

The Use of English Reduced Adverbial Clauses among L1 Thai Learners

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Article information	Abstract
Article history: Received: 8 Feb 2025 Last revised: 1 Jun 2026 Accepted: 4 Jun 2026 Available online: 11 Jun 2026	<i>This study investigated L1 Thai English language learners' production of two types of reduced adverbial clauses (RACs): temporal and logical. It also identified whether the presence of past participles and present participles in such clauses influenced learners' RAC production. It was hypothesized that L1 Thai English language learners would use unreduced adverbial clauses (ACs) over RACs because the latter clauses differ from their Thai equivalents. Thirty upper-intermediate L1 Thai learners undertook a comprehension test and an indirect preference assessment (IPA) task. Overall, the participants supplied more RACs than ACs possibly due to their exposure to the RACs and the IPA task's choice provision. Furthermore, the effects of the participle and clausal types on the participants' production might involve the grammatical complexity of certain subfactors. Only when encountering the more ambiguous past participles or logical clauses did the learners supply fewer RACs than ACs.</i>
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INTRODUCTION

Schachter's groundbreaking 1974 study introduced the Avoidance Behavior Hypothesis to the second language acquisition (SLA) field. Schachter explained that L2 learners' low error rates with second language (L2) construction does not necessarily mean they experience no problems with it. Instead, they might find the structure difficult, and therefore, underproduce it. Schachter referred to this phenomenon as "avoidance behavior."

Several studies have addressed the avoidance of various L2 English features among learners from many L1 backgrounds, e.g., passive construction in L1 Thai learners (Chotiros & Pongpairaj, 2012) and L1 Chinese learners (Wang & Pongpairaj, 2021), the prepositions *despite*, *in spite of*, and *because of* in L1 Arab learners (Mattar, 2003), and phrasal verbs among L1 Turkish learners (Akbulut, 2018), L1 Chinese learners (Liao & Fukuya, 2004), and L1 Japanese learners (Okuwaki, 2021).

One prominent English structure is the reduced adverbial clause (RAC). RACs are an essential feature of academic writing because they allow for syntactic complexity and conciseness. Academic writing often values economy of expression (Swales & Feak, 2012); therefore, RACs, by reducing subordinate clauses to non-finite forms, enable writers to pack more information into a single sentence without sacrificing grammatical accuracy. This syntactic

feature reflects the discourse norms of academic genres such as research articles, theses, and formal reports. Beyond academic writing, RACs frequently appear in fiction, where they contribute to narrative flow and stylistic variation. They allow authors to concisely convey background actions, temporal relations, and character states, often enhancing rhythm and pacing in descriptive prose. For L2 learners aiming to participate in academic or professional communities, the ability to use RACs signals advanced proficiency and aligns their writing with native-like conventions (Biber et al., 1999).

Although non-finite clauses, including RACs, frequently occur in fiction and academic writing registers (Biber et al., 1999; Granger, 1997), L2 learners have been found to underproduce such clauses (Parrott, 2010; Taşçı, 2023). Given that fiction and academic prose are major registers in English (Biber et al., 1999), many learners' avoidance of the RAC structure prevalent in these registers suggests that they may avoid the construction due to its structural difficulty, which could override the facilitative effect of its frequent exposure.

While several factors may influence L2 learners' limited use of RACs, this study emphasizes avoidance behavior as a plausible explanation. The reason is that RACs have a corresponding full adverbial clause (AC) construction that is syntactically simpler and more commonly encountered. It is therefore possible that learners may opt for the less complex ACs instead of RACs, a behavior consistent with the characteristics of avoidance as defined in the Avoidance Behavior Hypothesis and observed in previous SLA avoidance research (e.g., Kosolsombat & Pongpairoj, 2017; Mattar, 2003; Sara & Mohammadreza, 2013; Thiamtawan, 2012).

It is logical to expect that an exploration of learners' RAC avoidance might shed light on the sources of their difficulties with the construction and thus help teachers develop materials that improve students' use of the structures. This in turn enhances learners' ability to produce sophisticated and concise texts, aligning their writing skills with native speaker norms in academic contexts.

However, to the best of the researcher's knowledge, L2 avoidance of English RACs remains an unexplored area. This may be because studies have tended to examine them as part of broader investigations into non-finite clauses rather than focusing specifically on them. Additionally, since omitting or replacing RACs with ACs does not necessarily lead to overt grammatical errors, learners' avoidance behavior may go unnoticed in performance-based analyses that focus on what learners produce incorrectly rather than what they underproduce, which could also indicate their production difficulty. Thus, the present study aims to investigate L2 avoidance of English RACs among L1 Thai learners.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Adverbial clauses and reduced adverbial clauses in English

In English, an AC is part of a complex sentence (DeCapua, 2017). Complex sentences comprise two clauses: a main clause and a subordinate clause, i.e., a clause which depends on the

main clause and cannot stand alone. Usually, subordinate clauses follow a subordinator and elaborate on the main clauses (Kortmann, 2020).

(1) a. I walked home after I called my mother.

(DeCapua, 2017, p. 286)

b. The boys left because it was raining hard.

(DeCapua, 2017, p. 288)

In (1a) and (1b), the subordinators *after* and *because* introduce the subordinate clauses *I called my mother* and *it was raining hard*, respectively.

According to DeCapua (2017), English ACs can be subcategorized into eight types: purpose, contrast, result, place, manner, conditional, time, and cause. Two prevalent types of ACs are time and cause. ACs of time express time sequences via such time subordinators as *before*, *after*, *when*, *until*, and *since* (DeCapua, 2017). ACs of cause provide information about the cause of the event in the main clause. Common reason subordinators include *because*, *since*, and *as*. Azar and Hagen (2009) suggested that only these two AC types can be shortened into reduced forms or RACs.

English RACs are a type of non-finite subordinate clause (Biber et al., 2003). DeCapua (2017) refers to RACs as the ACs which lack main verbs and auxiliary-verb strings in the proper aspect but encompass a verb in its past or present participial form instead.¹ Two characteristics of RACs are the lack of an explicit subject and their unidentified tense or modality (Foley & Hall, 2004).

ACs of time are shortened via two steps. Firstly, the subject of the subordinate clauses is omitted (Azar & Hagen, 2009). Secondly, either an omission of the copula *be* or an addition of the present participial suffix is required, depending on the voice of the AC. In the case of the passive voice, the copula is omitted. For active clauses, the *-ing* suffix is attached to the verb in the clauses.

Table 1
Reduction of English adverbial clauses of time

ACs	RACs
a. After he finished his homework, Peter went to bed. (Azar & Hagen, 2009, p. 388)	d. After finishing his homework, Peter went to bed.
b. When Leigh talks on the phone, she clears out the dishwasher. (DeCapua, 2017, p. 304)	e. When talking on the phone, Leigh clears out the dishwasher.
c. When these plants are watered regularly, they flower all summer.	f. When watered regularly, these plants flower all summer. (Aljović, 2017, p. 86)

¹ Both participial types are non-finite forms (Kortmann, 2020).

The reduction of the ACs of cause is similar to that of the temporal clauses except the logical connector *because* needs to be deleted (Azar & Hagen, 2009).

