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A comparative study of smiling facial expressions and display rules of the Thai and the Japanese

Tippayarat Pothisitthiporn and Kiyoshi Maiya

ABSTRACT—This study aims at investigating the similarities and differences between Thai and Japanese smiling facial expressions. The interview was conducted with Thai and Japanese participants. The results show that Thais tend to experience happiness in situations related to excitement and stability significantly more than the Japanese, while the Japanese tend to experience happiness in situations related to relief and self-concept to a significantly greater degree than Thais. The results also indicate that, in situations where they do not feel happy, Thais tend to smile when they are greeting or apologizing significantly more than the Japanese, who tend to smile to conform to the group significantly more than Thais. The reasons for smiling are also different. When smiling with a neutral feeling, the Japanese tend to nod significantly more often than Thais. When smiling with sadness in their minds, Thais tend to raise their cheeks (AU6) significantly more often than the Japanese. The bases of Thai and Japanese smiles are argued on social characteristics, social values and their education systems.

Keywords: Smile, interview, happy facial expression, FACS

Introduction

According to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, as of 2014, there were approximately 64,000 Japanese nationals residing in Thailand and there were approximately 73,000 Thai nationals residing in Japan. In 2013, approximately 1.5 million Japanese travelled to Thailand. In 2014, more than 500,000 Thais travelled to Japan according
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to the Japan National Tourism Organization. The statistical data shows that the Thai and Japanese people closely relate to each other. A comparative study between Thais and the Japanese should be worthwhile for both of them.

According to Petison (2008), communication errors occur among Thai and Japanese people working in Japanese corporations in Thailand, principally caused by nonverbal communication, inappropriate facial expressions and body language. According to Horimoto (2012), Thais tend to misunderstand the neutral Japanese face as being an angry face. Facial expressions are considered to be an obvious non-verbal communication channel which may cause errors in communication.

Thai facial expressions have mostly been studied with the help of questionnaires. Arayasiri (1980) suggests that Thais tend to be hesitant in showing an angry face in front of their partners compared with Americans. Saetang (1985) suggests that Thais hesitate to express anger, happiness and sadness in front of bystanders, parents and teachers. Kuvasanont (2003) suggests that Thais tend to control both positive and negative emotions when they interact with strangers more than when they interact with friends. According to these studies, Thais tend to adjust their facial expression dependent upon their communication partners. However, it is still unclear how Thais exactly express their emotions and it has been necessary to use a more dynamic method to investigate Thai facial expressions more deeply.

Japanese facial expressions have been studied by means of experiment, facial expression gathering, interviews and questionnaires. As a result of experiment, Ekman and Friesen (1975) suggest that the Japanese suppress negative facial expressions when there are others present whereas Americans do not control their facial expressions in the same way. Using the dimension of social differences, Matsumoto (1990; 1996) studied the facial expressions of the Japanese, people from a collectivistic culture, and Americans, people from an individualistic culture, and suggests that the Japanese tend to express negative facial expressions towards partners in a lower position rather than those from a higher position. According to the studies mentioned above, it is suggested that the Japanese tend to adjust their negative facial expressions depending on their communication partners. Matsumoto (1992) conducted a facial recognition experiment and suggests that
the Japanese and American judgment of basic facial expressions is different.

In the case of Thailand and Japan, the smile is one of the most important facial expressions to investigate because both Thai and Japanese people smile in both positive and negative situations.

According to Ekman and Friesen (1982), the smile is the most easily recognized facial expression but the most confusing one and Thailand is known as “The Land of Smiles” (Matsushita 1995; Holmes and Tangtongtavy 1995). Smiling is considered important in Thai culture (Ngammuk 2001). Thais smile in various situations and Holmes and Tangtongtavy (1995) have identified thirteen phases of Thai smiles which are used in negative situations. Soisangwan (2011) argues that Thais often smile when they do not know what to say. Monthienvichienchai (2006) reviewed Thai words containing *yim* (smile) in literature, finding that non-enjoyment smiles are much more prevalent than enjoyment smiles. Komin (1991) points out the nine Thai values include smooth interpersonal relationship orientation which may cause Thai people to smile even when they have negative feelings. According to Sabsang (2002), Thais tend to smile during 80 percent of self-introduction time.

