



**COMMUNICATION APPREHENSION IN THAI AND ENGLISH
LANGUAGES AMONG M.A. STUDENTS IN AN INTERNATIONAL
PROGRAM IN BANGKOK**

By

NAVAPEE HOMHUAL

**A RESEARCH PAPER SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL
FULFILLMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF ENGLISH
FOR CAREERS
LANGUAGE INSTITUTE
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ENTITLED

COMMUNICATION APPREHENSION IN THAI AND ENGLISH LANGUAGES
AMONG M.A. STUDENTS IN AN INTERNATIONAL PROGRAM IN BANGKOK

was approved as partial fulfillment of the requirements for
the Degree of Master of Arts in English for Careers

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Chairman



(Ajarn Panna Chaturongakul, Ph.D.)

Member and Advisor



(Associate Professor Sucharat Rimkeeratikul, Ph.D.)

Dean



(Associate Professor Pornsiri Singhapreecha, Ph.D.)

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Author	Miss Navapee Homhual
Degree	Master of Arts
Major Field/Faculty/University	English for Careers Language Institute Thammasat University
Independent Study Paper Advisor	Associate Professor Sucharat Rimkeeratikul, Ph.D.
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ABSTRACT

The objectives of this study were to explore the communication apprehension when students communicate in Thai (L1) and English (L2), find out the CA difference between students using Thai and English, and investigate the situations that affect students communicating anxiety when communicating in Thai and English. The sample was 60 students who study in Master of Arts in English for Careers, Language Institute, Thammasat University. The questionnaire was used as an instrument to find the results of this study.

The results revealed that the CA score in the group with the lowest GPA scores was the highest among the other groups. The CA in L2 was higher than CA in L1 with the CA score in public speaking as the highest score in both Thai and English. From open-ended questions, it appeared that most of the students are afraid to speak in English and are uncomfortable expressing themselves in English. This could be from the lack of knowledge, the limitation of vocabulary, and the demand of impromptu speeches. Findings also suggested that the students tend to continuously practice the use of the language in order to reduce their communication apprehension and increase their chance of interacting with foreigners.

Keywords: Communication apprehension, PRCA-24, native language, second language

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Miss Navapee Homhual



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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

Most Thai students study English as a second language. Some of them speak English well but some of them cannot communicate in English despite the fact that they have been studying English for a number of years. It is interesting to find out the reasons why students cannot speak in English. In almost 30 years of research on foreign language learning, Randall (2007) has disclosed that second language anxiety is a variable in the second language learning process and it has specific effects on learning. To discover the causes of the worry and dread, McCroskey (1986) investigated communication apprehension by using a tool to determine the level of communication apprehension that is called The Personal Report of Communication Apprehension (PRCA-24). Over the past 40 years or so, the PRCA-24 has been the key measurement to the investigation of communication apprehension. It was found that students with high CA tend to do poorly in their examinations. They could not achieve much in their education. High CA students were significantly more likely to have lower grade point averages compared to low CA students (McCroskey, Booth-Butterfield, and Payne, 1989). At the most primary level, the students' fears typically fall into the two broad categories of productive skills: writing and speaking. Second language learning can sometimes be a painful experience for many learners (Zheng, 2008). They feel nervous or fearful to speak in the second/foreign language in many circumstances such as group discussions, meetings, dyadic and public speaking. Woodrow (2008) revealed that CA in the second language can be weakening and can influence their educational achievement. This study focuses on the communication anxiety of Thai students who study English as a second language.

1.2 Research questions

1.2.1 What are the CA scores among MEC year 1 and year 2 students?

1.2.2 What are the CA levels among MEC year 1 and year 2 students?

1.2.3 Is there any difference between CA in L1 (Thai) and CA in L2 (English) among students of MEC year 1 and year 2?

1.2.4 What are the situations that affect MEC students in year 1 and year 2?

1.3 Research objectives

1.3.1 To explore the CA scores among MEC year 1 and year 2 students.

1.3.2 To explore the CA levels among MEC year 1 and year 2 students.

1.3.3 To find out the difference between CA in L1 (Thai) and CA in L2 (English) among students of MEC year 1 and year 2.

1.3.4 To investigate the situations that affect students in year 1 and year 2.

1.4 Definition of terms

This study focuses on Thai students' CA when speaking English as a second language in four dimensions: group discussions, meetings, dyadic and public speaking. To avoid any misunderstanding the key terms are described as follows.

Communication Apprehension (CA) refers to a fear or anxiety related to oral communication with other person.

PRCA-24 refers to “The Personal Report of Communication Apprehension”, this instrument was invented by McCroskey (1977) and is used to measure communication apprehension.

Native language (L1) refers to the Thai language.

Second language (L2) refers to the English language.

1.5 Scope of the study

This study is limited to year 1 and year 2 graduate students of academic year 2015 in MEC who study English as a second language. They are using both Thai and English languages in many circumstances: group discussions, meetings, interpersonal conversations and public speaking. In this program, English is used as the medium language.

1.6 Significance of the study

This study is significant in several aspects as follows.

1.6.1 The results of this study will help MEC students to know what factors affect them when they acquire anxiety. Moreover, they may understand the causes of the anxiety in order to reduce their apprehension.