- (Rakhmasari, 2022, p. 54)

Adverbial clauses and reduced adverbial clauses in Thai

(3) พอ คุณ โทร มา
 phaw khun thoo maa
 as.soon.as second-person pronoun telephone come/directional aux (DIR)
 เขา ก็ ออก ไป พอดี
 | kháw kǐw òk pay phaw-dii
 | third-person pronoun linking particle exit go/DIR just
 ‘When you called, he had just stepped outside.’

(Iwasaki & Ingkaphirom, 2005, p. 276)

I was hungry is reduced by omitting the subject *phở* /phǒm/ *I*.

(4) ผม	เป็นลม		เพราะว่า	หิว
phǒm	pen-lom		phró wâa	hǐw
first-person male pronoun	faint		because	hungry
'I fainted because I was hungry.'				

(Adapted from Iwasaki & Ingkaphirom, 2005, p. 273)

Thai reduced clauses differ from their English counterparts in three aspects: the existence of inflectional morphemes, the simplicity of the AC reduction, and the conditions in which the subjects are omissible. The first difference concerns the existence of inflectional morphemes. While English is inflectional, Thai lacks inflectional morphemes (Rungrojsuwan, 2015). This means the verb form in Thai reduced subordinate clauses is identical to that in full clauses, namely no morpheme is attached to the verb. Accordingly, when learners experience English RACs whose verb forms differ from unreduced ones, they might find the former more complex. The next distinction involves the degree of simplicity of the AC reduction. In English, the verb in an AC must be inflected to its present or past participial form, depending on the voice of the clause. However, in Thai, no change is made to the AC apart from the subject omission. Clearly, Thai AC reduction is therefore simpler than English AC reduction. The third difference concerns the conditions in which the subject can be omitted. According to Phimsawat (2011), Thai is a pro-drop language, which allows the omission of the subject in both main clauses and subordinate clauses. When the subject of a Thai clause is clear from the context, it can be omitted. In contrast, English is a non-pro-drop language where the subjects of finite constructions are required. This means that not all subjects in English clauses are optional. As regards the RACs, subject omission is possible only when the subjects of the main clause and dependent clause are identical, and only the subjects of the subordinate clauses are omissible (DeCapua, 2017). The tighter constraints on subject omission in English might make L1 Thai learners uncertain about when English ACs are reducible and lead them to avoid curtailing the construction.

Previous studies on L2 avoidance behavior

According to Richards et al. (2002), avoidance behavior in SLA refers to the phenomenon in which L2 learners avoid an L2 item due to its difficulty or non-existence in their native language. Instead, they opt for features simpler or present in their L1. As Klienmann (1978) explained, before it can be claimed that learners avoid an L2 structure, their knowledge of it must be ensured; otherwise, their underproduction should be considered negligence instead. Klienmann suggested administering a comprehension test to assess participants' understanding of the investigated structures, followed by an indirect preference assessment task which examined their preference between choices to explore their avoidance of the structures.

Several previous L2 avoidance studies observed participants' L2 underproduction. One significant factor in predicting avoidance is L1–L2 differences (Mattar, 2003). L2 items that differ from their L1 counterparts or do not exist in learners' L1 are more likely to be avoided than those that are similar or present in their native language. The connection between L2 avoidance and negative transfer, whereby learners transfer L1 patterns incompatible with

the target language, is well-documented (e.g., Dagut & Laufer, 1985; Laufer & Eliasson, 1993; Maniruzzaman, 2008; Moghimizadeh, 2008). In a recent study in support of this factor, Kosolsombat and Pongpairaj (2017) explored intermediate L1 Thai learners' avoidance of English phrasal verbs. The results revealed that Thai learners avoid phrasal verbs and prefer one-word verbs. Their underproduction of phrasal verbs is linked to their absence in Thai.

Moreover, avoidance rates can be determined by other factors, including the complexity of L2 items. L2 learners typically favor simpler items over more complex ones. Pazhakh (2007) examined avoidance strategies in L1 Persian learners' English writing and found that many avoid using a complicated embedded relative clause, opting for two simple sentences instead. The complexity effect is also supported by two studies on the avoidance of English literal and figurative phrasal verbs: Sara and Mohammadreza (2013) with L1 Persian learners and Kosolsombat and Pongpairaj (2017) with L1 Thai learners. Compared to literal phrasal verbs, whose meaning derives from each component, figurative phrasal verbs are more semantically complex because their meanings cannot be directly drawn from each part. The findings of both studies showed that learners employ figurative phrases less frequently than the literal ones, confirming complexity could influence the avoidance rate. Similarly, Wang and Pongpairaj (2021) explored intermediate L1 Chinese learners' avoidance of English passives, and the participants' underuse of passive structures was attributed to their greater structural complexity compared to active constructions.

Test types also seem to influence the degree of avoidance. L2 learners tend to manifest underproduction when taking natural production tasks rather than when doing multiple-choice tasks. This is substantiated by Thiamtawan (2012) and Thiamtawan and Pongpairaj (2014), who investigated L1 Thai learners' avoidance of English reduced relative clauses (RRCs). Thiamtawan (2012) had his participants produce the structure by translating Thai sentences into English, while Thiamtawan and Pongpairaj (2014) used two multiple-choice tasks providing their participants with choices. In the former study, the participants used more full relative clauses than RRCs, while those in the latter study employed more RRCs. Okuwaki (2021) examined L1 Japanese learners' underproduction of English phrasal verbs. The participants completed two tasks: a multiple-choice task, where they selected the appropriate option to complete each item, and a translation task, which asked them to translate a set of Japanese verbs into English. The learners used more phrasal verbs in the multiple-choice task than in the translation task, suggesting that task type influences the level of avoidance.

Additionally, L2 learners' avoidance level can be affected by their proficiency level. Several studies show that less advanced learners, being less competent and confident, are more likely to show avoidance behavior than those with higher proficiency (e.g., Akbulut, 2018; Liao & Fukuya, 2004; Mattar, 2003; Pazhakh, 2007; Sara & Mohammadreza, 2013).

Although many researchers detected learners' L2 avoidance, a group of studies did not report participants' underproduction of L2 structures despite the non-existence of the structures in the learners' L1 or L1–L2 differences. For example, Chotiros and Pongpairaj (2012) found that L1 Thai learners did not avoid English passives, despite their structural complexity, likely due to similarities between Thai and English passives and the increasing use of the passive

voice in Thai. Wang and Pongpairroj (2021), who explored L1 Chinese learners' avoidance of English passive voice, reported that the learners produced more passives than actives. They observed that avoidance varied by context: the learners were more likely to underproduce passives in non-adversity contexts, where passives are structurally more complex, but produced more passives in adversity contexts. Similarly, Thiamtawan and Pongpairroj (2014) studied L1 Thai learners' avoidance of English reduced relative clauses. The participants were assumed to prefer unreduced clauses since their L1 has no exact equivalent for reduced clauses. However, the Thai learners tended to prefer the shortened clauses, probably due to their familiarity with them, the simplicity of the construction, and the nature of the employed instruments. Drawing on these findings, Thiamtawan and Pongpairroj proposed the Factors of Non-avoidance Hypothesis (FNAH), which holds that learners do not necessarily avoid L2 constructions non-existent in the L1 or different from their L1 equivalent because of various factors. These include learner-related factors (e.g., learners' familiarity with L2 constructions), task characteristics (e.g., multiple-choice tasks' tendency to yield a lower avoidance rate), and contextual effects on the perceived complexity of L2 structures (e.g., the lower complexity of English passives in adversity contexts for L1 Chinese learners).