The Japanese Smile, which Hearn (1895) referred to as “mysterious” to Westerners, is well known as a cultural difference specific to Japanese because the Japanese often smile in front of others in situations where Westerners think that they should not smile. Based on experimental study, Ekman and Friesen (1975) suggest that Japanese cover the facial expression of negative emotions with smiling much more than Americans do when they are in a social situation. Comparing various Japanese smiles, Takahashi and Maiya (2000) suggest that the latency and duration of some facial movements in the bitter smile are different from those in the happy smile. Morishita and Maiya (2002) who interviewed some Japanese about facial expressions, suggest that the Japanese tend to smile during an interview for 80 percent of the time.

In this multi-cultural century, cross-cultural understanding is becoming more and more important. On behalf of Thais working among Thai and Japanese, the researcher considered that it was necessary to study the cultural differences which affect communication between Thais and the Japanese. The present study aims to investi-
gate the similarities and differences between Thai and Japanese facial expressions, especially smiles. In order to study the differences between Thai and Japanese culture, it is necessary to consider the differences of emotional rules and display rules by investigating situations where those rules have been applied. The researcher hopes that the present study will develop an understanding between Thais and the Japanese during interpersonal communication situations and eventually enhance the relationship between the two countries.

The smile is considered important in both Thai and Japanese culture. However, it is arguable whether the use and meaning of their smiles are similar or different. When, why and how do Thais and the Japanese feel happy and smile? This research question was investigated using the interview method (Morishita 2003). The results from the Thai and Japanese participants were analysed and compared.

**Method**

**Participants**

There were two groups of research targets, Thai and Japanese undergraduate students. In order to assemble the participants, the researchers asked for research volunteers from psychology classes at universities in Thailand and Japan.

Fifty-seven Thai undergraduate students (mean age = 21.02 years old, SD = 0.97) participated in the interview in February 2014, consisting of 28 females (mean age = 21.29 years old, SD = 0.71) and 29 males (mean age = 20.76 years old, SD = 1.12). The experiment was conducted at Chulalongkorn University and Thaksin University, Thailand.

Forty-six Japanese undergraduate students (mean age = 19.61 years old, SD = 1.96) participated in the interview in May and June 2014, consisting of 24 females (mean age = 19.17 years old, SD = 1.05) and 22 males (mean age = 20.09 years old, SD = 2.56). The experiment was conducted at Kobe University, Japan.

**Procedure**

After informed consent had been obtained for video recording, the interview was carried out according to the following procedure.
First of all, for approximately three minutes, the interviewer asked the participants for basic information such as their names, ages and hobbies. Secondly, the interviewer asked the participants to describe situations where they felt glad, happy, delighted and other related emotions which were positive emotions in their opinion. After they had explained each situation, the interviewer asked them to express the facial expression they might have displayed at the time. Thirdly, the interviewer asked the participants to describe situations where they smiled regardless of whether they were feeling happy or not. The following questions were included. When did this happen? Why did they smile? What emotions did they really feel? After that, the interviewer asked them to express the same facial expression as the one they had done at the time.

The planned interview time was 15-20 minutes and consisted of 3 minutes for the first procedure and the remainder for the second and third procedures.

In the interview room, the participants sat on a chair with the interviewer opposite. The video camera was placed diagonally behind the interviewer.

The situations reported by the participants were categorized based on related research (Ekman and Friesen 1975; Hofstede 1984). The facial expressions recorded during the interview were coded by the first author using Facial Action Coding Systems (FACS) (Ekman et al. 2002).

The average interview time for Thai participants was 15 minutes, 40 seconds (SD = 3 minutes, 48 seconds) and the average interview time for Japanese participants was 13 minutes, 32 seconds (SD = 3 minutes, 14 seconds).

**Happy situations**

**Reported situations**

According to Ekman and Friesen (1975), happiness can be caused by excitement, pleasure, relief and self-concept enhancement. The researchers categorized the reported happy situations exclusively into the 4 groups according to Ekman and Friesen (1975). However, some reported situations could not be fitted into the cited categories, there-
fore, the researchers added 3 more categories, which were stability, funny situation and other situations.

