PROBLEMS OF THAI AIRWAYS SENIOR CABIN CREW TOWARD ENGLISH LANGUAGE COMMUNICATION WITH GUESTS IN ROYAL FIRST CLASS AND NEW BUSINESS CLASS ON INTERNATIONAL FLIGHTS

BY

MISS NARUECHON PUPPHAVESA

AN INDEPENDENT STUDY PAPER SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS IN CAREER ENGLISH FOR INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATION LANGUAGE INSTITUTE THAMMASAT UNIVERSITY ACADEMIC YEAR 2017 COPYRIGHT OF THAMMASAT UNIVERSITY
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INDEPENDENT STUDY PAPER

BY

MISS NARUECHON PUPPHA VESA

ENTITLED

PROBLEMS OF THAI AIRWAYS SENIOR CABIN CREW TOWARD
ENGLISH LANGUAGE COMMUNICATION WITH GUESTS IN ROYAL
FIRST CLASS AND NEW BUSINESS CLASS ON INTERNATIONAL
FLIGHTS

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to investigate barriers of English communication in terms of oral communication skills and the communication strategies used to solve problems between Thai Airways senior cabin crew and their foreign guests on international flights in order to gain acquisition of a second language.

Seventy-seven Thai Airways senior cabin crew working in royal first and new business classes at Thai Airways International Public Company Limited participated in this study. Using quantitative method, the empirical part of the study consisted of both closed- and open-ended questions. The data was analyzed by percentage, frequency, mean and standard deviation.

This study revealed that problems of Thai Airways senior cabin crew toward English communication with foreign guests in royal first and new business classes on international flights were in three main areas. Firstly, the two major problems of oral communication were being able to understand slang, idiomatic expressions, or colloquialisms and being able to express complex ideas. Secondly, it was found that Thai Airways senior cabin crew often speak in a warm tone and aim to pay attention to the interlocutor by using non-verbal language such as eye contact and facial expressions.
Lastly, the most significant communication strategy used to solve communication problems when Thai Airways senior cabin crew face problems was always to use message-reduction strategy, using the words which are familiar to them. In contrast, they rarely use message-abandonment.

**Keywords**: problems of English communication, communication strategies
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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

This chapter introduces (1) the background of the study (2) research questions, (3) objectives of the study, (4) significance of the study, (5) scope of the study, (6) definition of abbreviations and terms, and (7) organization of the study.

1.1 Background

Thai Airways International Public Company Limited (TG), as the national flag carrier, was founded in 1960 and joined Star Alliance in 1997, and is based in Bangkok, Thailand. TG operates domestic, reginal and intercontinental flights to 37 countries around the world (www.thaiairways.com). One of Thai Airways International Public Company Limited’s policies is promoting and representing Thai culture, customs and tradition. To achieve the company’s vision of being “The First Choice Carrier with Touches of Thai”, it is important that TG cabin crew acquire new skills and standards of professionalism in terms of using English language as the medium of communication, cultural diversity and norms.

Since Thai Airways International Public Company limited (TG) has launched the new business/first class services operated by TG and Yates partners in 2016 to achieve the highest productivity service, therefore training courses have been instituted, class by class, approximately these past 2 years. Also, more courses are expected in case more crew are required for these particular new services. The content of the new business class course consists of Mindset, THAI hospitality, service beyond, service dialogue, problem solving, and cultural diversity. The content includes a workshop concerning the service mock up performance. To assess the overall performance, at the end of the course, a post-test is conducted.