Overall, the reviewed studies show two phenomena. While many studies found that L2 avoidance is shaped by various factors, such as L1–L2 differences and structural complexity, others suggested that learners may not avoid certain L2 structures due to many reasons, including their familiarity with the constructions and the simplicity of the forms in question. These contrasting outcomes point to a need for further research on lesser-studied constructions. English RACs, despite being frequent in written registers, have received limited attention in L2 avoidance research. This study addresses that gap by examining whether and why L2 learners avoid English RACs, which contributes to a deeper understanding of avoidance and non-avoidance in SLA.

L2 avoidance of English reduced adverbial clauses among L1 Thai learners

Based on relevant frameworks and previous research, L1 Thai learners tend to avoid English RACs and prefer ACs for two reasons. Firstly, English RACs may cause more confusion for L1 Thai learners than English ACs because of greater structural differences between the RACs in Thai and English compared to those between the ACs in the two languages. According to Selinker (1972), structural differences between two languages regarding a structure tend to cause negative language transfer, which could hinder L2 learners' acquisition of the target construction. One possible difficulty caused by L1–L2 differences is learners' uncertainty or confusion about an L2 structure, which might lead them to avoid it. Several studies have established L1–L2 distinctions concerning a grammatical structure or form as a reliable cause of L2 avoidance (e.g., Dagut & Laufer, 1985; Kosolsombat & Pongpairroj, 2017; Laufer & Eliasson, 1993; Maniruzzaman, 2008; Mattar, 2003; Moghimizadeh, 2008). Consequently, L1 Thai learners tend to avoid English RACs because of three differences between RACs in Thai and English: the existence of inflectional morphemes, the simplicity of AC reduction, and the settings in which subject omission is permissible. Nevertheless, learners may find English ACs easier as they are syntactically similar to their Thai equivalents. Secondly, L2 learners are more likely to underproduce more complex constructions than simpler ones (Pazhakh, 2007).

ACs are likely preferable to RACs because the former presents a clearer relationship between the main clause and subordinate clause, while the latter challenges learners to identify ellipsis or the omission of specific components which can pose comprehension problems to learners since they might anticipate information to be stated more clearly than it is (Parrott, 2010).

Moreover, L1 Thai learners' RAC avoidance might involve clausal type and participle type. First, the learners' avoidance of RACs could be affected by clausal types. English temporal and logical clauses differ in two aspects. The first distinction, the optionality of a main clause marker, refers to English reduced logical clauses not necessitating any other marker. In contrast, in Thai sentences, although the logical conjunction *เพราะ* /phrǎ/ *because* is omissible, the main clause marker *จึง* /cun/ or *ก็เลย* /kǎw lǎy/ *therefore* is usually needed (Iwasaki & Ingkaphirom, 2005). Therefore, Thai learners from an L1 background, where logical RACs require a marker, can be confused when producing English logical RACs that do not need any marker. However, time conjunctions in Thai and English temporal RACs are normally required. Thus, it can be concluded that L1 Thai learners should be more comfortable with English reduced temporal clauses. The second difference involves clarity of meaning. While reduced temporal clauses clearly express chronological sequences through a time connector, reduced logical clauses which contain no conjunction seem unclear in meaning since conjunction-free RACs can indicate various meanings, such as expressing simultaneous events and describing details (e.g., Azar & Hagen, 2009; Hewings, 2013; Parrott, 2010). Accordingly, the absence of a conjunction can lead L1 Thai learners to perceive the connection between the main clause and subordinate clause as unclear. They are therefore inclined to favor unreduced ACs when expressing the cause of resultative clauses.

Regarding the participle types, RAC avoidance rates for present and past participle sentences might be unequal because the participle types differ in how clearly they express the subject's thematic role or the semantic function of noun phrases in sentences (O'Grady & Dobrovolsky, 1997). Two primary thematic roles are Agent, the action performer, and Theme, the action recipient. For instance, in *The actor found the girl*, *The actor* serves as the Agent, performing the action of finding, while *the girl* receives the action, acting as the Theme.

Past participles, especially those in reduced non-finite clauses, could cause temporary confusion regarding the subject's thematic role, as the same verb form can be interpreted as either the past tense or the past participle (Carroll, 2008; Harley, 2014). For example, *observed* in *The teacher observed this afternoon received positive feedback from the students* can be confusing as to whether the teacher observes someone or receives the action of observing. The difficulty in identifying the subject's thematic role in sentences with past participles is well-established (e.g., Ismani & Simamora, 2021; Rah & Adone, 2010; Yang & Shih, 2013). Notably, most studies focused on past participles in reduced relative clauses (RRCs). Although past participial reduced clauses in RRCs and RACs differ in sentential position, both lack a copula and convey passive meaning. Therefore, identifying thematic roles may also be challenging for learners encountering past participles in RACs. Compared to those in ACs, past participles in RACs may convey the subject's thematic role less explicitly because RACs lack a copula. The non-existence of the passive marker *be* could make it harder for readers to identify the thematic role of the subject in RACs. Therefore, when given past participles,

L1 Thai learners might prefer using ACs because of their clearer expression of thematic roles. In contrast, both present participles in RACs and ACs clearly suggest active meaning and the Agent role. While present participles share the *-ing* form with gerunds, both constructions convey only active meaning (Gu, 2020). As a result, present participles in RACs and ACs tend not to pose ambiguity about thematic roles, and learners should easily recognize the subject's Agent role. Accordingly, when given RACs and ACs with present participles, learners should find both constructions equally clear in conveying thematic relations and should be able to employ them with comparable frequency rates.

The present study

The present study focuses on L1 Thai learners' avoidance of English RACs. Two RAC types, i.e., temporal and logical clauses, were emphasized for two reasons. Firstly, they have an equivalent structure in their unreduced form with a participle. Secondly, the two RAC types are structurally different from their Thai counterparts. RACs and ACs, thereby, correspond to Richards et al.'s (2002) definition of avoidance behavior which involves L2 learners who avoid an L2 construction difficult to use or non-existent in their L1 and prefer a simpler L2 item or structure existing in their L1.

This study explores (1) the extent to which L1 Thai learners will avoid English RACs and use ACs instead, (2) which participle type, i.e., present and past participles, the learners will be more likely to avoid, and (3) which clausal type, namely temporal and logical clauses, will have a higher tendency to be avoided.

The formulated hypotheses of this study are:

(1) The participants (L1 Thai learners) will avoid RACs and use ACs instead due to greater structural differences between RACs in Thai and English and the higher syntactic complexity of RACs compared to ACs.

(2) The participants will avoid RACs with a past participle more than they avoid those with a present participle because past participles tend to convey the subject's thematic role less clearly and are more likely to cause ambiguity.

(3) The participants will avoid logical RACs more than they avoid temporal RACs because logical RACs lack conjunctions and are less explicit in meaning.

METHOD

Participants

This study comprised two groups of participants: a control group of native speakers and an L1 Thai learner group. The control group included five native English faculty members at Chulalongkorn University in Bangkok, Thailand. They provided baseline data regarding the

production of English RACs and ACs. Forty-four L1 Thai undergraduate students from various faculties at Chulalongkorn University participated in this study. The participant selection was based on their test scores from one of three English proficiency tests: Chulalongkorn University Test of English Proficiency (CU-TEP), TOEFL iBT, and IELTS. Only the students whose score matched the upper-intermediate level of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages were included because they might have previously learned about RAC construction (North et al., 2010). Thirty-one participants were freshmen, while the rest included four sophomores and nine seniors.