1.6.2 This study may be able to help teachers understand the obstacles of communicating in English as a second language. Moreover, they may be able to create the curriculum that is appropriate to the students by using the results of this study.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The main purpose of this chapter is to review the literature concerning the topics relevant to this study: (1) definitions of communication apprehension (2) second language anxiety (3) types of communication apprehension (4) causes and effects of communication apprehension (5) CA measure (6) the MEC (CEIC) program and (7) previous related studies. They are as follows:

2.1 Definition of communication apprehension

Communication apprehension is “an individual’s level of fear or anxiety associated with either real or anticipated communication with another person or persons” (McCroskey, 1984). It is also a subjective feeling when people communicate with other people in many circumstances.

2.2 Second language anxiety

Second language (L2) anxiety is a feeling of fear, nervousness, or worry about using or learning a second or foreign language. Especially in speaking, many researchers found that for students studying English as a second language, it has a weakening effect on oral performance (Woodrow, 2006). They have communication anxiety caused by the attitude of the students (Kopkitthanarot, 2011) that decreased the ability of speaking. Horwitz K., Horwitz B. and Cope (1986) found that there are three types of causes in foreign language anxiety: 1) communication apprehension; 2) test-anxiety; and 3) fear of negative evaluation. However, this study will focus mainly on communication apprehension.

2.3 Types of communication apprehension

There are four points on a continuum that can be identified as types of communication apprehension.

2.3.1 Traitlike CA is viewed as “a relatively enduring, personality type orientation toward a given mode of communication across a wide variety of contexts” (McCroskey, 1984). The PRCA-24 is the elementary measure of CA to determine the individual scores across the time (McCroskey C. and Beatty J., 1986). Usually, people may have high anxiety to communicate with others while they have lower level of anxiety to communicate with family members or close friends (Richmond & McCroskey, 1998). However, people with trait-like CA may have high level of anxiety whenever they have to communicate with others.

2.3.2 Generalized-Context CA is another type of CA that is viewed as “a relatively enduring, personality-type orientation toward communication in a given type of context” (McCroskey, 1984). The PRCA addressed the context in four types: in dyadic interactions, in small group discussions, in meetings or classes, and in public. This type of CA can be related to people having a high level of CA in one type of context while having less or no apprehension in another type of context.

2.3.3 Person-Group CA is viewed as “a relatively enduring orientation toward communication with a given person or group of people” (McCroskey, 1984). This type of CA is related to people who got highly apprehensive by interacting with individuals or groups. For example, a worker may be highly anxious when talking to his or her boss, but may have little or no apprehension when talking to his or her colleague.

2.3.4 Situational CA is viewed as “a transitory orientation toward communication with a given person or group of people” (McCroskey, 1984). This type of CA is apprehension in a person that occurs with a specific situation depending on who he or she is communicating with at a certain time.

This study will focus on traitlike CA, as an individual’s orientation toward communication across varied contexts and situations (McCroskey and Beatty, 1998 cited

by Rimkeeratikul, 2015). It will be divided into four different contexts: (a) group discussions, (b) meetings, (c) dyadic conversations and (d) public speaking.

2.4 Causes and effects of CA

2.4.1 Causes of CA

CA is defined as a subjective feeling. The cause of CA can be either genetic or the environment, or the combination of the two (McCroskey, 1984). Genetics influences people who may share the same environment differently. That is, some people may already have tendency to be with high CA since they were born, and the environment around them can determine differently the personality.

2.4.2 Effects of CA

The effects of CA can be divided in to two categories: internal and external effects.

2.4.2.1 Internal impact of CA is viewed from a cognitive rather than a behavioral perspective. McCroskey (1984, p.33) states that “The only effect of CA that is predicted to be universal across both individuals and types of CA is an internally experienced feeling of discomfort.” The lower the CA, the less internal discomfort. The internal feelings of a high level of CA are the feelings of discomfort, fear, being unable to handle things and being unsatisfactory (Vitayanantapornkul, 2014). The physiological effects of internal CA would be sweating, rapid heart beating, dry mouth and shakiness of hands and legs (Richmond and McCroskey, 1998 cited by Vitayanantapornkul, 2014).

2.4.2.2 Regarding the external impact of CA, there are three typical patterns of external impact of CA: communication avoidance, communication withdrawal, and communication disruption (McCroskey, 1984).

(1) Communication avoidance is the situation which people can make a decision to confront or avoid it. The people with high CA may usually select to avoid communication. Hence, they tend to choose professions that require the least communication. They may also choose seats in meetings or in classrooms that are less

apparent, and may avoid communicating with others. -

(2) Communication withdrawal is the behavioral pattern that withdraws from situations. For instance, talking only as much as absolutely required, speaking very short speech in public settings, and answering the questions only when called upon in meetings and in classrooms.

(3) Communication disruption occurs with people who have disfluencies in verbal speech and abnormal nonverbal behaviors (Vitayanantapornkul, 2014).

