ as well as a word-by-word translation. For ease of the analysis, however, back translation (BT) from Thai into English has been carried out. Then both ST and its BT are plotted in a tabula form according to the mood lexico-grammatical structure of SFL’s interpersonal metafunction for comparison.

⁴ http://www.royin.go.th/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/416_2157.pdf last accessed on 17th November 2017.

Findings and Discussion

As was briefly described in the previous section, Eggins (2004) posits that the speech function of command can be expressed in three types of mood clause: imperative, declarative and modulated interrogative clauses. However, the current study found only imperative and declarative clauses conveying commanding messages reflecting the power relationship between the Dom and Sub. No modulated interrogative clause was found to be used to manifest power. This section thus exemplifies the imperative and declarative clauses from the collected data by dividing the analysis into two levels: textual and contextual. This division is ultimately for ease of the explanation only since, in reality, text and context are inseparable.

Textual Analysis

Table 2 below demonstrates the total number of 227 clauses found in the English version and 197 clauses in the Thai version. The difference in number is due to deletions in the target text which was the result of the Thai editor's decision as stated in the preface of the Thai version.⁵ Of all the clauses found in the ST, 151 (66.5%) and 76 (33.5%) are imperative and declarative clauses, respectively. In the TT, 126 (64%) and 71 (36%) are imperative and declarative

clauses, respectively. It was found that 25 (83.3%) imperative and 5 (16.7%) declarative clauses in the ST were not translated in the TT.

Table 2 Types of clause and percentage of analysed data in the English and Thai versions

Types of Clause	English Version		Thai Version			
	Number of Clauses	%	Number of Clauses	%	Number of Deletion	%
Imperative	151	66.5	126	64	25	83.3
Declarative	76	33.5	71	36	5	16.7
Total Clauses	227	100	197	100	30	100

Among the 151 clauses of imperative structure in the ST, 140 clauses (92.7%) are produced by Grey, with 11 clauses (7.3%) by Steele; 71 declarative clauses (93%) belong to Grey and 5 clauses (7%) to Steele. In the TT, of all 126 imperative clauses, 117 clauses are spoken by Grey and 9 by Steele and 66 and 5 declarative clauses belong to Grey and Steele, respectively.

In what follows, in order to analyse how the mood structure of the interpersonal metafunction can inform us about the notion of power relations, the paper showcases and discusses, firstly, the imperative clauses with selected examples before proceeding to the declarative clauses with examples.

⁵ The Thai editor states that "...[b]ut in the linguistic process, it is necessary that the draft of some chapters (of the translation) needs to be polished, edited and shortened where appropriate." (vi, my translation).

Imperative Clause

Power relationships between P1 and P2 appear to be best expressed in the imperative clause. This is in particular when P1 wants P2 to do something. The study found the mood structure analysis provides detailed explanations of the power relations as shown in the following examples:

Example 1

ST Grey: “Show me how you pleasure yourself.” (p.114)

TT Grey: “แสดงให้ผมดูสิว่าคุณให้ความสุขตัวเองยังไง” (p.134)

sadaeng hai phom du si wa khun hai khwam-suk tua-eng yang-ngai

show to me see
FN* you give pleasure
yourself how

BT [“Show me you give yourself pleasure how.”]

ST	Show	me		how	you	pleasure		yourself
	Predicator	Complement		Textual Adjunct	Subject	Predicator		complement
	<i>Residue</i>					<i>Mood</i>	<i>Residue</i>	
TT	Show	me	FN*	you	give	yourself	pleasure	how
	Predicator	Complement	Modal Adjunct	Subject	Predicator	Complement		Textual Adjunct
	<i>Residue</i>				<i>Mood</i>	<i>Residue</i>		

*(FN = final particle)