The purpose of these courses is to educate TG cabin crew on how the important ‘THAI Key Concepts and Understand’ can affect and help bring back the achievement as one of the top 5 leading airlines. These courses are fully integrated suites of TG’s service. The high standard performance carried out by professional TG crew members
aims to serve valued passengers through the remarkable smooth as silk experience. “According to a survey of SKYTRAX (the United Kingdom-based organization which conducts research on the commercial airlines around the world), it is noted that the ability to communicate by cabin crew is considered to be one of essential factors leading to the entire successful outcome of an airline” (“Passenger Choice Awards”, n.d.) (Nanakorn, 2011, p.1). The airline industry is one of the huge business units which needs the improvement of its employees to interculturally communicate for its competitiveness. Also, the airlines business is related to the aviation service industry. Furthermore, safety is an important factor. The airline has to maintain communication in order to ensure and be aware of errors with zero incidents and no complaints to make the ultimate satisfaction of the passengers. It is remarked clearly by the international airline auditor institution, SKYTRAX that a cabin crew’s English ability to communicate with passengers on board is crucial during flights whilst serving on the ground and also once in the air. SKYTRAX has rated Thai Airways as follows: - 4/5 stars in first class and 4/5 stars in business class, in terms of ‘cabin staff language skills’ (www.airlinequality.com). Hence, it drives Thai Airways to launch a new business class and royal first class to strengthen cabin crew’s English ability with the best qualified English competence to reach the target ‘to be number 1’; not just only meal service improvement, but also increasing the effectiveness of the safety conditions, in case of emergency. This research study attempts to investigate the cabin crew language abilities at work during long haul flights of TG senior cabin crew who are working in new royal first class and new business class. In this research, it is intended to study Thai Airways cabin crew’s English problems. Consequently, it could be brought into analysis to conduct and strengthen Thai Airways to meet the purpose and for success of the company. Furthermore, the conclusion found could possibly lead Thai Airways to become a professional airline with excellence beyond service as “The First Choice Carrier with Touches of Thai” slogan indicates in all air travelers’ hearts.

1.1.1 Background of the Research Questions

SKYTRAX World Airline Awards, established in 1989 and based in London, is an airline industry consulting and rating company. The annual awards are based on
the impressions of customer surveys, including on-line questionnaires, and interviews covering more than 300 airlines.

SKYTRAX also compiles an Airline Star Ranking, which ranks airlines on a scale of one to five. The evaluation of airline customer service views Thai Airways cabin crew procedures.

Service quality criteria as follows:

- Assistance during boarding
- Welcoming passengers
- Applying safety procedures
- Food & beverage service efficiency
- Answering call bell
- **Staff language skills**
  - Problem-solving ability
  - Discipline among staff
  - Enthusiasm of staff
  - Sincerity of staff service
  - Staff friendliness
  - Courtesy of staff service
  - Consistency of quality among staff

According to the SKYTRAX ranking, Thai Airways record of *cabin crew awards* in 2017 is ranked no.4 for airline staff in Asia. This covers airline staff service efficiency, friendliness, staff language skills and overall quality consistency. (airlinequality.com) In addition, Thai Airways recorded three best awards of the World's best economy class onboard catering, the World's best economy class, and the World's best airline lounge spa facilities (Thaiairways.com).

Related research by SKYTRAX (2017) stated that Thai Airways staff language abilities in first class are above and beyond a basic level of service related dialogue. SKYTRAX (2017) business class report and rating of Thai Airways staff language dialogue related to meal service reported it could be completed with more consistency by introducing different meal courses, checking if the customer has enjoyed their meal, having some chat during service or asking if anything else is required. Address by
customer names is inconsistent; it is primarily offered during boarding time but this does not tend to be followed up consistently during the flight. All of the feedback from customer loyalty are remarkable through effective service recovery and problem solving.

1.2 Research Questions

1.2.1 What communication problems are most common between Thai Airways senior cabin crew and their foreign guests?

1.2.2 What communication strategies do Thai Airways senior cabin crew use when facing communication problems?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

1.3.1 To investigate English communication problems between Thai Airways senior cabin crew and their foreign guests.

1.3.2 To investigate communication strategies used by Thai Airways senior cabin crew when facing the communication problems.

1.4 Significance of the Study

This study aims to investigate English communication problems and strategies used by TG senior cabin crew on international flights with foreign guests. The findings of this study will find ways to develop their English communication skills. Therefore, the results may be beneficial to senior cabin crew who can handle problems when communicating in English with foreign guests in an effectively professional manner.

Moreover, these investigations may be helpful for further providing guidelines in English language training courses for senior cabin crew and gain Thai Airways bringing back the nomination as number one for the Best Cabin Staff in Asia with the reputational image of THAI touches to intentions as representatives of THAI.
1.5 Scope of the Study

The scope is limited to investigating the communication in English language between senior cabin crew of Thai Airways and their foreign guests in international flights.