Instruments

The instruments partially replicated Klienmann's (1978) tests, comprising a comprehension test (see Appendix A) and an indirect preference assessment task (see Appendix B). They explored the participants' comprehension and production of English RACs. This study emphasized the clauses following four conjunctions: *when*, *before*, and *after* for the temporal clauses, and *because* for the logical clauses.

The test items in these two tasks manipulated two variables: participle type (present and past) and clausal type (temporal and logical), leading to four test conditions: 1) present-temporal, 2) past-temporal, 3) present-logical, and 4) past-logical.

The comprehension test was used to ensure the participants' understanding of English RACs. The task had 8 test items and 12 distractors, with 2 items addressing each test condition. Each item was accompanied by a confidence scale, which asked the participants to rate how confident they were about their answer. The participants' score for each item ranged from -4 to +4 according to their answer accuracy and confidence, so the total score was 32. Further analyses did not include any participants whose score was lower than 80% of the total score, i.e., 26, because it was uncertain whether they comprehended RACs. A sample item is provided in (5).

- (5) Killed in battle, the soldier was awarded the Medal of Honor.

What does the underlined part mean?

- (a) But the soldier was killed
- (b) Before the soldier was killed
- (c) Because the soldier was killed

0	1	2	3	4
Completely unsure	Mostly unsure	Half-sure/ half-unsure	Mostly sure	Completely sure

The participants also took an indirect preference assessment (IPA) task so that their RAC-AC preferences could be investigated. The task contained 16 test items and 24 distractors, with each test condition addressed by four test items. Since RACs are commonly observed in academic writing and fiction registers (Biber et al., 1999), all the test items were taken from articles, news, and research to provide the participants with authentic contexts of the construction. A sample IPA item is given below.

- (6) When _____ about superhero movies, the actor revealed he had been offered the role of Batman.
- (a) he was questioned
 - (b) questioned

The test items were kept constant by controlling the subjects and verbs of the subordinate clauses: using only definite singular human nouns (e.g., *the teacher*) and regular verbs (e.g., *accept*). Moreover, because the clausal position might influence the RAC production, only RACs in the initial position were employed.

Three L1 Thai teachers specializing in applied linguistics or language assessment rated the validity of the two instruments via the index of Item-Objective Congruence (Rovinelli & Hambleton, 1976). The experimental items in the comprehension test were rated as appropriate for testing the learners' RAC knowledge, whereas those in the IPA task were deemed suitable for examining the participants' RAC-AC preference.

The comprehension test and the IPA task were subsequently uploaded to a Google Form, allowing the participants to finish both at the same time. The Google Form was sent to the participants' emails on the day the experiment was held.

Some might argue that avoidance involves learners' L2 production, and thus, natural production tasks may be more appropriate to explore the phenomenon than multiple-choice tasks. However, the present study utilized a multiple-choice task for three methodological reasons. Firstly, multiple-choice tasks have been claimed to indirectly measure learners' productive writing skills, including knowledge of grammatical rules and sentence structure (Heck & Crislip, 2001). Next, the use of a multiple-choice task is consistent with the definition of avoidance in SLA. Kleinmann (1978) argued that "avoidance presupposes choice" (p. 158), suggesting that investigating avoidance in L2 learners requires examining their preferences. Similarly, Zhang (2005) described avoidance as a cognitive strategy, which implies that learners consciously select one language form over another. Based on these views, presenting learners with two equivalent L2 structures enables the investigation of avoidance through examining their structural preferences. Thirdly, a multiple-choice task serves the aim of the present study better than a production task. This study explored whether participle types and clausal types influenced participants' avoidance of RACs; consequently, the learners were expected to produce either an AC or an RAC for each test item. A natural production task might prompt the participants to elicit other structures unrelated to the two constructions under investigation (Thiamtawan, 2012). Thus, to ensure the produced ACs and RACs incorporated the target participle types and clausal types, ACs and RACs were provided in the task. The use of multiple-choice tasks has been widely adopted in SLA avoidance studies to examine learner preferences (e.g., Dagut & Laufer, 1985; Kosolsombat & Pongpairaj, 2017; Liao & Fukuya, 2004; Thiamtawan & Pongpairaj, 2014).

Data collection

Both the control group of native speakers and the L2 learners took part in the experiments online via ZOOM. During the meetings, which were conducted separately for both groups,

the participants were informed of how to complete the tasks. They were instructed not to consult any external sources or AI tools and were asked to share their screens throughout the tasks to ensure they followed the task procedure. The L1 Thai learners first completed the comprehension test by choosing answers and determining their confidence scores. Then, they took the IPA task by choosing their preferred choice for each item. The learners were asked to complete each task within 30 minutes. The control group of native speakers took only the IPA task to provide baseline data on the RAC production.

Although the two tasks were administered consecutively, any bias towards the RACs that the comprehension test might have on the performance of the IPA task was likely minimal, as they measured different constructs or specific skills or attributes they were intended to assess. Tasks that examine distinct constructs are less susceptible to the effects of confounding factors, including the influence of one task on another (McLeod, 2024). The comprehension test assessed participants' understanding of RACs, requiring them to figure out the meaning of the RACs appearing as part of the stimulus sentences and select the accurate paraphrase from the three choices provided. In contrast, the IPA task was designed to elicit participants' production preferences. They were presented with RACs and ACs and were asked to select the structure they preferred. In this case, the RACs appeared as one of the options, and participants had to make a syntactic choice, not a semantic judgment. The three experts' validation of the two tasks ensured their measurement of different constructs, which could have mitigated the possibility of any priming effect or bias that the first task might have on the subsequent one.

Data analysis

Descriptive statistics were used to identify the frequency rates and mean values of each construction, as well as the standard errors of the differences. Moreover, paired-samples *t*-tests were employed to find if there were significant differences between the frequency rates of RACs and ACs and to identify the participle and clausal types in which the frequency rates significantly differed. This would determine whether participle and clausal types affected the learners' RAC avoidance.

FINDINGS

This section starts with the findings from the control group of native speakers followed by those from the L1 Thai learners. Table 2 presents the overall frequencies of both structures among the control group of native speakers from the IPA task.

Table 2
Overall frequencies of RACs and ACs among the control group of native speakers from the IPA task

Structure	Total	Percentage	M	N	SE of difference	t	df	p
RAC	65/80	81.25	13	5	.89443	11.180	4	< .001***
AC	15/80	18.75	3					

****p* < .001.

According to Table 2, RACs were more frequent than ACs: 81.25% and 18.75%, respectively. A paired-samples *t*-test revealed that the native speakers supplied significantly more RACs than ACs, $t(4) = 11.180$, $p < .001$. This indicates that they generally preferred reduced ACs to unreduced ACs, and that the test items created conditions where native speakers tended to prefer RACs.

The L1 Thai learners were administered the comprehension test followed by the IPA task. Details about the comprehension test scores are provided in Table 3.