This example is taken from the first intimate encounter between Grey and Steele that takes place at his apartment. Grey plays the Dom role of is the one with power, or P1, while Steele takes the Sub role of is the one without power, or P2. As the dominant, P1 orders P2 to do what he wants that pleases him. In the setting, P1 orders P2, who is sexually inexperienced, to perform self-gratification before him. The interpersonal function of language that demonstrates requests can be realised in the imperative clause, which is a typical means of

conveying demands or commands. Generally, the mood structure of an imperative clause omits *Mood* (and the Subject) but starts with *Residue*. This particular mood structure, i.e. without the Subject ‘You’, gives a direct command to the communicative partner who realises with whom the command is being used. The one who uses the imperative clause thus represents P1 who projects his greater power to P2. Example 1 shows near similar mood structure between the two versions, both of which express demand. This can be seen

from the first *Residue* consisting of Predicator (Show) and Complement (me) that requests P2 to act as directed. However, in the Thai translation there is a final particle after the Complement (me). The second *Residue* also shows a similar structure: Predicator (pleasure) and Complement (yourself) in the original and Predicator (give) and Complement (yourself pleasure) in the translation that shares similar meaning. However, the Textual Adjunct ‘how’ in the TT appears at the end of the clause since, in the Thai language, the question words appear at the end of the clause. Also, it should be noted that, in the Thai version, there is a final particle ‘สิ’ after the Complement (me). In the Thai language, a final particle, or phrase/clause/sentence ending word, occurs at the end of phrases, clauses and sentences. It prevents phrases, clauses and sentences from ending abruptly. Also, it adds an extra meaning to the whole meaning of the phrase, clause and sentence (Deepadung and Ratanakul, 1997). This specific final particle can be used at the end of imperative clauses and sentences showing that the speaker wants to receive a listener’s response (Noss, 1964; Cooke, 1989). In this sentence, it strongly emphasises the request ‘Show me’ (www.royin.go.th last retrieved on 1 April 2016). It can be argued that the final particle which does not exist in the English language can be classified as a Modal Adjunct which adds extra interpersonal meanings to the clause (Eggins, 2004). In the example, this specific final particle emphasises or intensifies the command and thus heightens the power

relations between P1 and P2.⁶ Thus the translation tends to show slightly stronger command and power than the original version.

Example 2

ST Grey: “Stay still, don’t move.” (p.120)
 TT Grey: “อยู่นิ่ง ๆ อย่างขีบนะ” (p.141)
u ning-ning ya kha-yap na
 be still don’t move
 FN
 BT [“Stay still, don’t move.”]

ST	Stay	still,	don’t	move	
	Predicator	Circumstantial Adjunct	Finite	Predicator	
	<i>Residue</i>			<i>Mood</i>	<i>Residue</i>
TT	Stay	still,	don’t	move	FN
	Predicator	Circumstantial Adjunct	Finite	Predicator	Modal Adjunct
	<i>Residue</i>			<i>Mood</i>	<i>Residue</i>

Example 2 is also taken from P1’s and P2’s first sensual encounter. Grey stills takes the P1 role and Steele is his submissive. In terms of the mood structure, it is shown that there are two clauses in this sentence, i.e.,

⁶ In English, the speaker may use intonation to show his or her intensity or emphasis that can be equivalent to the Thai final particle. However, since this study only examines the written text, the speaker’s intonation is not available.

‘Stay still,’ and ‘don’t move’. Both versions demonstrate similar mood structure that project P1’s direct command. The first clause begins with *Residue* consisting of Predicator (Stay) and Adjunct (still) which adds extra ideational meaning to the clause. The second clause consists of *Mood* that has the Finite (don’t) and *Residue* with the Predicator (move). Presented in the negative form, the second clause shows similar meaning to the first clause and it seems to reiterate the command of the first clause. Omission of the Subject (You) clearly shows P1’s power over P2. Similar to the first example, the translation contains a final particle ‘นะ’ after the Predicator (move). This specific final particle shares the same function ‘สิ’ in the first example; i.e., the listener’s response is required by the speaker’s command (Noss, *ibid.*; Cooke, *ibid.*). However, instead of strengthening the command and power, the final particle ‘นะ’, which is considered a Modal Adjunct expressing either intensification or minimisation in this specific sentence tends to slightly soften the speaker’s request as opposed to the final particle ‘สิ’ in Example 1. The translation thus seems to exhibit less command and power in comparison with the ST.