Stability is a situation where the participant feels happy because his or her environment is stable, for example, a situation where the participant is with family or friends. A funny situation is a situation where the participant has fun. The other 6 situations from the Thai and the Japanese participants were situations which the researchers could not put into the 6 groups mentioned above.

The Thai participants reported a total of 241 situations, 129 situations from the female participants and 112 situations from the male participants. The result of an \( \chi^2 \) test shows that the percentages of each category did not differ by gender. The reported situations were mostly grouped into the pleasure category (females 42 situations, 33 percent, males 47 situations, 42 percent). The rest were grouped into excitement (females 31 situations, 24 percent, males 24 situations, 21 percent) and stability (females 25 situations, 19 percent, males 22 situations, 20 percent) respectively.

The Japanese participants reported a total of 151 situations, 80 situations from the female participants and 71 situations from the male participants. The result of the \( \chi^2 \) test showed that the percentages of each category did not differ by gender. The reported situations were mostly grouped into the category of pleasure (females 32 situations, 40 percent, males 25 situations, 35 percent) The rest were grouped into relief (females 10 situations, 12 percent, males 14 situations, 20 percent) and self-concept (females 13 situations, 16 percent, males 8 situations, 11 percent) respectively.

Figure 1. Comparison of happy situations.
Both Thai and Japanese participants mostly reported happy situations regarding pleasure. However, as shown in figure 1, the result of the $\chi^2$ test shows that the distribution of each category differed according to culture, $\chi^2(6, N = 392) = 24.69, p < .001$. The Thai participants reported situations related to excitement more than the Japanese participants, $\chi^2(1, N = 392) = 7.28, p = .007$. The Thai participants also reported situations related to stability more than the Japanese participants, $\chi^2(1, N = 392) = 3.86, p = .050$. The Japanese participants reported situations related to relief more than the Thai participants, $\chi^2(1, N = 392) = 4.10, p = .043$. The Japanese participants also reported situations related to self-concept more than the Thai participants, $\chi^2(1, N = 392) = 7.49, p = .006$.

**Facial expressions**

Based on FACS (Ekman et al. 2002), the participant’s facial expressions were coded by the first author and divided into 3 groups; smile, neutral face and others.

Smile refers to facial expressions which consist of either the raising of the cheek (AU6) or the pulling of the lip corner (AU12). The smile may include other facial movements apart from AU6 and AU12. A neutral face refers to a face without the reported movement of any facial muscles. Others refers to facial expressions apart from the smile and the neutral face.

From 241 situations, there were 227 situations where the Thai participants described their facial expressions. The result of the $\chi^2$ test showed that the percentage of each category did not differ by gender. In happy situations, the Thai participants mostly expressed smiles (females 110 situations, 87 percent, males 84 situations, 83 percent). Apart from smiles, the Thai participants also expressed neutral facial expressions (females 14 situations, 11 percent, males 17 situations, 17 percent).

From 151 situations, there were 116 situations where the Japanese participants described facial expressions. The result of the $\chi^2$ test shows that the percentage of each category did not differ by gender. In happy situations, the Japanese participants mostly expressed smiles (females 43 situations, 73 percent, males 38 situations, 67 percent). Apart from smiles, the Japanese participants expressed neutral facial expressions (females 13 situations, 22 percent, males 14 situations, 25 percent).
Both Thais and the Japanese mostly expressed smiles when they experienced happiness. However, as shown in figure 2, the result of the $\chi^2$ test shows that the distribution of each category differed according to culture, $\chi^2(2, N = 343) = 16.07, p < .001$. The Thai participants expressed smiles more than the Japanese participants, $\chi^2(1, N = 343) = 11.81, p = .001$. The Japanese participants expressed neutral faces more than the Thai participants, $\chi^2(1, N = 343) = 5.23, p = .022$.

Smiling situations

Smiling situations define situations where the participant smiles regardless of whether he/she is happy or not.

Reported situations

The reported situations were categorized into 14 groups which were apology, conforming group (a situation where people around the participant were smiling), confused feeling, consolation, customer reception (a situation where the participant smiles at customers) greeting, hiding anger, hiding sadness, not an amusing story (a situation which the participant thinks is not fun or funny), rejection (a situation where the participant smiles instead of saying no), respecting older people, silence substitution (a situation where nobody is talking), taking pictures and others.