Table 3
Details about the L1 Thai learners' comprehension test scores

M	N	SD	Max	Min
25.55	44	5.02	32	14

The participants' mean test score was 25.55 out of a maximum score of 32. The comprehension test criterion excluded 14 participants whose score was lower than 26, resulting in a total of 30 participants for further analysis. The mean score suggests that the participants possessed a relatively high level of English proficiency, consistent with their classification as upper-intermediate learners. The scores ranged from 14 to 32, with a standard deviation (SD) of 5.02. Given that all the participants had the same L2 proficiency level, the SD reflects a variation within the relatively homogeneous group. Such a distribution supports the suitability of the participants for investigating how learners at this proficiency level comprehend the RAC structure.

The findings of the IPA task were then examined to address the three hypotheses. To test Hypothesis 1, the frequency rates of RACs and ACs among the L1 Thai learners were explored. The overall frequencies of the two constructions among the learners in the IPA task are reported in Table 4.

Table 4
Overall frequencies of RACs and ACs among the L1 Thai learners from the IPA task

Structure	Total	Percentage	M	N	SE of difference	t	df	p
RAC	287/480	59.79	9.57	30	.72830	4.302	29	< .001***
AC	193/480	40.21	6.43					

*** $p < .001$.

Table 4 shows that RACs were more frequent than ACs: 59.79% and 40.21%, respectively. Statistically, the learners used significantly more RACs than ACs, $t(29) = 4.302$, $p < .001$, contradicting Hypothesis 1.

Concerning Hypothesis 2, the analysis incorporated the frequency rates of RACs and ACs by participle type, as well as the RAC frequency rates for present participle and past participle items. Table 5 provides the frequencies of the RACs and ACs in the test items by participle type, followed by Table 6, which compares the RAC frequency rates for present participle and past participle items.

Table 5
Frequencies of RACs and ACs among the L1 Thai learners in the test items by participle type

Participle type	Structure	Total	Percentage	M	SE of difference	t	df	p
Present	RAC	189/480	39.37	6.3	.58447	7.870	29	< .001***
	AC	51/480	10.63	1.7				
Past	RAC	107/480	22.29	3.57	.68268	-1.270	29	.214
	AC	133/480	27.71	4.43				

*** $p < .001$.

Table 6
Frequencies of RACs among the L1 Thai learners in the test items by participle type

Participle type	Total	Percentage	M	SE of difference	t	df	p
Present	189/480	39.37	6.3	.47690	5.731	29	< .001***
Past	107/480	22.29	3.57				

*** $p < .001$.

As presented in Table 5, the learners employed a significantly higher number of RACs than ACs for present participle items, $t(29) = 7.870$, $p < .001$. For past participle items, RACs were less frequent than ACs. Despite the statistical insignificance ($t(29) = -1.270$, $p = .214$), the result shows a trend in the predicted direction, providing partial support for the learners' higher RAC avoidance degree for past participle items. Additionally, according to Table 6, the RAC rate for past participle items was significantly lower than that for present participle items, $t(29) = 5.731$, $p < .001$. The findings suggest that the learners were more likely to avoid using RACs when experiencing past participles. Thus, Hypothesis 2 was confirmed.

The frequencies of RACs and ACs by clausal type and the RAC rates for temporal clause items and logical clause items were analysed to investigate Hypothesis 3. Table 7 shows the frequencies of the two structures among the learners in the test items by clausal type, while Table 8 compares the RAC frequency rates for temporal clause items and logical clause items.

Table 7
Frequencies of RACs and ACs among the L1 Thai learners in the test items by clausal type

Clausal type	Structure	Total	Percentage	M	SE of difference	t	df	p
Temporal	RAC	182/480	37.92	6.07	.55030	7.511	29	< .001***
	AC	58/480	12.08	1.93				
Logical	RAC	105/480	21.88	3.5	.42616	-2.347	29	.026*
	AC	135/480	28.12	4.5				

* $p < .05$. *** $p < .001$.

Table 8
Frequencies of RACs among the L1 Thai learners in the test items by clausal type

Clausal type	Total	Percentage	M	SE of difference	t	df	p
Temporal	182/480	37.92	6.07	.33108	7.752	29	< .001***
Logical	105/480	21.88	3.5				

*** $p < .001$.

As shown in Table 7, the participants supplied RACs rather than ACs when dealing with temporal clauses, $t(29) = 7.511$, $p < .001$, but the opposite occurred when they encountered logical clauses, $t(29) = -2.347$, $p = .026$. Table 8 also reveals that the RAC rate for temporal clauses was significantly higher than that for logical clauses, $t(29) = 7.752$, $p < .001$. In summary, when given logical clauses, the learners showed a higher RAC avoidance rate than when tackling temporal clauses, affirming Hypothesis 3.

DISCUSSION

Hypothesis 1 posited that L1 Thai learners were likely to avoid English RACs and use ACs instead. However, the findings showed that the learners were generally unlikely to underproduce RACs although the construction differs from its L1 counterpart. This did not correlate with Hypothesis 1 and Richards et al.'s (2002) claim that learners' avoidance of an L2 structure is caused by either its difficulty or non-existence in their native language. The participants' non-avoidance of RACs could result from their frequent exposure to the structure and the IPA task's choice provision.

The first reason for the learners' non-avoidance of RACs concerned their high exposure to the structure. The learners might have frequently encountered the construction from two primary sources: pre-university English classes and preparation for university admission.

First, the participants may have encountered RACs in English classes before university. This exposure probably pertains to the national curriculum's requirements for foreign language learning at the high school level. The Office of the Basic Education Commission of Thailand (2008) set goals for Grade 12 students, including being able to use complex sentences. Therefore, English complex constructions, including RACs, have likely been incorporated into English curricula and teaching materials used in Thai high schools. The inclusion of RACs into the curricula was verified by the researcher's personal communication with English teachers from many high schools (K. Supan, personal communication, November 1, 2023; P. Lamkhak, personal communication, November 1, 2023; T. Pholasane, personal communication, November 1, 2023). Moreover, RACs are present in the English textbook series approved and currently used by the Ministry of Education of Thailand. For instance, the *Go Beyond* (Campbell et al., 2021a, 2021b, 2021c), *Upstream* (Evans & Dooley, 2012a, 2012b, 2012c), and *Upbeat* (Evans & Dooley, 2023a, 2023b, 2023c) textbook series, covering students in Grades 10 to 12, feature RACs across all three books in each series. This means L1 Thai students likely encounter RACs for three consecutive years before university admission. This high exposure to reduced clauses in English classes could have familiarized them with the construction.

Second, the participants might have been exposed to RACs while preparing for university admission through two sources: tutorial schools and test preparation books. To enter university, high school students generally need satisfactory scores in English university admission tests (Poonpipatkit & Pungnirund, 2022), specifically Thai General Aptitude Test (TGAT), Applied Knowledge Level Tests (A-level Tests), General Aptitude Test (GAT), and Common Subject Areas Tests (CSAT), or certain English proficiency tests, such as IELTS, TOEFL iBT, and CU-TEP. To meet the students' demands, tutorial schools tend to prioritize elements commonly found in English university admission tests (Eng, 2019). Therefore, temporal and logical RACs are likely emphasized in tutorial schools' courses because the clauses are prevalent in the tests, e.g., temporal clauses in TGAT (2022, 2023), A-level (2022, 2023), GAT (2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2021), and CSAT (2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2021) and logical clauses in TGAT (2022), A-level (2022), GAT (2017), and CSAT (2015, 2016, 2017, 2021). RACs are also observed in test preparation books available in bookstores. These books provide practice tests and lessons on elements often observed in English university admission tests (Hao et al., 2025). Learners who prepare for the tests by studying the preparation books may have experienced reduced clauses, which would have helped enhance their understanding of using them. Examples of such test preparation books are those by Intrawatana (2022) and Rainvalee and Limcharoen (2021) for university admission tests, Barber (2023), Educational Testing Service (2019), and Sharpe (2020) for TOEFL iBT, Bowers et al. (2020) and Loughheed (2020) for IELTS, and Chulalongkorn University Language Institute (2022a, 2022b) for CU-TEP. The issue of preparing for university admission holds relevance given that most participants, 24 out of 30, were first-year students who had recently transitioned from high school.