2.5 CA measurement

The common measurement of CA is the Personal Report of Communication Apprehension (PRCA-24) which is most widely used to measure communication apprehension. It is composed of 24 statements about feelings they have when they have to communicate with others. There are separations in four different contexts: group discussions, meetings, interpersonal conversations and public speaking. The scores can range from 6 to 30 in each context and the total scores should range between 24 and 120. Any score above 72 indicates a high level of CA.

The effect of CA on grade point average indicated high CA students were significantly more likely to have low grade point averages compared to low CA students (McCroskey, Booth-Butterfield, and Payne, 1989).

2.6 The MEC (CEIC) program

According to the official web site of the Language Institute of Thammasat University (LITU) (<http://www.litu.tu.ac.th>), the MEC program was officially established as a Master's Degree Program in 1998 to provide the English language courses for people who graduated with at least a Bachelor's Degree in any field to improve their English

abilities in all of the four skills: Reading, Writing, Listening, and Speaking. All activities in the classroom are done in the English language (L2).

2.7 Previous related studies

Communication apprehension is one of the most popular topics for many researchers to investigate in a number of countries like United States, Australia, Korea, and Thailand. There are many research studies done on this concept.

Park and Lee (2004) studied the relationship among the anxiety, self-confidence and oral performance of the students using second language in conversation classes. The 132 Korean college students were selected. The instrument of this study was a questionnaire to find out the effects of anxiety and self-confidence in L2 learners. The results revealed that anxiety and oral performance ability had a negative correlation, while confidence and oral performance had a direct correlation.

In 2011, Kopkitthanarot conducted a research on communication apprehension in public speaking among class L2 English for careers students, Thammasat University. The participants in this research study were 80 students who were studying in the program of Master of Arts in English for Careers (MEC), Thammasat University, Thailand. The data was collected by using a questionnaire and selecting participants for the personal interviews. The result of the study showed that more than a half of the participants have a very high anxiety in public speaking and when the level of public speaking anxiety was increased, grade point was decreased. Moreover, regarding the students who have high level anxiety, they have a negative attitude as well. Thus the important factor is the attitude of the students that is decreasing the ability of speaking.

Wongthodsaporn (2012) studied 85 undergraduate students studying in the faculty of applied science at King Mongkut's university of Technology North Bangkok, Thailand. She examined the factors discouraging Thai undergraduate students from speaking English with foreigners by using a questionnaire with close ended and open ended questions to reveal their English speaking problems. The result revealed that the

main factors discouraging students from speaking English with foreigners were (a) having inadequate English vocabulary knowledge (b) limited knowledge of grammatical structures (c) experiencing anxiety when speaking English (d) feeling uncomfortable, nervous and not confident as well as (e) restrictive chances to speak English in their daily lives.

Vitayanantapornkul (2014) studied the factors that affect to speaking anxiety when salespersons in the jewelry business in Bangkok communicate by using English with foreign customers and the strategies which they use to cope with their anxiety. The sample was 50 salespeople in the jewelry industry and 5 salespeople from JP Co.,Ltd. The instruments of this study were a questionnaire and personal interview. The result revealed that CA levels in English context were higher than CA levels in Thai context. They had high anxiety because they are afraid to make grammatical errors when communicate with foreign customers. Moreover, they have less confident if they lack information involving their work when customers ask. Thus, they usually prepare themselves before speaking with customers as the strategy to cope with their anxiety.

Rimkeeratikul (2015) studied communication apprehension in Thai and English of engineering students in a unique program in Thailand. The sample was 90 students in an engineering program at a public university in Bangkok, Thailand. The instrument was a questionnaire which composed of three parts: (1) demographic data; (2) the PRCA-24 in Thai and (3) the PRCA-24 in English. The results revealed that the CA level when using English higher than Thai in all dimensions, except in meetings. It could be that they may not have had experience in meeting situation.

For most studies, they found that communication apprehension in the second language can influence their ability of communication and affect their educational achievement. The findings also give a better understanding towards causes and effects of CA in L2. Moreover, this study may be able to help the readers understand CA in L2 in a certain context and it may help expand the literature on CA in L2 as well.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes the key elements of the research methodology of this study: (1) Participants, (2) Research instruments, and (3) Data analysis.

3.1 Participants

The population in this study consisted of students who are studying MEC in Thammasat University at the Thaprachan campus. The participants were studying in a master's degree program. The English courses provided mainly aim to improve the student's language proficiency in listening, speaking, writing, and reading.

A convenience sampling was applied to 60 randomly selected participants who were studying in second year in the Master's degree program in English for Careers and first year in the Master's Degree program of Career English for International, Language Institute, Thammasat University. The reason for choosing these students was because they had opportunity to speak English in various circumstances: interpersonal conversations, group discussions, meetings, and public speaking. All students are required to speak English in class with both Thai and Foreign teachers and other students. Some of them were working at international organizations and communicate in English.

3.2 Research instruments

Data collection was done by questionnaire, which is composed of three parts. They are 1) personal information of the respondents 2) the personal report of communication apprehension (PRCA-24), and 3) the open-ended questions regarding English speaking anxiety. They are as follows.

3.2.1 The first part intended to elicit general information and educational background of the participants, including gender, age, marital status, education, how long he/she has been studying English, and the GPA score.