The study chose participants from Thai Airways senior cabin crew staff who are responsible for new royal first class and new business class as a position ranking of ASE, AHE, AP, and IM, and fly an intercontinental flight with a particular type of aircraft: Airbus A380, Airbus A330 and Boeing 777.

The participants were randomly selected and the opinions of the participants were surveyed by using a questionnaire at Thai Airways International Crew Center, Suvarnabhumi Airport.

The participants in this study were 77 senior cabin crew of Thai Airways who have been learning in a new business class course.

The findings from the survey may not be generalized to cabin crew that work in economy class and other airlines. Also, time constraints were a limitation in this study. The results were returned to the researcher by the due date during 20 March 2018 - 30 April 2018.

1.6 Definitions of Abbreviations and Terms

1.6.1 Definitions of abbreviations

CS/CSs = communication strategy/ communication strategies
L1 = first / native language or Thai
L2 = second / foreign language or English
L3 = The third language or other language
TG = Thai Airways International Public Company Limited
IM = Inflight manager
AP = Air purser
ASE = Senior air steward executive performs duties in Business class and First class.
AHE = Senior air hostess executive performs duties in Business class and First class.
ICAO = International Civil Aviation Organization
CAAT = The Civil Aviation Authority of Thailand

1.6.2 Definitions of terms

Thai Airways International Public Company Limited (TG) refers to Thailand’s national flag carrier which was founded in 1960. THAI now flies to 64 destinations in 33 countries. “The First Choice Carrier with Touches of THAI” is the company vision.

Senior Cabin crew refers to air stewards and air stewardesses who work with many years of experience with Thai Airways and perform a duty with the operation of new royal first class and new business class of intercontinental flights with a particular type of aircraft and have been learning in new business class course as a position of In-flight manager IM, Air purser AP, air steward ASE and air hostess AHE.

Service of THAI on board are passengers’ service during in-flight meals and beverages service.

New Royal first/business classes service refers to Loyal Service Recovery Process of Thai Airways and Yates partners who have the goal of service recovery. It is a positive approach to complaint handling and builds guest loyalty service in new royal first class and new business class.

Guest refers to first class and business class foreign passengers who are native speakers and non-native speakers on board TG with the new royal first and new business classes service.

Problems refers to English problems or difficulties that cabin crew encountered with native speakers and non-native speakers of English.

Communication strategies (CSs) refers to both the interactional and psycholinguistic strategies employed when Thai cabin crew who are English Second Language Learners (L2) encounter a problem in communication, to achieve a communicative goal.

International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) World-wide association based in Montreal, Canada. It is an agency of the United Nations established to develop
the principles and techniques of international air navigation and foster the planning and development of international air transport to ensure safety.

*Aviation English language* A specialized code based on the English universal language for pilots, air traffic controllers and aircraft dispatchers who wish to operate in any international aviation workplace which has set standards by ICAO.

### 1.7 Organization of the Study

“Problems of Thai Airways Senior Cabin Crew toward English Language Communication with Guests in New Royal First Class and New Business Class on International Flights” is presented in five chapters.

Chapter 1 introduces the background and rationale of the study, research questions, objectives of the study, significance of the study, scope of the study, definition of abbreviations and terms, and organization of the study.

Chapter 2 reviews the related literature containing five topics; communication, the concept of cabin crew, barriers to effective communication, communication strategies and research studies.

Chapter 3 provides the research methodology including information about the participants, research instruments, data collection procedure and data analysis.

Chapter 4 describes the results of the analysis and the findings of the study in relation to each research question, presented in both table and text format.

Chapter 5 presents the conclusion and gives recommendations for the further study.
CHAPTER 2
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This chapter reviews the literature about (1) communication, (2) the concept of cabin crew (3) barrier to effective communication, (4) communication strategies, and (5) related studies.

2.1 Communication

The word communication is derived from the Latin word “communis” which means common. Communication as a word is clarified in the Penguin Dictionary of Psychology (2009) as “The transmission of something from one location to another. The ‘thing’ that is transmitted may be a message, a signal, a meaning, etc”. Weekley (1967, p.338) pointed out that communication in Latin is communicare, which means share and make common. Keyton (2011) mentioned that communication is a process of transmitting the information from one person to another. The definitions of communication are various based on each scholar’s perspective. According to Hamilton (2014) “Communication is the process of people sharing thoughts, ideas, and feelings with each other in commonly understanding ways”. Hamilton (2014) described the element concepts of the communication process on a basic model of communication.