Furthermore, the participants' inclination to employ RACs could be due to the given task's choice provision. The test type has been claimed to influence L2 learners' avoidance (Liao & Fukuya, 2004). Whereas production tests that demand learners produce a construction themselves tend to show a high underproduction rate (Thiamtawan, 2012), multiple-choice tests seem less likely to elicit avoidance (Thiamtawan & Pongpairoj, 2014). The participants in the present study were presented with both RACs and ACs in a multiple-choice format. Consequently, they did not need to determine the sentence structure to generate; this probably explains their preference for RACs. Conversely, without any given options, they might have been more inclined to avoid the reduced clauses. The participants' lower tendency to avoid L2 structures for the multiple-choice test is consistent with the findings of Okuwaki (2021), Thiamtawan (2012), and Thiamtawan and Pongpairoj (2014). Thus, the fact that the participants favored RACs in the multiple-choice task does not imply that they would employ it when taking other task types. However, the present study utilized only a multiple-choice test because it aimed to investigate the effects of participle types and clausal types on the participants' RAC avoidance. Using a production task might lead the participants to produce other constructions other than the investigated structures (Thiamtawan & Pongpairoj, 2014); therefore, choices were given to control their responses.

Although English RACs differ from their Thai counterparts in the existence of inflectional morphemes, the simplicity of the AC reduction, and the conditions in which the subjects are omissible, the L1 Thai participants were unlikely to avoid using RACs, probably because of their exposure to the construction and the choice provision in the IPA task. The low avoidance rate

was supported by Thiamtawan and Pongpairoj's (2014) FNAH, which posits that L2 learners may not always avoid L2 constructions absent in their native language or different from their L1 equivalent due to several reasons. FNAH is also consistent with the findings of some recent L2 avoidance studies, including Chotiros and Pongpairoj (2012), Thiamtawan and Pongpairoj (2014), and Wang and Pongpairoj (2021).

Regarding the findings for Hypotheses 2 and 3, the RAC underproduction rate was possibly related to the correlation between the grammatical complexity of the test items and the participants' choice. According to Skehan and Foster (2001), more complex items demand more attention from L2 learners than less complex ones. Given that content takes precedence over form (VanPatten, 1990), items with complicated content could consume much more attentional capacity, leaving residual attention for language form. Learners' insufficient focus on form may lead to them employing less complex grammatical structures for such items (Skehan & Foster, 2001). In contrast, when tackling items with simpler content which should absorb less attention, the learners could have ample attentional resources for considering the grammatical forms and exhibit a higher tendency to use more intricate constructions. Pertaining to the current study, the more cognitively demanding grammatical components in test items are, the more likely the participants are to avoid RACs.

Hypothesis 2, which stated that the participants would avoid RACs with a past participle more than they would those with a present participle, was supported. They produced fewer RACs than ACs for the past participle items, but vice versa for the present participle ones. Furthermore, the RAC rate for past participle items was lower than that for present participle items. The greater RAC avoidance rate for the past participle items might have resulted from the complexity of identifying the subject's thematic role. Past participles in reduced non-finite clauses can cause ambiguity about the subject's thematic role (e.g., Carroll, 2008; Harley, 2014; Ismani & Simamora, 2021; Rah & Adone, 2010; Yang & Shih, 2013), as the clauses lack a copula, and the participles may be misinterpreted as their past tense counterparts. According to Parrott (2010), such ambiguity is even more likely to occur when the past tense and past participial forms are identical, which is the case for the regular verbs included in the test items of this study. Because identifying the unclear thematic role of the subject in past participle items can drain participants' attention, they tend to steer clear of RACs and turn to ACs conveying the Theme role more clearly with the passive marker *be*. Conversely, since the *-ing* suffix indicates only active meaning (Gu, 2020), the participants were less likely to have had difficulties determining the thematic role of the subject in RACs with present participles compared to those with past participles. As a result, they may have had sufficient attentional resources for form, allowing them to adopt the more complex RAC construction.

Hypothesis 3 stated that the participants would underproduce logical RACs more than they would temporal RACs. The findings substantiated the hypothesis as the learners used more RACs than ACs for temporal clauses, but the opposite was observed for logical clauses. Moreover, the RAC rate for temporal clauses was higher than that for logical clauses. The findings might result from two factors mentioned earlier. The first factor is the difference in the optionality of a main clause marker between English and Thai logical RACs. The English subordinator *because* can be removed without adding other markers (e.g., Azar & Hagen,

2009; Hewings, 2013), which can confuse learners whose L1 logical RAC usually needs a main clause marker to suggest a resultative event (Iwasaki & Ingkaphirom, 2005). Secondly, the absence of a subordinating conjunction in English logical RACs could make the relationship between the subordinate clause and the main clause contextual and lead participants to perceive the clauses as unclear. Figuring out the relationship between the clauses could exploit a large pool of attention since conjunction-free adverbial clauses can suggest various meanings, depending on the context (e.g., Azar & Hagen, 2009; Hewings, 2013; Parrott, 2010). Due to the negative transfer and unclear clause relationships, the complexity of logical RACs could double, leading participants to prefer the ACs when showing the causes of the resultative clauses. On the contrary, English temporal RACs, similar to their Thai equivalents, normally contain an explicit time marker that clarifies the relationship between the main and subordinate clauses (e.g., Azar & Hagen, 2009; DeCapua, 2017; Hewings, 2013). Comprehending the clauses should have been less demanding for the participants and should have left them enough attention to focus more on form. This could have resulted in the higher RAC occurrence rate for the temporal clauses.

Based on the findings regarding Hypotheses 2 and 3, it can be concluded that grammatical complexity can influence L2 avoidance, indicating that the more complicated test items are more apt to cause avoidance than the simpler ones. The higher avoidance rate for the more complicated items aligns with several previous studies, including Kosolsombat and Pongpairoj (2017), Pazhakh (2007), and Sara and Mohammadreza (2013).

CONCLUSION

This study explored L1 Thai learners' avoidance of English RACs. The findings showed that the participants tended not to avoid RACs, possibly because of their pre-university exposure to the construction and the research instrument's choice provision. The research also established three factors which may affect L2 avoidance: participle type, clausal type, and grammatical complexity of test items.

The research findings yielded two pedagogical implications. First, a possible cause of the participants' non-avoidance was their exposure to RACs. Consequently, English language instructors are advised to provide students with ample real-life examples of the construction and introduce them within context to enhance learners' familiarity. Secondly, the participants showed a higher RAC avoidance rate for the logical clauses, possibly because the RACs without any connectors can serve various functions. Instructors should highlight the possible functions of the conjunction-free RACs and direct their attention to the context in which the constructions appear. Using RACs enables learners to write more concisely and fluidly, which is essential for academic writing.