Example 3

ST	Grey: “Don’t touch yourself.” (p.350)
TT	Grey: “ห้ามช่วยตัวเองนะ”(p.393) <i>ham chuai tua-eng na</i> don’t help yourself FN
BT	[“Do not help yourself.”]

ST	Don’t	touch	yourself	
	Finite	Predicator	Circumstantial Adjunct	
	<i>Mood</i>	<i>Residue</i>		
TT	Don’t	help	yourself	FN
	Finite	Predicator	Circumstantial Adjunct	Modal Adjunct
	<i>Mood</i>	<i>Residue</i>		

This specific example draws from another intimate act between P1 and P2 that takes place inside a boathouse belonging to P1’s family. Again P1 employs an imperative clause to express a command. However, it is in the negative form. So, the command P1 has for P2 can thus be both the order ‘do this’ and the prohibition ‘don’t do this’. His dominant role is manifested in the interpersonal function that is realised in the same mood clause of the ST and TT, *Mood* (Finite) and *Residue* (Predicator and Adjunct). While ST’s and TT’s Finites (Don’t) and Circumstantial Adjuncts (yourself) are similar; the Predicator in the ST is ‘touch’ whereas in the TT it is ‘help’. However, the Predicator of each version employs euphemistic slang, i.e., ‘touch yourself’ in the ST and ‘help yourself’ in the TT, both of which refer to self-gratification. In the TT, the final particle ‘นะ’ is added at the end of the clause functioning as a Modal Adjunct. Similar to Example 2, this specific final particle indicates the speaker’s request for the listener’s response. Nevertheless, in most cases, including in this particular sentence, it is used to soften the sentence. As a result, it tends to makes the imperative sentence less strong.

The three examples above are selected to exemplify how the mood structure of the

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interpersonal metafunction inform readers about the power relationship expressed in the imperative clause. The mood structure can also demonstrate a slight meaning difference between the ST and TT in terms of the degree of power relations due to the use of a final particle in the Thai translation. The translation, with the final particles, tends to slightly reduce the strength of request in comparison with the ST. Next, the study showcases the declarative clauses that are used to express power relations.

Declarative Clause

As briefly mentioned at the beginning of the section, not only can power relations be expressed in the imperative clause but also the declarative clause. Using mood structure

analysis, a number of declarative clauses are found to be used to express command, demand and request, demonstrating the power relationship between P1 and P2 conveyed in their intimate conversations, some of which are exemplified as follows:

Example 4

ST Grey: “I want to bite this lip”
(p.111)
TT Grey: “ผมอยากกัดริมฝีปากคุณจัง”
(p.131)
*phom yak kat rim-fi-pak
khun chung*
I want bite lips
you FN
BT [“I do want to bite your lip.”]

ST	I	want to bite		this lip	
	Subject	Finite	Predicator	Complement	
	<i>Mood</i>			<i>Residue</i>	
TT	I	want to bite		your lip	FN
	Subject	Finite	Predicator	Complement	Modal Adjunct
	<i>Mood</i>			<i>Residue</i>	

Apart from the explicit orders P1 uses through the imperative clauses, his commands can also be seen from the declarative clauses. This example is taken from the first intimate encounter between Grey (P1) and Steele (P2) at the former’s residence. By using the declarative clause to convey P1’s demand, it reiterates P1’s assertion of power over P2. The interpersonal function of utterance evoking P1’s authority can be seen from the mood structure consisting of *Mood* and *Residue* in

both the ST and TT. In the ST, *Mood* consists of the Subject (I) and the Finite (want to bite) and the Complement (this lip) in *Residue*. In the TT, *Mood* comprises the Subject (I) and the Finite (want to bite), and *Residue* has the Predicator (want to bite), the Complement (your lip) and the Modal Adjunct (final particle). The TT contains a final particle ‘จัง’ that intensifies the speaker’s intention (Bhamoraput, 1972). However, this intensification tends to soften

the sentence, thus reducing the strength of demand in comparison to the ST. A slight difference between the ST and TT can be seen in the Complement, i.e., ‘this lip’ and ‘your lip’, respectively. It seems that the TT sounds more specific and personal with ‘your lip’ as the Complement.