The Thai participants reported a total of 122 smiling situations including 65 situations from the female participants and 57 situations from the male participants. The Thai female participants mostly
reported situations regarding not an amusing story (14 situations, 21 percent) and they reported situations regarding greeting (10 situations, 15 percent) and apology (7 situations, 11 percent) respectively. The Thai male participants also mostly reported situations regarding not an amusing story (11 situations, 19 percent), and they reported situations regarding greeting (9 situations, 16 percent), hiding sadness (5 situations, 9 percent) and confused feeling (5 situations, 9 percent) respectively. The result of the $\chi^2$ test shows that the percentages of each category did not differ by gender.

The Japanese participants reported a total of 96 smiling situations including 56 situations from the female participants and 40 situations from the male participants. The Japanese female participants mostly reported the situations regarding not an amusing story (14 situations, 25 percent) and next were situations regarding respect towards older people, hiding anger and conforming group (7 situations, 12 percent each). The Japanese male participants also mostly reported the situations regarding not an amusing story (14 situations, 35 percent) and next were situations regarding respect towards older people (5 situations, 12 percent) and hiding anger (4 situations, 10 percent) respectively. The result of the $\chi^2$ test showed that the percentage in each category did not differ by gender.

Both Thai and Japanese participants mostly reported situations regarding not an amusing story. Situations regarding apology, consolation and taking pictures were reported only by the Thai participants. Situations regarding conforming group and silence substitution were reported only by the Japanese participants.

As shown in figure 3, the result of the $\chi^2$ test showed that the distribution of each category differed by culture, $\chi^2(13, N = 218) = 43.80, p < .001$. The Thai participants reported greeting situations significantly more than the Japanese participants, $\chi^2(1, N = 218) = 4.60, p = .032$. The Thai participants also reported apology situations significantly more than the Japanese participants, $\chi^2(1, N = 218) = 5.69, p = .017$. The Japanese participants reported the situations where they conformed with the group significantly more than the Thai participants, $\chi^2(1, N = 218) = 11.93, p = .001$. For situations that could not be grouped (other situations), the Thai participants reported significantly more than the Japanese participants, $\chi^2(13, N = 218) = 5.86, p = .015$. 
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Figure 3. Comparison of smiling situations.

Reported reasons

For each reported situation, the participants were also asked for reasons why they smiled. The researchers categorized these into 10 groups. However, some reported reasons could not be categorized exclusively. In this case, the researchers divided the point (fully 1 point) equally to each category.

Collective customs (Hofstede 1984) refers to reasons concerning the participants’ affiliated groups such as groups of friends. Conflict avoidance refers to reasons prompted by an avoidance of conflict. Conversation refers to reasons concerning the use of smiling in conversation. Duty refers to reasons concerning the participant’s duty. Emotional regulation refers to reasons concerning an enhancement of emotions. Hiding negative emotions refers to reasons concerning the concealment of negative emotions such as anger, sadness and disgust. Manner refers to reasons concerning attitude towards a person of the same age. Power distance (Hofstede 1984) refers to reasons concerning the power of a communication partner. Self-presentation refers to reasons concerning the participant’s self-appeal. Others refer to reasons that
cannot be grouped into the above categories.

The Thai participants reported a total of 122 smiling reasons including 65 reasons from the female participants and 57 reasons from the male participants. The Thai female participants mostly reported reasons concerning collective customs (16.3 points, 29 percent) and next were reasons concerning emotional regulation (9.8 points, 17 percent) and manner (6.0 points, 11 percent) respectively. The Thai male participants mostly reported reasons concerning emotional regulation (14.0 points, 21 percent) the most and next were reasons concerning emotional collective customs (12.5 points, 19 percent) and conservation (10.5 points, 16 percent) respectively. The result of the $\chi^2$ test showed that the percentage in each category did not differ by gender.

The Japanese participants reported a total of 96 smiling reasons including 56 reasons from the female participants and 40 reasons from the male participants. The Japanese female participants mostly reported reasons concerning collective customs (17.6 points, 31 percent) and next were reasons concerning conservation (10.1 points, 18 percent) and self-presentation (8.8 points, 16 percent) respectively. The Japanese male participants mostly reported reasons concerning self-presentation (12.5 points, 31 percent) the most and next were reasons concerning collective customs (11.0 points, 27 percent) and conservation (5.0 points, 12 percent) respectively. The result of the $\chi^2$ test showed that the percentage in each category did not differ by gender.