3.2.2 The second part aimed to figure out the degree of CA in L1 and L2 that the participants faced in the classroom or working. This scale measured an individual's level of apprehension by ratings on the questions that provided 24 items. The participants had to answer each statement, ranging from: (5) = strongly disagree, (4) = disagree, (3) = neutral, (2) = agree, and (1) = strongly agree. The possible range is 24 to 120; the higher the score, the more communication apprehension.

3.2.3 The last part aimed to find out the situations that affect English speaking anxiety. The two open-ended questions were asked in this part. For example, "Tell me situations that make you feel uncomfortable using the English language in oral communication. What make you become uncomfortable in these situations?", and "Do you have any plan to reduce your oral communication anxiety? If yes, please elaborate what is included in your plan. If no, why?"

This questionnaire showed the level of anxiety and the score of CA that students got and ranged from highest anxiety level to lowest anxiety level in terms of gender, age, years of studying English, as well as grade point average.

3.3 Data analysis

The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was used for the analysis of the quantitative data in this study. The descriptive statistics: mean, frequency, and percentage were used to analyze the data of this research.

The respondents' answers from the open-ended questions were also analyzed and discussed in the findings and summary.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter reports the results and the discussion of communication apprehension testing among the MEC students using Thai (L1) and English (L2). The questionnaire was divided into three parts; the personal information of the respondents, the PRCA-24 testing and the two open-ended questions.

4.1 The results of personal information of the respondents

The 60 participants were asked to participate in this study. They are students in year 1 and year 2 of MEC, Thammasat University.

4.1.1 Gender

According to table 4.1, most of the respondents of this study were female. From total 60 persons, 47 were female (78.3%) and 13 were male (21.7%).

Table 4.1 Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	13	21.7
Female	47	78.3
Total	60	100

4.1.2 Age

As shown in table 4.2, the range of the ages was divided into 4 groups: 21-30 years, 31-40 years, 41-50 years and over 50 years. Most of the participants were 21-30 years (58.3%) and followed by those whose ages were between 31-40 years (33.3%).

Table 4.2 Age

Age	Frequency	Percent
21-30	35	58.3
31-40	20	33.3
41-50	3	5
Over 50	2	3.3
Total	60	100

4.1.3 The period of time of studying English

As shown in table 4.3, the range of the period of time of studying English was divided into 7 groups; 1-5 years, 6-10 years, 11-15 years, 16-20 years, 21-25 years, 26-30 years, and 31-35 years. Students who studied English for a group of 16-20 years were the majority of participants. From a total of 60 persons, 26 students studied English for 16-20 years (43.3%), 14 students studied English for 11-15 years (23.3%) followed by those who studied English for 1-5 years of which there were 7 students (11.7%).

Table 4.3 Period of time of studying English

The period of time (years)	Frequency	Percent
1-5	7	11.7
6-10	3	5
11-15	14	23.3
16-20	26	43.3

(continue)

Table 4.3 The period of time of studying English (continued)

The period of time (years)	Frequency	Percent
21-25	6	10
26-30	3	5
31-35	1	1.7
Total	60	100

4.1.4 GPA

As shown in table 4.4, GPA is divided into three groups: 2.50 – 3.00, 3.01 – 3.50 and 3.51 – 4.00. Most of the respondents got the GPA between 3.01 – 3.50 (51.70%), followed by those who got the GPA between 3.51 – 4.00 (41.70%).

Table 4.4 GPA

GPA	Frequency	Percent
2.50-3.00	5	8.3
3.01-3.50	31	51.7
3.51-4.00	24	40
Total	60	100

4.2 Discussions

In this part, discussions were done by following the research questions: RQ1: What are the CA score among MEC year 1 and year 2 students?, RQ2: What are the CA levels among MEC year 1 and year 2 students?, RQ3: Is there any difference between CA in L1 (Thai) and CA in L2 (English) among students of MEC year1 and year 2?, and RQ4: What are the situations that affect CA among students in year 1 and year 2?

4.2.1 Part I: What are the CA scores among MEC year 1 and year 2 students?

The PRCA-24 is an instrument that is composed of 24 statements. The score of this instrument should range between 24 and 120. If the score is between 24 and 54, you have a low level of CA. If your score is between 55 and 83, you have a moderate level of CA. If your score is between 84 and 120, you have a high level of CA.

The PRCA measurement is divided into 4 contexts: group discussions (items 1 to 6), meetings (items 7 to 12), interpersonal conversations (items 13 to 18) and public speaking (items 19 to 24). The score of each context is computes as follows.

<u>Contexts</u>	<u>Scoring Formula</u>
Group discussion	18+scores from item 2, 4, 6; - scores from item 1, 3, 5
Meetings	18+scores from item 8, 9, 12; - scores from item 7, 10, 11
Interpersonal conversations	18+scores from item 14, 16, 17; - scores from item 13, 15, 18
Public speaking	18+scores from item 19, 21, 23; - scores from item 20, 22, 24

If the score of each context is above 18 that means you have high level of CA in that context. The overall CA can be obtained by combining the score of 4 contexts together. The score above 85 reveals a very high level of CA.