• The sender (encoder)

The source of message is someone who needs to communicate with others. In completing this need, the sender transmits the message via a channel to the receiver(s).

• The receiver (decoder)

The interpreter of a message, which may or may not be an accurate message different from the senders’ intention and the receiver may misinterpret the message.

• Stimulus and motivation

The sender must be stimulated to communicate, then the sender must motivate to trigger and send a message.
• Encoding and decoding

Encoding is the process of putting a message into a code. When the message is received and interpreted by receiver, the process of extracting a message from a code then occurs and is called decoding.

• Frame of reference

Frame of reference includes education background, race, cultural value, gender, life experiences, attitude and personality of the communicator.

• Code

A set of symbols used to carry the message and can be divided into three basic communication codes. (1) Expression of feelings or emotion through the spoken or written of language or verbal code. Written messages might be information notes. Verbal communication is the primary mode of communication in an aircraft. (2) Paralanguage or vocal code involves the vocal elements that go along with the spoken language such as tone of voice, pitch, rate, volume, and emphasis. (3) Nonverbal cues or visual code involves all intentional and unintentional means other than written or spoken word by which a person sends a message (Philpott, 1983).

• Channel

Channel is the medium through which messages pass. The channel acts as a bridge connecting the source and the receiver. For spoken communication, this might be face-to-face, or via interphone.

• Feedback

Feedback is reaction that is sent back to the source. It helps the sender to evaluate the effectiveness of a message knowing whether the message was interpreted as intended.

• Environment

The environment refers to the location where the communication take place including time, physical and social surroundings.

• Noise

Noise is anything that interferes with communication by distorting or blocking the message. External noise includes distractions within the environment such as a phone’s ringing, engine’s starting, and people talking. Internal noise refers to conditions of the receiver such as headache or jet lag.
It is common knowledge that communication takes place when information is transmitted from one or many sender to one or many receivers. In order to have communication both the transmitter and the receiver must share a common code, so that the meaning or information contained in the message may be (mis)interpreted.

2.2 The Concept of Cabin Crew

In airline industry, the English language is used as a major tool for controlling transport operations. In these circumstances, the standard phraseology alphabet has been set by International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) to increase intelligibility in order to ensure safety flight of airline. Aviation English language is based on a specialized code used by cockpit crew and dispatcher, maintenance, ground and Air Traffic Control (ATC) working in international civil aviation.

In the early mid 1990s it has been suggested that ‘crew’ consist of two separate sub-groups or two distinctive groups represented by cockpit and cabin crew groups (Chidester, 1993; Kayten, 1993; Chute & Wiener, 1995, 1996; Wiener & Kanki, 1993; cited in Ford, Henderson & O’Hare, 2013). Clark (2012) explained that cabin crew work separate from the cockpit crew, which refers to the pilots. Each area has different responsibilities which can be viewed as two separate characteristic cultures in the aircraft, thus cockpit crew are viewed as concerning flight operations control where safety is stressed with the following procedures. In other words, cabin crew are divide from cockpit crew in terms of two sociological and geographical environments (Helmreich, Merritt, &Wilhelm, 1999). Chute &Wiener (1996) points out that cabin crew have more space, and the personnel working in it are more physically active and socially interactive than those on the flight deck. In addition, cabin crew are typically part of the marketing department in customer relation service where passenger service is emphasized (Metscher, Smith, & Alghamdi, 2009).

2.2.1 The Definitions of Cabin Crew

Famous English dictionaries and aviation authorities explained the word cabin crew as follow; Macmillan English Dictionary (2011) defined the word as “the people on a plane whose job is to look after the passengers”. English for Aviation Teaching
Notes explained the definition of cabin crew as “airline staff who work directly with passengers and whose main job is to ensure their safety and well-being, in addition to dealing with seating arrangements and food and drink service”. According to guidance material for cabin crew training manuals (The Civil Aviation Authority of Thailand, 2016), cabin crew is defined as “a crew member who performs, in the interest of safety of passengers, duties assigned by the operator or the pilot-in-command of the aircraft, but who shall not act as a flight crew member”.