Example 5

ST Grey: “I’m going to take you from behind, Anastasia...” (p.119)

TT Grey: “ผมกำลังจะมีอะไรกับคุณจากทางด้านหลังนะ แอนัสเตเซีย...” (p.139)

phom kam-lang-cha mi a-rai kup khun chak tang-dan-lang na ae-nas-ta-chia

I am going to have what with you from back FN Anastasia

BT [“I’m going to do something with you from behind, Anastasia...”]

ST	I	'm going to take		you	from behind		Anastasia
	Subject	Finite	Predicator	Complement	Circumstantial Adjunct		Circumstantial Adjunct
	<i>Mood</i>			<i>Residue</i>			
TT	I	'm going to do		something	with you from behind	FN	Anastasia
	Subject	Finite	Predicator	Complement	Circumstantial Adjunct	Modal Adjunct	Circumstantial Adjunct
	<i>Mood</i>			<i>Residue</i>			

This example is also taken from the first sensual encounter between Grey and Steele at his residence. By using the declarative clause to convey P1’s demand, it reiterates P1’s assertion of power over P2. The interpersonal function of utterance evoking P1’s authority can be seen from the mood structure consisting of *Mood* and *Residue* in both the ST and TT. However, one can notice a different degree of explicitness between the English and Thai versions from the Finite/Predicator (am going to take); the Complement (you); and the Adjunct (from behind) in the ST; and the Finite/Predicator (am going to do), the Complement (something), the Adjunct (with you from behind) and the Modal Adjunct (final

particle) in the TT. While the interpersonal meaning in the ST conveys direct and relatively strong demand, the mood elements in the TT shows the reduced degree of demand and directness through euphemism, although it implies a similar meaning with the ST. Euphemistic approaches are scattered throughout the TT where sexually explicit lexicons occur as a result of the print media censorship laws in Thailand, which remains relatively strong (Chueasuai, 2010). The translation contains a final particle ‘นะ’ the functions as a Modal Adjunct that, similarly to Examples 2 and 3, show the speaker’s request for the listener’s response. This specific final particle tends to smooth P1’s demand in this declarative clause.

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Thus, it can be said that the TT makes the request sound relatively softer, thus reducing the strength of P1’s power.

In addition, Examples 5 and 6 also showcase how the Subject ‘I’ is used to emphasise a person’s orientation, i.e. the speaker’s request that in turn demonstrates the speaker’s power. These selected examples as well as the majority of collected data reiterates the dominant role that P1 the male character plays. However, the next example shows reverse role play when Steele plays P1.

Example 6

- ST Steele: “You’ll have to learn to keep still.” (p.265)
- TT Steele: “คุณต้องเรียนรู้อะไรที่จะอยู่นิ่งๆนะ” (p.303)
- khun tong rian-ru thi cha u ning-ning na*
- you must learn to will be still FN
- BT [“You have to learn to stay still.”]

ST	You	will	have to learn to keep		still	
	Subject	Finite	Predicator		Adjunct	
	<i>Mood</i>		<i>Residue</i>			
TT	You	have to	learn to stay		still	FN
	Subject	Finite	Predicator		Adjunct	Modal Adjunct
	<i>Mood</i>		<i>Residue</i>			

This example is drawn from another example of sexual roleplay between Grey and Steele. However, this specific part of the *BDSM* relationship shows a shift in role play when Steele becomes P1 and Grey P2, hence the shift in power relations. Grey allows Steele to take the P1 role and give orders to him when she is undressing him. The interpersonal function of language expressing P2’s authority over P1 can be realised from the mood clause structure where both versions share similarities in the *Mood* and *Residue*. However, the TT shows a slight difference when ‘have to’ is the Finite that expresses an obligation, the meaning of commands (Eggins, 2004) while

the modal ‘will’ appears in the ST and is followed by Predicator ‘have to learn to keep’. The modulation of ‘will’ shows an inclination to do something, in this case P2 will have to be still. Nevertheless, using modality increases tentativeness in clauses without using any modality at all (Eggins, *ibid.*). The translation contains a final particle ‘นะ’ that functions as a Modal Adjunct that, similar to Examples 2, 3, and 5 to show the speaker’s request for the listener’s response. This specific Modal Adjunct dilutes the degree of power relations through the conditional command of this declarative clause. Therefore, the TT in this specific example shows a slightly

higher degree of power relations than the ST which is, from the analytical data, rare to find.