4.2.1.1 The PRCA-24 in Thai context (L1)

The result shows the overall of communication apprehension when students are using Thai (L1). The average of CA in Thai context is at 63.95 scores, which can be interpreted that most students have a moderate level when performing in Thai context. Table 4.5 revealed the responses to individual statements in PRCA-24 Thai context.

Table 4.5 The responses to individual statements in PRCA-24 Thai context

Statement	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1) I dislike participating in group discussions.	3 (5%)	2 (3.3%)	9 (15%)	28 (46.7%)	18 (30%)
2) Generally, I am comfortable while participating in group discussion.	19 (31.7%)	26 (43.3%)	14 (23.3%)	-	1 (1.7%)
3) I am tense and nervous while participating in group discussions.	2 (3.3%)	5 (8.3%)	15 (25%)	25 (41.7%)	13 (21.7%)
4) I like to get involved in group discussions.	14 (23.3%)	24 (40%)	18 (30%)	3 (5%)	1 (1.7%)
5) Engaging in a group discussion with new people makes me tense and nervous.	2 (3.3%)	16 (26.7%)	18 (30%)	15 (25%)	9 (15%)
6) I am calm and relaxed while participating in group discussions.	11 (18.3%)	18 (30%)	24 (40%)	7 (11.7%)	-
7) Generally, I am nervous when I have to participate in meetings.	5 (8.3%)	11 (18.3%)	15 (25%)	18 (30%)	11 (18.3%)
8) Usually I am calm and relaxed when I am called upon to express an opinion at a meeting.	6 (10%)	19 (31.7%)	16 (26.7%)	16 (26.7%)	3 (5%)
9) I am very calm and relaxed when I am called upon to express an opinion at a meeting.	6 (10%)	15 (25%)	21 (35%)	9 (15%)	9 (15%)
10) I am afraid to express myself at meetings.	4 (6.7%)	11 (18.3%)	11 (18.3%)	23 (38.3%)	11 (18.3%)

(continue)

Table 4.5 The responses to individual statements in PRCA-24 Thai context (continued)

Statement	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
11) Communicating at meetings usually makes me uncomfortable.	4 (6.7%)	10 (16.7%)	12 (20%)	24 (40%)	10 (16.7%)
12) I am very relaxed when answering questions at a meeting.	5 (8.3%)	15 (25%)	24 (40%)	14 (23.3%)	2 (3.3%)
13) While participating in a conversation with a new acquaintance, I feel very nervous.	2 (3.3%)	18 (30%)	18 (30%)	11 (18.3%)	11 (18.3%)
14) I have no fear of speaking up in conversations.	15 (25%)	18 (30%)	14 (23.3%)	10 (16.7%)	3 (5%)
15) Ordinarily I am very tense and nervous in conversations.	1 (1.7%)	11 (18.3%)	9 (15%)	24 (40%)	15 (25%)
16) Ordinarily I am very calm and relaxed in conversations.	13 (21.7%)	24 (40%)	14 (23.3%)	8 (13.3%)	1 (1.7%)
17) While conversing with a new acquaintance, I feel very relaxed.	5 (8.3%)	17 (28.3%)	27 (45%)	9 (15%)	2 (3.3%)
18) I am afraid to speak up in conversations.	1 (1.7%)	7 (11.7%)	15 (25%)	19 (31.7%)	18 (30%)
19) I have no fear of giving a speech.	6 (10%)	17 (28.3%)	15 (25%)	16 (26.7%)	6 (10%)
20) Certain parts of my body feel very tense and rigid while giving a speech.	5 (8.3%)	25 (41.7%)	18 (30%)	8 (13.3%)	4 (6.7%)
21) I feel relaxed while giving a speech.	7 (11.7%)	8 (13.3%)	16 (26.7%)	23 (38.3%)	6 (10%)
22) My thoughts become confused and jumbled when I am giving a speech.	7 (11.7%)	25 (41.7%)	14 (23.3%)	9 (15%)	5 (8.3%)
23) I face the prospect of giving a speech with confidence.	1 (1.7%)	32 (53.3%)	18 (30%)	8 (13.3%)	1 (1.7%)
24) While giving a speech I get so nervous, I forget facts I really know.	6 (10%)	23 (38.3%)	14 (23.3%)	13 (21.7%)	4 (6.7%)

The overall CA in Thai context was separated into 4 groups; group discussion, meetings, interpersonal conversations and public speaking as shown in Table 4.6. The public speaking dimension was the highest score from all sub-dimensions that makes them get high CA. It was stated that it is because they are afraid to speak in front of many people and afraid to make a mistake while giving a speech to the audiences.

Table 4.6 The overall CA in Thai context

Sub-dimensions	Min	Max	CA Mean
Group discussion	6	23	13.78
Meetings	7	28	16.55
Interpersonal conversations	6	27	14.93
Public speaking	7	29	18.68
Total			63.95

4.2.1.2 The PRCA-24 in English context (L2)

The result shows the overall communication apprehension when students using English (L2). The average of CA in English context is at 71.05, which can be interpreted that most students have a moderate level when performing in English context. Table 4.7 revealed the responses to individual statement in PRCA-24 English context.