2.2.2 The Characteristics of Job Descriptions of Cabin Crew

A number of definitions clarify the meaning of the word and the characteristics of job descriptions of cabin crew for an airline as responsible for the safety and comfort of its passengers. Duties cabin crew during normal operations include:

1. Pre-boarding: Preflight cabin crew safety briefing include type questions relating to service and emergency safety procedures.
2. Boarding: Assisting with passenger boarding.
   2.1 In-flight services and safety
   • Greeting, welcome and farewell
   • Scanning for guests’ boarding pass, flight, name and seat number
   • Address guest by name, introduce yourself
   • Showing guests to their seats and providing special attention such as seat orientation
   • Assisting with outerwear and hand luggage
   • Offering guests newspapers, magazines and in-flight entertainment
   • Engaging in meals and taking drink orders: explaining choices to guests, apologizing when preferable meal choice is not available
   • Selling duty-free commercial goods and pursuing sales
   • Checking the condition and provision of emergency equipment and information for passengers such as to give briefings to passengers seated at emergency exits, turn off any electronic devices or set to flight mode
   • Demonstrating emergency equipment and safety procedures such as distribute an infant life vest, an extension belt
   • Administering first aid
• Producing written cabin reports after completing a flight
• To make public announcement

3. Pre take-off
4. Post take-off
5. Cruise
6. Approach and Landing
7. Disembarkation
8. Turnarounds
9. Dealing with emergencies situation

Admittedly, it is crucial that cabin crew are knowledgeable concerning aircraft systems and basic components (Chute & Wiener, 1996). Consequently, cabin crew is required to compete training courses covering safety procedures, customer service and legal immigration issues which educate them on skills and recruitments. In order to serve customers with high trust, security and comfort throughout a memorable flight experience that will lead the airline business (Gomez, 2012).

2.3 Barriers to Effective Communication

English communication is essential to the aviation professional in today’s world. The way of communicating shapes the image and creates an atmosphere with good relationships. Some communication problems are existing between cabin crew and passengers. Barkow and Rutenberg (2002) suggested that choosing messages that are necessary, using short and simple sentences, avoiding air travel jargon, incomplete wording, ambiguous wording, and non-essential messages could be reduce the risk of misunderstanding. Wishom (2004) stated that poor grammar, pronunciation, vocabulary, misinterpretation and cultural differences are affecting communication (cited in Eamjoy, 2015). However, sometimes communicators send messages are not clear, because the language barriers which are the most crucial are 1) word choice, 2) denotative versus connotative meaning, 3) grammar, spelling, punctuation and sentence structure (Krizan, Merrier, & Jones, 2002, Kositchart 2011). Other barriers existing that may distort the meaning are physical barriers such as background noise, and cultural language differences of dialects (Air Traffic control training series crew resource...

Focusing on both barriers and solutions to communication from the cabin crew perspective in standard operating procedures includes; phraseology, knowledge of aircraft terminology, preflight briefings, and also an emphasis on the service attitude of cabin crew who must conduct the most appropriate way to avoid giving offensive messages or gestures that may cause frustration or misunderstanding (Thai Airways, Hand in Hand, 2017). Moreover, the awareness of cultural differences with good communication skills will reduce misunderstanding and impress passengers by professional performance (Suthaceva, 2013).

2.4 Communication Strategies

Thai cabin crews are English Second Language Learners (L2). This research is mainly focused on English communication problems that affect communication in the workplace: productive skills; speaking and writing skills are conveyed messages from sender to receiver, receptive skills: listening and reading skills are interpretive feedback for clarification about message. These are viewed in terms of operation and seek to determine what strategies are used to handle the communication problems, especially in oral communication.

2.4.1 The Definitions of Communication Strategies (CSs)

Communication strategies (CSs) used by English Language Learners to handle communication difficulties. Using English language is complicated and difficult for Thai cabin crew who are English Second Language Learners (L2) due to the fact that English is not their mother tongue or first language. It means that L2 learners select the most appropriate strategies, whenever they encounter the problem, they might employ strategies to understand its meaning (Swan 2008). Therefore, there have been many definitions proposed for L2 learners, so that they can use appropriate communication strategies (CSs) to achieve their potential communication. Below is a list of its different definitions of various famous researchers.
Selinker (1972) was one of the first influential researchers on interlanguage during the 1970’s and suggested the notion of CS of L2 communication in his paper “Interlanguage”. Then, the concept of CS was further developed and discussed by many researchers.