Both Thai and Japanese mostly reported reasons regarding collective customs. However, as shown in figure 4, the result of the $\chi^2$ test showed that the distribution of each category differed according to culture, $\chi^2(9, N = 218) = 24.06, p = .004$. The Thai participants reported more reasons concerning emotional regulation, $\chi^2(1, N = 218) = 8.16, p = .004$. The Thai participants also reported more reasons concerning manner, $\chi^2(1, N = 218) = 5.96, p = .015$. The Japanese participants reported more reasons concerning self-presentation, $\chi^2(1, N = 218) = 8.24, p = .004$.

Reported emotions

After the participants reported the situation where they smiled when they were not happy, they were asked what emotions they really experienced.
In 65 situations, the Thai female participants reported that they felt neutral, that is, felt neither positive nor negative in 23 situations (35 percent), sad in 11 situations (17 percent) and angry in 10 situations (15 percent). In 57 situations, the Thai male participants reported that they felt neutral in 16 situations (28 percent), disgusted in 10 situations (17 percent) and angry in 9 situations (16 percent). The result of the $\chi^2$ test showed that the percentage in each category did not differ by gender.

In 56 situations, the Japanese female participants reported that they felt disgusted in 18 situations (32 percent), neutral in 16 situations (29 percent) and angry in 6 situations (11 percent). In 40 situations, the Japanese male participants reported that they felt neutral in 16 situations (40 percent), disgusted in 12 situations (30 percent) and angry in 4 situations (10 percent). The result of the $\chi^2$ test showed that the percentage in each category did not differ by gender.

Both Thai and Japanese participants reported that they mostly felt neutral when they smiled regardless of happiness. However, as shown in figure 5, the result of the $\chi^2$ test showed that the distribution of each category differed according to culture, $\chi^2(5, N = 218) = 13.25, p = .021$. The Japanese participants reported situations where they felt disgusted significantly more than the Thai participants, $\chi^2(1, N = 218) = 8.51, p = .004$. 
Figure 5. Comparison of the emotions experienced when smiling.

Facial expressions

Facial expressions were analyzed based on the participants’ emotions. Apart from Cheek Raiser (AU6) and Lip Corner Puller (AU12) which are the components of a smile, the following action units (AU) were observed. Eyes Down (AU64), Nodding, Inner Brow Raiser (AU1), Outer Brow Raiser (AU2) and Lip Stretcher (AU20) were observed in the Thai participants’ smiles with neutral emotions. Inner Eyebrow Lowerer (AU42) and AU20 were observed in the Thai participants’ smiles with sadness. AU20, AU64 and Nodding were observed in the Thai participants’ smiles with anger and disgust. Lips Part (AU25), AU1 and AU2 were observed in the Thai participants’ smiles with embarrassment.

Apart from AU6 and AU12, the following AUs were observed. Nodding, AU64, Jaw Drop (AU26) and AU20 are observed in the Japanese participants’ smiles with neutral emotions. AU64, Nose Wrinkle (AU9) and AU26 were observed in the Japanese participants’ smiles with sadness. AU6 was not observed in these smiles. AU20, AU64 and Nodding are observed in the Japanese participants’ smile with anger. AU64, AU26, Nodding, Eyes Closed (AU43) and Head Back (AU58) were observed in the Japanese participants’ smiles with disgust. AU58 and AU64 were observed in the Japanese participants’ smiles with embarrassment.
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Table 1. Comparison of the facial expressions observed in smiling situations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Emotions</th>
<th>AUs most observed*</th>
<th>number of situations</th>
<th>percent of total situations</th>
<th>χ² test</th>
<th>result</th>
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<td>Japanese</td>
<td>Thai</td>
<td>Japanese</td>
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<td>24</td>
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As described in the table 1, the most observable action units were compared between the nationalities of the participants. For situations where the participants reported that they felt neutral, the Japanese participants nodded (AU59) more often than the Thai participants, $\chi^2(1, N = 62) = 8.36, p = .004$. For situations where the participants reported that they felt sad, the Thai participants raised their cheeks (AU6) more often than the Japanese participants, $\chi^2(1, N = 25) = 4.43, p = .035$. For situations where the participants reported that they felt disgusted, the Thai participants stretched their lips (AU20) more often than the Japanese participants, $\chi^2(1, N = 44) = 5.17, p = .023$, and the Japanese participants dropped their jaws (AU26) more often than the Thai participants, $\chi^2(1, N = 44) = 5.76, p = .016$.