Table 4.7 The responses to individual statements in PRCA-24 English context

Statement	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1) I dislike participating in group discussions.	2 (3.3%)	6 (10%)	20 (33.3%)	18 (30%)	14 (23.3%)

(continue)

Table 4.7 The responses to individual statements in PRCA-24 English context (continued)

Statement	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
2) Generally, I am comfortable while participating in group discussions.	13 (21.7%)	29 (48.3%)	13 (21.7%)	4 (6.7%)	1 (1.7%)
3) I am tense and nervous while participating in group discussions.	3 (5%)	15 (25%)	16 (26.7%)	19 (31.7%)	7 (11.7%)
4) I like to get involved in group discussions.	10 (16.7%)	24 (40%)	22 (36.7%)	3 (5%)	1 (1.7%)
5) Engaging in a group discussion with new people makes me tense and nervous.	4 (6.7%)	20 (33.3%)	15 (25%)	16 (26.7%)	5 (8.3%)
6) I am calm and relaxed while participating in group discussions.	7 (11.7%)	14 (23.3%)	27 (45%)	11 (18.3%)	1 (1.7%)
7) Generally, I am nervous when I have to participate in meetings.	5 (8.3%)	21 (35%)	14 (23.3%)	13 (21.7%)	7 (11.7%)
8) Usually I am calm and relaxed when I am called upon to express an opinion at a meeting.	3 (5%)	19 (31.7%)	14 (23.3%)	20 (33.3%)	4 (6.7%)
9) I am very calm and relaxed when I am called upon to express an opinion at a meeting.	4 (6.7%)	13 (21.7%)	20 (33.3%)	13 (21.7%)	10 (16.7%)
10) I am afraid to express myself at meetings.	6 (10%)	17 (28.3%)	11 (18.3%)	27 (28.3%)	9 (15%)
11) Communicating at meetings usually makes me uncomfortable.	7 (11.7%)	16 (26.7%)	8 (13.3%)	21 (35%)	8 (13.3%)
12) I am very relaxed when answering questions at a meeting.	1 (1.7%)	15 (25%)	23 (38.3%)	17 (28.3%)	4 (6.7%)
13) While participating in a conversation with a new acquaintance, I feel very nervous.	9 (15%)	15 (25%)	15 (25%)	11 (18.3%)	10 (16.7%)
14) I have no fear of speaking up in conversations.	7 (11.7%)	15 (25%)	17 (28.3%)	17 (28.3%)	4 (6.7%)
15) Ordinarily I am very tense and nervous in conversations.	1 (1.7%)	18 (30%)	11 (18.3%)	18 (30%)	12 (20%)
16) Ordinarily I am very calm and relaxed in conversations.	5 (8.3%)	22 (36.7%)	16 (26.7%)	15 (25%)	2 (3.3%)

(continue)

Table 4.7 The responses to individual statements in PRCA-24 English context (continued)

Statement	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
17) While conversing with a new acquaintance, I feel very relaxed.	3 (5%)	16 (26.7%)	21 (35%)	18 (30%)	2 (3.3%)
18) I am afraid to speak up in conversations.	2 (3.3%)	12 (20%)	15 (25%)	20 (33.3%)	11 (18.3%)
19) I have no fear of giving a speech.	4 (6.7%)	12 (20%)	18 (30%)	16 (26.7%)	10 (16.7%)
20) Certain parts of my body feel very tense and rigid while giving a speech.	11 (18.3%)	24 (40%)	14 (23.3%)	8 (13.3%)	3 (5%)
21) I feel relaxed while giving a speech.	3 (5%)	9 (15%)	13 (21.7%)	22 (36.7%)	13 (21.7%)
22) My thoughts become confused and jumbled when I am giving a speech.	13 (21.7%)	25 (41.7%)	12 (20%)	9 (15%)	1 (1.7%)
23) I face the prospect of giving a speech with confidence.	1 (1.7%)	26 (43.3%)	20 (33.3%)	11 (18.3%)	2 (3.3%)
24) While giving a speech I get so nervous, I forget facts I really know.	14 (23.3%)	20 (33.3%)	14 (23.3%)	9 (15%)	3 (5%)

The overall CA in English context was separated into 4 groups: group discussion, meetings, interpersonal conversations and public speaking as shown in Table 4.8. There were two sub-dimensions, the public speaking and the meetings, that the respondents had anxiety in when using English language. It could be that both sub-dimensions required them to interact with more people compared to the other sub-dimensions.

Table 4.8 The overall CA in English context

Sub-dimensions	Min	Max	CA Mean
Group discussion	7	25	15.52
Meetings	10	29	18.23

(continue)

Table 4.8 The overall CA in English context (continued)

Sub-dimensions	Min	Max	CA Mean
Interpersonal conversations	7	27	16.95
Public speaking	8	30	20.35
Total			71.05

4.2.2 Part II: What are the CA levels among MEC year 1 and year 2 students?

4.2.2.1 CA level in L1 and CA in L2

According to table 4.9, the CA level is divided into three levels: low, average and high. In the meetings dimension, the respondents had high CA in English context only. It may be because they were afraid to express their opinion when using second language. In the public speaking dimension, the participants had high CA in both Thai and English languages. It could be that they started to get anxiety giving a speech in front of many people which could be derived from the fear of failure.