Taron (1977, p. 195; cited in Kongsom, 2009) wrote that “conscious strategies are used by an individual to overcome the crisis which occurs when language structures are inadequate to convey the individual’s thoughts.” She introduced many categories of CSs and five types of CSs: avoidance, paraphrase, conscious transfer, appeal for assistance and mime were provided to adult English language learners.

Færch & Kasper (1983a, p. 36) found that “communication strategies (CSs) are potentially conscious plans for solving what to an individually presents itself as a problem in reaching a particular communicative goal”

Brown (1987, p.180) explained that “the conscious employment by verbal or nonverbal mechanisms for communicating an idea when precise linguistic forms are for some reasons not available to the learner at that point in communication”

Stern (1983, p.411) pointed out that “CSs is the techniques of coping with difficulties in communicating in an imperfectly know second language”

Corder (1981, p.103; 1983, p.16) stated that “It is a systematic technique employed by a speaker to express his or her own meaning when faced with some difficulty”

Bialystok (1990, p.3) suggested that “the idea that strategies are used only when a speaker perceives that there is a problem which may interrupt communication”

According to Cohens’ strategies in learning and using a second language (2014, p. 7), he defined communication strategies (CSs) in the following terms “Thoughts and action, consciously chosen and operationalized by language learners, to assist them in carrying out a multiplicity of tasks from the very onset of learning to the most advanced levels of target-language performance”.

The definitions focused on the idea that communication strategies (CSs) are consciousness and it referred to the fact that speakers use a process of technique based on interactional perspective between speaker and interlocutor to achieve communication while, the concept of problematicity leads to problems-solving strategies that a speaker uses when lacking morphological, lexical, or syntactic.
knowledge emphasized on cognitive view. However, there has not been complete agreement on a single definition of communication strategies (CSs).

2.4.2 The Taxonomies of Communication Strategies (CSs)

The taxonomies of CSs vary considerably in different studies. Cohen (2014) classified communication strategies (CSs) into four subsets taxonomies which are (1) retrieval strategies used by mnemonic word to memory (2) rehearsal strategies would be form-focused practice by learning language structure (3) coping strategies (3.1) compensatory strategies which compensate for lack of some language and create an impression (3.2) cover strategies memorize only parts of phrases in an utterance (4) communication strategies are used to deal with problems or breakdown of communication while speaking by seeking clarification or confirmation, paraphrasing words, using fillers (uh, uhm) when pausing while speaking and repeating words, asking for help; viewed as verbal or nonverbal.

Many previous researchers such as Tarone (1981), Færch & Kasper (1983), Bialystok (1990), Dörnyei & Scott (1997), and Nakatani (2005) have classified oral communication strategies (CSs) into two main basic types which are reduction or avoidance strategies used by low ability learners to avoid something during the process of language communication and achievement or compensatory strategies considered as good language learners’ behavior to complete an oral communication. Reduction or avoidance strategies referring to learners’ attempts to do away with a problem are reviewed as follows.

(1) topic avoidance or abandonment: learner is unable to continue and stops in mid-utterance or is unfinished and leaving a message because of the concept, which has vocabulary or meanings that are difficult.

(2) message reduction: learner reduces the message from what was intended to be communicated.

Achievement or compensatory strategies refer to learners choosing a way to communicate and convey their message.

(1) circumlocution: learners describe the characteristics or elements of the object or action instead of using the appropriate target language item or structure e.g., if a learner does not know the word key, he or she describes it by saying for example...
“the thing use to open the door”, which exemplifies “the thing use to open the bottle” for the word corkscrew.

(2) **approximation**: learners use an alternative lexical item that he or she knows is incorrect, but shares enough semantic features to express the meaning as closely as possible e.g., “pipe” for water pipe, “ship” for sail boat.

(3) **use of all-purpose words**: learners expand an empty lexical item to context where certain words are lacking e.g., the overuse of word “thingy”.