**Discussion**

It is suggested that Thais and the Japanese react to happy situations differently. Thai people tend to experience happiness in situations related to excitement and stability significantly more than the Japanese, who tend to experience happiness in situations related to relief and self-concept significantly more than Thai people. The Thai value of fun and pleasure orientation (Komin 1991) may encourage Thais to state happy situations regarding excitement more than the Japanese. In contrast to Thai society, a loosely structured society, Embree (1950) suggests that the Japanese social structure is closed, that is, it is not easy for members to deviate from their own group. This may cause stress to the Japanese and persuade them to consider relief as happiness.
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more than Thai people.

It is also suggested that both Thais and the Japanese tend to smile mostly when they experience happiness. Apart from smiling, they tend to express a neutral facial expression. According to the results, Thais tend to smile significantly more than the Japanese and the Japanese tend to express a neutral face significantly more than Thais. Because Thais tend to react to situations concerning excitement significantly more than the Japanese, it is possible to assume that Thais will smile more than the Japanese who derive happiness mainly from relief and self-concept. According to Morishita (2003), the Japanese tend to smile by raising their cheeks and lip corners together with other movements using gazes and the head. It can be said that the present study is consistent with Morishita (2003), who does not, however, mention neutral facial expressions.

The present study has found that the Japanese may also express neutral facial expressions when they experience happiness. Ekman and Friesen (1975) suggest that the Japanese cover the facial expressions of negative emotions with smiles and consider this behaviour the display rule. Our findings may suggest that the Japanese use neutral facial expressions to cover positive emotions as well as smiles. According to Matsumoto (1996), the Japanese tend to neutralize their facial expressions according to the atmosphere of their group, especially in sad or serious situations, so as not to damage harmony. It is considered that the Japanese may use neutral facial expression to conform to their group in those situations.

It is additionally suggested that Thais and Japanese tend to state situations, differently, where they smile regardless of happiness. Thais tend to smile when they greet somebody significantly more frequently than the Japanese. Smiling in greeting is not mentioned only in Thai and Japanese culture but also other cultures. In other words, smiling in greeting may be universal. According to Sinthuwong (1999), the smile is one of the most popular cultural issues in which expatriate managers are trained in international corporations in Thailand. Even if it is unclear exactly what the expatriate managers are told about smiling, it is possible to assume that the training includes an introduction to smiling while greeting. According to Lewis (1988), the Japanese are taught to smile while greeting at first grade in elementary school. It is possible that, for the Japanese, smiling in greeting is so unusual that it
has to be taught in primary school.

Moreover, it has been suggested that Thais often smile when they apologize while the Japanese rarely do so. Thais sometimes try to defuse critical situations such as a car accident by smiling (Holmes and Tangtongtavy 1995). Situations in which they are expected to apologize can be categorized as critical situations. Furthermore, the smile while apologizing can be related to Thai values, smooth interpersonal relationship orientation (no-conflict interpersonal interaction) and ego orientation (face-saving) (Komin 1991). Among the total nine value clusters, the value of conflict avoidance is, especially, a key value in the Thai public sector nowadays (Pimpa 2012).

On the other hand, the results indicate that the Japanese tend to smile to conform with the group significantly more frequently than Thais. Japanese society is so closed that the Japanese conform to rules and duties which are strictly enforced (Embree 1950). The tendency to conform with others may not be restricted only to formal situations which are bound by rules but may also exist in informal situations in everyday life.