Table 4.9 CA level in L1 and CA in L2

Sub-dimensions	Thai	English
Group discussion	average	average
Meetings	average	high
Interpersonal conversations	average	average
Public speaking	high	high
Total	average	average

4.2.3 Part III: Is there any difference between CA in L1 (Thai) and CA in L2 (English) among students of MEC year 1 and year 2?

4.2.3.1 Gender and CA score comparison

According to table 4.10, the results revealed that CA in English was not much higher than Thai for both male and female. This may be due to the fact that gender does not affect to the CA score.

Table 4.10 Gender and CA score comparison

Gender	N	Percent	CA Mean	
			Thai	English
Male	13	21.7	64.46	71.23
Female	47	78.3	63.81	71
Total	60	100	63.95	71.05

4.2.3.2 Age and CA score comparison

The result in table 4.11 displayed the CA scores variation of Thai and English considering each age group. The results of CA in Thai context revealed that the younger participants have higher CA scores than the older participants. This could be due to the lack of experiences in using the language in a professional workforce. On the other hand, the results of CA in English context showed that the older participants have higher CA than the younger participants. The theory of generation gap has shown that generation Y (age 19 to 36) is more confident with a second language and has a better chance in using English compared to generation X (age 37 to 51).

Table 4.11 Age and CA score comparison

Age	N	Percent	CA Mean	
			Thai	English
21-30	35	58.3	65.43	70.71
31-40	20	33.3	62.40	70.75
41-50	3	5	60.67	82.67
Over 50	2	3.3	58.50	62.50
Total	60	100	63.95	71.05

4.2.3.3 The period of time of studying English and CA score comparison

The result in table 4.12 indicated that the greater number of year of studying in English, the lower CA scores. It could be the result from the amount of the exposure to the language that affected their confidence in using English. The greater the amount of time in their studies, the more familiar they are to the language. However, the participants in the group of studying English between 31-35 years had the highest CA score which may be due to the fact that the participant had no chance in using English compared to other groups.

Table 4.12 The period of time of studying English and CA score comparison

The period of time (years)	N	Percent	CA Mean
			English
1-5	7	11.7	72.86
6-10	3	5	77.67

(continue)

Table 4.12 The period of time of studying English and CA score comparison (continued)

The period of time (years)	N	Percent	CA Mean
			English
11-15	14	23.3	74.36
16-20	26	43.3	70
21-25	6	10	65.17
26-30	3	5	61.67
31-35	1	1.7	83
Total	60	100	71.05

4.2.3.4 GPA and CA score comparison

The results shown in table 4.13 indicated that participants with higher GPA scores were more likely to have greater CA scores for Thai context, which was reversed from the result found in those score of CA when using the English language. The study by McCroskey, Booth-Butterfield, and Payne (1989) has further discussed that students with higher CA scores had a greater chance of dropping out and most likely are the ones who attained lower grade point averages compared to the lower CA students. From the results in the English context showed that the CA score in the group with lowest GPA scores was the highest among the three groups; while the highest GPA group was slightly higher than the middle GPA group. The shift in the trend may result from the average GPA scores generally including overall English skills such as writing and reading while, the previous research studies purely emphasized speaking.

Table 4.13 GPA and CA score comparison

GPA	N	Percent	CA Mean	
			Thai	English
2.50-3.00	5	8.3	61.40	73
3.01-3.50	31	51.7	63.03	70.35
3.51-4.00	24	40	65.67	71.54
Total	60	100	63.95	71.05

4.2.3.5 CA score in L1 and CA score in L2

As shown in table 4.14, the results in this section revealed that the CA scores in the English context are higher than CA scores in all sub-dimensions in the Thai context, which also corresponded to the studies by Richmond et al (2008) and McCroskey et al (1983). Specifically in public speaking, the participants in this study had the highest scores in this dimension in both languages. This could mean that MEC students are afraid to speak in front of many people.

Table 4.14 CA in L1 and CA in L2

Sub-dimensions	CA Mean	
	Thai	English
Group discussion	13.78	15.52
Meetings	16.55	18.23
Interpersonal conversations	14.93	16.95
Public speaking	18.68	20.35
Total	63.95	71.05

4.2.4 Part IV: What are the situations that affect MEC students in year 1 and year 2?

4.2.4.1 The open-ended questions

In the open-ended questions section, there were two questions that were answered by 60 MEC students. The first question was “Tell me situations that make you feel uncomfortable using English language in oral communication. What makes you become uncomfortable in these situations?” and the second question was “Do you have any plan to reduce your oral communication anxiety?” These two questions allowed the participants to figure out what are the causes that make them get apprehension.

In question 1: “Tell me situations that make you feel uncomfortable using English language in oral communication. What make you become uncomfortable in these situations?” It appeared that most students feel uncomfortable when speaking in front of the class or speaking in public. The second situation that they fear to speak English was when giving opinion or expressing their ideas. The causes that make them afraid were stated as they are afraid to speak when they lack knowledge, have limited knowledge of vocabulary and are not prepared for speaking.