This study has two limitations. Firstly, it included only L1 Thai learners whose native language features RACs which syntactically differ from English RACs. Future research might explore avoidance of English RACs among learners from other L1 backgrounds to substantiate L1 transfer effects on the avoidance degree. The second limitation concerns the position of

RACs. This study involved only RACs in the initial position. Subsequent studies could include RACs in both the initial and final positions.

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Appendix A

Comprehension Test

Directions: There are 20 items below. Below each sentence, there are five choices: (a), (b), (c), (d), and (e). Select the choice which you think best answers the question. After selecting one of the choices, indicate how sure you are of your answer by selecting one of the numbers on the scale. If you are “completely sure” that your answer is correct, choose number “4”. If you are “mostly sure”, choose number “3”. If you are “half sure-half unsure”, choose number “2”. If you are “mostly unsure”, choose number “1”. If you are “completely unsure”, choose “0”.

You have 30 minutes to complete the task.

- (1) Accepting his students’ efforts, the physical education teacher did not give them enough opportunities to develop.

What does the underlined part mean?

- (a) Although the teacher accepted his students’ efforts
- (b) If the teacher accepted his students’ efforts
- (c) Because the teacher accepted his students’ efforts

0	1	2	3	4
Completely unsure	Mostly unsure	Half-sure/ half-unsure	Mostly sure	Completely sure

- (2) Brad is often described as a millionaire loving parties while his brother prefers being alone.

What does the underlined part refer to?

- (a) A millionaire who loves parties
- (b) A millionaire who prefers being alone
- (c) A millionaire who does not love parties

0	1	2	3	4
Completely unsure	Mostly unsure	Half-sure/ half-unsure	Mostly sure	Completely sure

- (3) The academic librarians had a lot of difficulties when presented with copyright questions from library users.

What does the underlined part mean?

- (a) When the library users asked the librarians about copyright
- (b) When the librarians presented questions to the library users
- (c) When the library users had difficulties with questions about copyright

0	1	2	3	4
Completely unsure	Mostly unsure	Half-sure/ half-unsure	Mostly sure	Completely sure

- (4) Not for one moment did Dave think he would be offered the job.

What does the statement above mean?

- (a) Dave thought he would not be offered the job for one moment, so he was surprised when he got it.
- (b) For a moment Dave did not think that he would be offered the job, so he was surprised when he got it.
- (c) Dave did not think for a moment that he would be offered the job, so he was surprised when he got it.

0	1	2	3	4
Completely unsure	Mostly unsure	Half-sure/ half-unsure	Mostly sure	Completely sure

- (5) In 1487, the famous artist travelled to Milan with a pupil considered to have been his favorite.

What does the underlined part refer to?

- (a) The pupil who was considered the artist's favorite
- (b) The pupil who considered travelling to Milan with the artist
- (c) The pupil who considered himself as the artist's favorite

0	1	2	3	4
Completely unsure	Mostly unsure	Half-sure/ half-unsure	Mostly sure	Completely sure

- (6) Killed in battle, the soldier was awarded the Medal of Honor.

What does the underlined part mean?

- (a) But the soldier was killed
- (b) Before the soldier was killed
- (c) Because the soldier was killed

0	1	2	3	4
Completely unsure	Mostly unsure	Half-sure/ half-unsure	Mostly sure	Completely sure

- (7) Had James realized the problem, he would not have made those mistakes.

What does the statement above mean?

- (a) James had realized the problem and would not have made those mistakes.
- (b) If James had realized the problem, he would not have made those mistakes.
- (c) James would never have made those mistakes since he realized the problem.

0	1	2	3	4
Completely unsure	Mostly unsure	Half-sure/ half-unsure	Mostly sure	Completely sure

- (8) In 2018, the novelist left for China, where she became friends with a book editor inviting her to his house to discuss her novels.

What does the underlined part refer to?

- (a) A book editor who invited the novelist to his house
- (b) A book editor who became friends with the novelist
- (c) A book editor who was invited to the novelist's house

0	1	2	3	4
Completely unsure	Mostly unsure	Half-sure/ half-unsure	Mostly sure	Completely sure

- (9) Announcing her pregnancy on stage, the singer caused a sensation with her show.

What does the underlined part mean?

- (a) If the singer announced her pregnancy on stage
- (b) Because the singer announced her pregnancy on stage
- (c) Although the singer announced her pregnancy on stage

0	1	2	3	4
Completely unsure	Mostly unsure	Half-sure/ half-unsure	Mostly sure	Completely sure

- (10) Scarcely had the passengers got off the bus when it crashed into a car.

What does the statement above mean?

- (a) The passengers had scarcely got off the bus when it crashed into the back of a car.
- (b) Had the passengers scarcely got off the bus when it crashed into the back of a car.
- (c) Scarcely the passengers had got off the bus when it crashed into the back of a car.

0	1	2	3	4
Completely unsure	Mostly unsure	Half-sure/ half-unsure	Mostly sure	Completely sure

- (11) *Spectrum* is the newspaper section where readers will find investigative reports covered by distinguished journalists.

What does the underlined part refer to?

- (a) Reports which are included in Spectrum
- (b) Reports which are in a newspaper section
- (c) Reports which are done by distinguished news reporters

0	1	2	3	4
Completely unsure	Mostly unsure	Half-sure/ half-unsure	Mostly sure	Completely sure

- (12) After finishing his studies at the alternative school in 2019, John was admitted to the University of Cambridge.

What does the underlined part mean?

- (a) After John finished his studies at Cambridge
- (b) After John graduated from the alternative school
- (c) After John began his studies in 2019

0	1	2	3	4
Completely unsure	Mostly unsure	Half-sure/ half-unsure	Mostly sure	Completely sure

- (13) The child's room was so untidy that he could not find anything he was looking for.

What does the statement above mean?

- (a) He could not find anything that he was looking for the child's room was so untidy.
- (b) Was the child's room so untidy that he could not find anything he was looking for.
- (c) So untidy was the child's room that he could not find anything he was looking for.

0	1	2	3	4
Completely unsure	Mostly unsure	Half-sure/ half-unsure	Mostly sure	Completely sure

- (14) Goya Motors was founded in July 2022 by the businessman financing the company.

What does the underlined part refer to?

- (a) The businessman who financed the company
- (b) The businessman who incorporated Goya Motors
- (c) The businessman who was financed by the company

0	1	2	3	4
Completely unsure	Mostly unsure	Half-sure/ half-unsure	Mostly sure	Completely sure

- (15) Located in the city center, the department store is popular among both locals and tourists.

What does the underlined part mean?

- (a) Although it is located in the city center
- (b) Because it is located in the city center
- (c) If it is located in the city center

0	1	2	3	4
Completely unsure	Mostly unsure	Half-sure/ half-unsure	Mostly sure	Completely sure

(16) Only by working extra hours could the waiters afford to buy a house.

What does the statement above mean?

- (a) Only by working extra hours, the waiters could afford to buy a house.
- (b) When the waiters could afford to buy a house, they could work extra hours.
- (c) The waiters could afford to buy a house before they worked extra hours.