The paper has demonstrated textual analysis of the data applying the mood structure of the interpersonal metafunction and has found that, from selected examples, this specific linguistic element reveals the power relations between P1 and P2. Two grammatical clause structures – imperative and declarative clauses – were found to express of commands, demands and requests one participant makes of the other, signifying the interpersonal meaning of power relations in the social roles between these two communicative members. In what follows, the research demonstrates mood structure analysis at the contextual level of data to find out how this particular analytical tool can identify the power relation expressed in both versions of the text.

Contextual Analysis

Contextual analysis consists of situational elements that determine specific lexical choices used in specific communicative settings. In terms of the register constituent under study, tenor, the social role one plays in a specific situation, shapes how one selects suitable lexicons in the mood of the lexico-grammatical structure.

As was briefly mentioned earlier, power, contact and affective involvement are three significant factors that determine how a communicative partner opts for a specific choice of language in a specific situation. To select appropriate lexicons, one considers whether he or she has 1) equal or unequal power in comparison with his or her

communicative partner; 2) close and frequent contact or distant and infrequent contact; and 3) high or low emotional involvement with his or her communicative interactant.

In addition, formal or informal situations also shape how one selects proper choice of language. Unequal power, distant and infrequent contact and low affective involvement tend to be found in formal situations, all of which affect the language choice to be more objective, written, complete and polite. On the contrary, equal power, close and frequent contact and high emotional involvement tend to be characteristics of communication in informal situations where the language appears to be more attitudinal, colloquial, abbreviated or even vulgar (Eggins, 2004).

To make the analysis consistent, the contextual analysis examines the selected examples from the textual analysis to demonstrate continuation of realisation and relationships between both the textual and contextual levels.

Example 1

ST Grey: “Show me how you pleasure yourself.” (p.114)

TT Grey: “แสดงให้ผมดูสิว่าคุณให้ความสุขตัวเองยังไง” (p.134)

*sadaeng hai phom du si
wa khun hai khwam-suk
tua-eng yang-ngai
show to me see FN
you give pleasure
yourself how*

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BT [“Show me how you give yourself pleasure.”]

Example 2

ST Grey: “Stay still, don’t move.”
(p.120)

TT Grey: “อยู่นิ่ง ๆ อย่างขยับนะ” (p.141)
u ning-ning ya kha-yap na
be still don’t move
FN

BT [“Stay still, don’t move.”]

Example 3

ST Grey: “Don’t touch yourself.”
(p.350)

TT Grey: “ห้ามช่วยตัวเองนะ ”(p.393)
ham chuai tua-eng na
don’t help yourself FN

BT [“Do not help yourself.”]

Examples 1 and 2 are taken from conversations occurring during the first intimate encounter between Grey and Steele at his apartment whereas Example 3 is taken from another erotic act between the two characters taking place in the boathouse which belongs to Grey’s family. In terms of power, it is fairly obvious that since he plays the Dom while P2 willingly plays the Sub part, according to the role, P1 has more power than P2. His authority over P2 shows in his type of statement – imperative clause that reflects non-reciprocal power relations. In terms of contact, according to the story, before the first encounter, these two characters had only met each other a few times, so they do not know each other well.