In question 2: “Do you have any plan to reduce your oral communication anxiety?” It appeared that most participants had plans to reduce communication apprehension. The methods to reduce the CA were mentioned as the following:

(1) Individual improvement was the first method mentioned to start from practicing themselves e.g. watching films, reading news as well as practicing speaking in front of the mirror.

(2) It was planned to expand opportunity for themselves to changes; work with foreigners and take conversation classes.

(3) The last plan was self-relaxation before delivering the speech.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter reveals the conclusions and recommendations of this study and is divided into two sections: (1) conclusions, and (2) recommendations. The details are presented as follows.

5.1 Conclusions

5.1.1 The summary of the study

5.1.1.1 Objectives of the study

- (1) To explore the CA scores among MEC year 1 and year 2 students.
- (2) To explore the CA levels among MEC year 1 and year 2 students.
- (3) To find out the difference between the level of CA and speaking in L1 (Thai) and L2 (English) among MEC year 1 and year 2 students.
- (4) To investigate the situations that affect CA among students in year 1 and year 2.

5.1.1.2 The instruments of the study

The population in this study was students studying MEC in Thammasat University at the Thaprachan campus. The participants were studying in a master's degree program. A convenience sampling was applied with 60 randomly selected participants who were studying in second year in the Master's degree in English for Careers and first year in the Master's Degree of Career English for International, Language Institute, Thammasat University. Data collection was done by a questionnaire, which is composed of three parts. They are 1) personal information of the respondent 2) the personal report of communication apprehension (PRCA-24), and 3) the open-ended questions regarding English speaking anxiety. The research instrument for analyzing the data of this research study was descriptive statistics e.g. frequency, percentage and mean.

The respondents' answers from the open-ended questions were analyzed and discussed as supporting evidence in the findings and summary.

5.1.2 The summary of the findings

In this study, the results from PRCA-24 showed that among MEC (second year MA students), and CEIC (first year students) CA scores in English context were higher than those in Thai context in all sub-dimensions. Specifically, public speaking category indicated the highest CA in both Thai and English among the participants. This study revealed that MEC students are afraid to speak English in public.

5.2 Recommendations

This study investigated CA in Thai and English languages among the M.A. students in an international program at Thammasat University. With some limitations of the study, the following are recommendations that could be applied to research in the future.

5.2.1 The sample size

It is recommended that further research be conducted to utilize a bigger sample size because it will increase the statistical power of the research. The data in this study was limited to 60 students enrolled in Thammasat University; therefore, the data was limited to a small sample size. Broadening the scope of the study to other universities will also increase the sample size and enhance the value of the research findings. It is also recommended that further research is conducted to include other settings such as variations in class divisions, students from Thai programs, and rural/suburban areas.

5.2.2 Research methodology

Mixed methods are recommended to be applied in further research in order to assure the reasons for students' communication apprehension. It is recommended that further studies be conducted utilizing a qualitative method after the quantitative method is done. The feedback from the interviews, the observations, or the narratives from the participants may provide the researchers with in-depth information that will create a better understanding of students' communication apprehension.

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APPENDIX

Questionnaire

Directions

This questionnaire is designed to examine the communication apprehension among Thai graduate students. Your response will be strictly kept confidential and will be used for academic purpose only. Please answer all questions truthfully and do not worry that your responses are different from others because there is no right or wrong answer. This questionnaire consists of three parts: (1) personal information of the respondent, (2) the Personal Report of Communication Apprehension (PRCA-24) questionnaire, and (3) the open-ended questions regarding communication apprehension when using English (L2).

Part I: Personal information of the respondent

Directions: Please make a mark (✓) in the box or fill in your information in the blank of each item.

1. Gender: male female

2. Age: 21-30 31-40 41-50 over 50

3. Marital status: Single Married Divorced/Seperated

4. Highest level of Education:
 Bachelor in Thai program
 Bachelor in English program
 Master in Thai program
 Master in English program

5. How long have you been studying English? Years

6. Your current GPA

Statement	Opinion									
	Thai (L1)					English (L2)				
	1 (SA)	2 (A)	3 (N)	4 (D)	5 (SD)	1 (SA)	2 (A)	3 (N)	4 (D)	5 (SD)
23) I face the prospect of giving a speech with confidence.										
24) While giving a speech I get so nervous, I forget facts I really know.										

Part III: The open ended questions regarding English speaking anxiety

Directions: Please answer the following questions using your own feeling.

1. Tell me situations that make you feel uncomfortable using English language in oral communication. What makes you feel uncomfortable in these situations?

For example: You always forget a speech when you are assigned to speak in front of class or you are afraid of giving opinions in group discussion; as a result, keep quiet.

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2. Do you have any plan to reduce your oral communication anxiety? If yes, please elaborate what includes in your plan. If no, why?

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BIOGRAPHY

Name	Miss NavapeeHomhual
Date of Birth	June 20,1987
Educational Attainment	2012: Bachelor of Fine and Applied Arts (Western Dance) 2014: Master of Public and Private Management
Work Position	General Administration Officer Provincial Waterworks Authority
Work Experiences	- General Administration Officer Provincial Waterworks Authority - Customer Services Representative Bank of China - Customer Services Officer Bangkok Bank