0	1	2	3	4
Completely unsure	Mostly unsure	Half-sure/ half-unsure	Mostly sure	Completely sure

(17) The experiments carried out by Dr. Cohen made a greater contribution to linguistics than those done by Dr. Miyasaka.

What does the underlined part refer to?

- (a) The experiments which contributed to linguistics
- (b) The experiments which were performed by Dr. Cohen
- (c) The experiments which were carried out by Dr. Miyasaka

0	1	2	3	4
Completely unsure	Mostly unsure	Half-sure/ half-unsure	Mostly sure	Completely sure

(18) When asked about her decision to join an idol group, Jane said she wanted to know what her idols went through to become famous.

What does the underlined part mean?

- (a) When Jane asked her idols
- (b) When someone asked Jane
- (c) When Jane decided to ask someone

0	1	2	3	4
Completely unsure	Mostly unsure	Half-sure/ half-unsure	Mostly sure	Completely sure

(19) The comprehensive history book she received from Nicholas is on the sofa.

What does the statement above mean?

- (a) On the sofa is a thought-provoking history book she received from Nicholas.
- (b) On the sofa to be a thought-provoking history book she received from Nicholas.
- (c) On the sofa being a thought-provoking history book she received from Nicholas.

0	1	2	3	4
Completely unsure	Mostly unsure	Half-sure/ half-unsure	Mostly sure	Completely sure



- (20) Before receiving an athletic scholarship to go to college, Bruce was a member of the 1991 national team.

What does the underlined part mean?

- (a) Before Bruce went to college
- (b) Before Bruce gave someone a scholarship
- (c) Before Bruce was given a scholarship

0	1	2	3	4
Completely unsure	Mostly unsure	Half-sure/ half-unsure	Mostly sure	Completely sure



Appendix B

Indirect Preference Assessment Task

Directions: There are 40 items below. One blank is given for each item. Two choices are provided for each blank. Please note that both choices are correct. Select the choice you prefer. You have 30 minutes to complete this task.

- (1) Because he had many health problems, the musician was often forced to _____ his scheduled appearances.
(a) cancel
(b) call off
- (2) After _____ in the army during the civil war, the nurse went back home to look after her mother.
(a) she served
(b) serving
- (3) Because _____, the student could defend himself against school bullies.
(a) he was given martial arts lessons from a karate school
(b) a karate school gave him martial arts lessons
- (4) When _____ by her colleagues to speak about her family background, the secretary politely declined.
(a) she was encouraged
(b) encouraged
- (5) Because he really wanted to stop drinking, the farmer went to rehab for about 15 days, and _____.
(a) he finally achieved his goal
(b) his goal was finally achieved
- (6) Before the politician was known for her _____ in education campaigns, she raised awareness on the effects of global warming.
(a) involvement
(b) participation
- (7) _____ his colleagues would think he made an excuse for his absence, the accountant claimed his father was sick.
(a) Because he feared
(b) Fearing
- (8) After she had a long history of failure in Hollywood, _____ to return to her hometown.
(a) the actress was advised by her boyfriend
(b) her boyfriend advised the actress
- (9) Because he donated _____ amounts of money to charitable organizations, the businessman was renowned for his social contributions.
(a) enormous
(b) huge
- (10) Before _____ on Tuesday at 54, the singer wrote a social media post about her career success.
(a) she died
(b) dying

- (11) Because he believed _____ in the long run, the engineer would not get the vaccine.
(a) the COVID-19 vaccine could affect his health
(b) his health could be affected by the COVID-19 vaccine
- (12) Before the law was passed to prevent misuse of the drug, the number of people in Colorado affected by it was _____.
(a) rising
(b) increasing
- (13) _____ by one company, the graduate kept improving himself until he landed a respectable job in a bank.
(a) Because he was rejected
(b) Rejected
- (14) When he met the cancer patient, _____.
(a) the doctor recommended no further treatment
(b) no further treatment was recommended by the doctor
- (15) _____ paragraph writing to be easy, the tutor neglected teaching students how to write paragraphs effectively.
(a) Because she perceived
(b) Perceiving
- (16) Before _____, he had received several awards for his non-fiction works.
(a) the writer wrote stories
(b) the stories were written by the writer
- (17) Because the lecturer _____ excellent student evaluations, she was nominated for the Distinguished Teacher Award last year.
(a) received
(b) got
- (18) When _____ to review the research paper, the referee was given the abstract for initial consideration.
(a) he was asked
(b) asked
- (19) Because he was _____ striking the ball with either foot, the footballer was selected for the Italy national team.
(a) skillful at
(b) capable of
- (20) When the physicist agreed to participate in the scientific project, _____ as project director.
(a) he was appointed by his boss
(b) his boss appointed him
- (21) _____ to do his own stunts, the actor prepared greatly for his role in the movie.
(a) Because he was allowed
(b) Allowed
- (22) Since his ex married her boyfriend, _____.
(a) the writer has not experienced any bad feelings
(b) there have been no bad feelings experienced by the writer

- (23) Before _____ the ward after the shift, the pharmacist showered to disinfect her body.
(a) she entered
(b) entering
- (24) Because he was _____ by the machine's capacity and durability, the factory owner bought two more.
(a) fascinated
(b) attracted
- (25) When the comedian passed away, _____ that she had donated a huge fund for those unable to afford medical care.
(a) it was revealed by the media
(b) the media revealed
- (26) _____ the land, the farmer should have the right to decide what species and variety of crops will be grown on it.
(a) Because he owned
(b) Owning
- (27) When the singer made her debut album in 2022, _____ as talented and charismatic.
(a) her director described her
(b) she was described by her director
- (28) _____ by his superiors and peers, the policeman felt secure at his workplace.
(a) Because he was accepted
(b) Accepted
- (29) After her son was kicked out of college, the merchant _____ that he go study abroad.
(a) suggested
(b) proposed
- (30) When _____ of stealing a brick from a wall of the Colosseum, the tourist hired an experienced Italian attorney to help him.
(a) he was accused
(b) accused
- (31) Because _____, the songwriter developed an interest towards the piano when he was three.
(a) he was influenced by his older brother
(b) his older brother influenced him
- (32) Before _____ a victory over the Scottish army, the commander defeated the Welsh enemy.
(a) he achieved
(b) achieving
- (33) The cameraman who often worked with the film director described him as a "complete filmmaker" who _____ all aspects of production.
(a) oversaw
(b) took control of

- (34) _____ by her students' lack of enthusiasm, the teacher came up with a wider range of activities.
(a) Because she was disappointed
(b) Disappointed
- (35) After he went missing for two hours, _____ on the beach at Ballykinler Army Base.
(a) the swimmer was found by police officers
(b) police officers found the swimmer
- (36) The scientist played a/an _____ role in the national space agency of India.
(a) significant
(b) important
- (37) When _____ about superhero movies, the actor revealed he had been offered the role of Batman.
(a) he was questioned
(b) questioned
- (38) Because the patient suffered from a car accident that disfigured her face, she _____ a surgical operation.
(a) had
(b) underwent
- (39) When the historian first _____ ancient Egyptian monuments, she did not exhibit the great interest in Egyptology that developed in her later years.
(a) visited
(b) stopped by
- (40) _____ the phrase "work-life balance" suggested either "work" or "life", the economist preferred the phrase "work-life harmony".
(a) Because she believed
(b) Believing