However, their levels of affective involvement appear to be high since they hold strong affection for each other. Regarding formality, the specific setting of Examples 1 and 2 is in P1’s private residence when Steele is casually invited to Grey’s place, thus an informal situation. The setting of Example 3 is inside P1’s family boathouse. However, the data found in these examples seems to contradict some of Eggins’ claims that in an informal situation, language tends to show ‘equal power’ between two interactants who have close and frequent contact. Nevertheless, the lexical choice from this example of unequal power relationship exhibits colloquialism that signifies informality, i.e., ‘pleasure yourself’ and ‘touch yourself’ in the ST and ‘give yourself pleasure’ and ‘help yourself’ in the TT. However, if one considers *BDSM* role play as a formal act by mutual consent and agreement where one has more power than the other, then these imperative clauses express unequal power relations. Still, lexical choices should have brought more sense of formality, according to Eggins’ claims.

Example 4

ST Grey: “I want to bite this lip”
(p.111)

TT Grey: “ผมอยากกัดริมฝีปากคุณจัง”
(p.131)
phom yak kat rim-fi-pak khun chung
I want bite lips
you FN

BT [“I do want to bite your lip.”]

Example 5

ST	Grey: “I’m going to take you from behind, Anastasia,...” (p.119)
TT	Grey: “ผมกำลังจะมีอะไรกับคุณจากทางด้านหลังนะ แอนัสเตเชีย...” (p.139) <i>phom kam-lang-cha mi a-rai kup khun chak tang-dan-lang na ae-nas-ta chia</i> I am going to have what with you from back FN Anastasia
BT	[“I’m going to do something with you from behind, Anastasia...”]

Example 6

ST	Steele: “You’ll have to learn to keep still.” (p.265)
TT	Steele: “คุณต้องเรียนรู้ที่จะอยู่นิ่งๆ นะ” (p.303) <i>khun tong rian-ru thi cha u ning-ning na</i> you must learn to will be still FN
BT	[“You have to learn to stay still.”]

Examples 4, 5 and 6 showcase another three erotic situations. Examples 4 and 5 take place at Grey’s apartment when the two characters have their first intimate act while Example 6 occurs at a later time in Steele’s apartment. The tenor that consists of contact, power and affective involvement shows similar results with those of Examples 1, 2 and 3. Although they had only met a few times before their first intimate act, showing infrequent contact, their emotional

involvement with each other demonstrates a high level. Meanwhile, their power relationship in these three examples shows P1’s authority over P2. The lexical choice in Example 5 exhibits direct demand implying P1’s power. In the TT, however, the euphemistic lexical choice ‘to do something with you’ considerably reduces its explicitness although it signals the same meaning as the original version. It can be argued that it also lightens P1’s power over P2, though their affective involvement remains high. Again, these three examples share the same informal situations and settings where, according to Eggins (ibid.), the lexical choices will opt for informal tone and express equal power relations. However, they contradict the claim since the power relation is non-reciprocal.

From the above examples, the interpersonal metafunction’s contextual analysis demonstrates how situational context, particularly the variable register of tenor, plays a significant role in determining interactants’ lexical choices appearing in the clauses used in communication to display their social role relationships. Together with the textual analysis, it helps to inform readers, in great detail, how the notion of power relations between the two characters is expressed both in the original and translated version of the novel under study.

Concluding Remarks

This paper attempts to discover how the notion of power relations appearing in the ST and TT is expressed by applying SFL’s interpersonal metafunction as the effective analytical tool. Applying the mood structure helps the research examine, in great detail,

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how the expression of power relations appears at the textual level. Two types of clause, imperative and declarative clauses, are found to be used for signifying power in both versions. The imperative is the most frequently used clause and can be explained in terms of directness of command, demand or request. Following the tenor variables of register at the level of context of situation regarding the power, contact, and affective involvement, it has further helped the study find the non-reciprocal power relations in the informal settings that seem to contradict Eggins' (2004) claim. Through the mood structure, the analysis also shows certain differences in meaning in terms of the demonstration of power relations in the TT. The study finds that, although the translated version mostly follows the original mood structure, certain clauses in the translation are modified in terms of the use of final particles in the Thai version. This particular Thai linguistic element is found to affect, to various degrees, the notion of the power P1 conveys to P2 in terms of softening the strength of P1's command, demand or request. The mood structure analysis can be applied to other text types in order to find out the social role relationships of communicative participants. It can also be applied in translation classes to identify any differences in ST and TT meanings.

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