The results indicate that Thais tend to smile because they try to conform to collective customs and regulate their negative emotions the most. They also tend to smile because they want to express a good manner or to end the conversation. It is found that the Japanese tend to smile because they try to conform to collective customs and appeal to themselves the most. They also tend to smile because they want to end the conversation. Thailand and Japan are considered to be collectivist societies by Hofstede (1984). It can be said that the findings from the present study support Hofstede (1984) and provide concrete behaviour which explains collectivism. In other words, as people from collectivistic cultures, the Thais and Japanese tend to smile to maintain harmony in the group.

The results also indicate that both the Thais and Japanese state smiling reasons differently. Thais tend, significantly, to refer more to reasons concerning emotional regulation and manner than the Japanese. The Japanese tend, significantly, to refer more to reasons concerning self-presentation than Thais. Similar to Westerners, Thais may smile in order to regulate their negative feelings or to change negative emotions into positive ones (Ekman et al. 1975). Thais may also smile in order to camouflage their negative emotions. The display
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rule of negative emotional concealment exists also in Japanese culture and is known as “The Japanese Smile” (Hearn 1895) but the Japanese may interpret it as a way of appealing to themselves. Thus, the reasons concerning self-presentation become one of the most referred to reasons for the Japanese to smile. According to Hearn (1895), the Japanese smile even if they have negative emotions because this prevents causing others to feel negative which is considered impolite in Japanese society. In order to appeal to oneself, the Japanese may smile in such situations. The motivation of the Japanese smile may deeply relate to an attempt to present oneself.

It is suggested that Thais tend to feel neutral, that is, to feel neither positive nor negative, when they smile regardless of happiness. Thais may also smile even if they are experiencing negative emotions such as sadness, anger and disgust. Similar to Thais, Japanese males mostly tend to feel neutral when they smile. On the other hand, Japanese females mostly tend to feel disgusted when they smile. Both Japanese females and males also sometimes feel angry when they smile. It is suggested that the Japanese tend to feel disgusted when they smile significantly more than Thais. As Embree’s suggests, Japan is a strictly closed society (1950) thus the fear of being ejected from the group may persuade the Japanese to keep emotions of disgust internal.

The results indicate that nodding, gazing downwards (AU64), and stretching the lips (AU20) are additional common movements for Thais and the Japanese when smiling but feeling neutral. The Japanese tend to nod significantly more often than Thais. Moreover, Thais may raise the inner and outer brows (AU1+2) and the Japanese may drop their jaws (AU26) when they smile with a neutral feeling. It can be said that Thais emphasize the movement of muscles around the eye area but the Japanese emphasize the movements of muscles around the mouth area and the movement of the head.

Analyzing smiles when Americans conceal negatives emotions, Ekman et al. (1988), suggest that a leakage of the negative emotions can be observed, for example, the Upper lip Raiser (AU10) as the hint of disgust and the Lip Corner Depressor (AU15) as the hint of sadness. These leakages are not observed in Thai and Japanese masking smiles. Both Thais and the Japanese tend to stretch their lips (AU20), lower their gazes (AU64) and nod when they smile with anger. It can be said that Thais and the Japanese may be able to recognize this in each other.
Conclusion

The researchers analyzed happy situations, including the facial expressions in each situation and the smiling situations, including the facial expressions of each situation, the reasons making the participants smile and their real emotions. The difference between genders was not statistically significant in any issue. On the other hand, the difference between nationalities was statistically significant in many cases. It is considered that the difference between nationalities is more vital than the difference between genders. Contrary to the Japanese, Thais may not smile along with their group and they may not smile to gaps in a conversation. Contrary to Thais, the Japanese may not smile when they apologize and when they console. This may cause the misunderstanding between Thais and the Japanese. Even though Thailand and Japan share many characteristics of collective societies (Hofstede 1984), they may not be similar in other dimensions. This tendency is supported by the present study.

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Appendix

List of Action Units (Ekman et al. 2002)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AU</th>
<th>Explanations</th>
<th>AU</th>
<th>Explanations</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Inner Brow Raiser</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>Inner Eyebrow Lowerer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Outer Brow Raiser</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Brow Lowerer</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Cheek Raiser</td>
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<td>Nod</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Nose Wrinkler</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>Eyes Down</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Upper Lip Raiser</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Lip Corner Puller</td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Lip Corner Depressor</td>
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<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Lip Stretcher</td>
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<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Lips Part</td>
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<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Jaw Drop</td>
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