(4) **word coinage**: learner creates a non-existing Second Language (L2) word based on his or her knowledge of morphology rules e.g., “vegetarianist” for vegetarian, “paintist” for painter, “liquid zoo” for aquarium, “airball” for balloon, (examples of created words which are not stated in the dictionary).

(5) **prefabricated patterns**: useful phrases or sentences that are memorized for survival purposes e.g., Where is the…?

(6) **nonlinguistic signals**: learners use non-linguistic resources such as mime, gesture, facial expression or sound imitation to help in expressing the meaning.

(7) **literal translation**: learners translate a lexical item, an idiom, a compound word, or structure from another language e.g., from their First Language (L1) to Second Language (L2) “cat water” for seal “horse water” for seahorse.

(8) **foreignizing**: learners use First Language (L1) word by adjusting it to Second Language (L2) phonologically (pronunciation) and/or morphology (suffix).

(9) **code-switching**: learners use two languages or multilingual within a sentence or discourse, he or she uses a First Language (L1) word with First Language (L1) pronunciation while speaking in Second Language (L2) or use a Third Language (L3) word with Third Language (L3) pronunciation while speaking in Second language (L2).

(10) **appeal for help**: learners ask for help from the interlocutor either directly by asking a question e.g., What do you call…? Or indirectly e.g., rising intonation, pause, puzzled expression.

(11) **stalling or time-consuming strategies**: learners use filler or hesitation to fill pauses and gain time to think e.g., well, you know, uh, uhm or longer phrases such as it’s a good question (Dörnyei, 1995 adapted by Brown 2000).
Apart from these categories, Corder (1983) classified taxonomy of communication strategies in two levels: high ability or risk-taking strategies and low ability or risk-avoidance strategies. Description of each are presented in the following.

**High ability or risk-taking strategies** involves six strategies.

1. **Social-affective strategies**: the speakers are dealing with emotion or feeling, enjoy companionship of others and maintain conversation to avoid silence during interaction.
2. **Fluency-oriented strategies**: the speakers are concerned with speaking fluently.
3. **Accuracy-oriented strategies**: the speakers are paying attention to accurate grammar by self-correcting forms of their speech.
4. **Non-verbal strategies**: the speakers are using gestures and facial expression such as eye contact.
5. **Help-seeking strategies**: the speaker turn to the interlocutor either directly or indirectly. It might be include asking for confirmation, clarification, and repetition to elicit help or rising intonation.
6. **Circumlocution strategies**: (paraphrase): the speaker is paraphrasing or describing the elements of the objects involving exemplifying to show or illustrate by action.

**Low ability or risk-avoidance strategies** involves three strategies

1. **Message abandonment strategies**: the speaker give up their attempt for leaving the message unfinished.
2. **Message reduction and alteration strategies**: the speaker tries to avoid a communication by reducing messages, simplifying their utterance, or allows it by using new or familiar words that they can use confidently.
3. **Time-gaining strategies**: the speaker uses fillers to fill pause or gambits, to gain time such as uh, uhm, well, or uses longer phrases such as it's a good question, as a matter of fact, this is difficult to explain, now let me see.

The taxonomy used in the study adopted the framework of communication strategies (CSs) from Corder (1983), Dörnyei & Scott (1997), Nakatani (2005 & 2006), and Cohen (2004) as they are classified in a similar way (cited in Chuanchaisit 2009). The proposed CSs investigated in the questionnaire of this study were classified into...
two categories involves nine strategies. Table 2.1 describes the framework of categories of CSs used in this study.

Table 2.1 Taxonomy of CSs adopted in this study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. High ability or risk-taking strategies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.1 Social-affective strategies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2 Fluency-oriented strategies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3 Accuracy-oriented strategies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4 Non-verbal strategies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5 Help-seeking strategies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.6 Circumlocution strategies</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2. Low ability or risk-avoidance strategies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.1 Message abandonment strategies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2 Message reduction and alteration strategies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3 Time-gaining strategies</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Taking into account the aforementioned in table 2.1, for the purpose of this study it will use both the interactional strategies (e.g. help-seeking strategies: ask confirmation request, clarification check, and appeal for help) and psycholinguistic consider lexical compensatory strategies (e.g. circumlocution and accuracy-oriented strategies) used by learners of a second language (L2) when confronted with difficulties of communication in the target language and, therefore, enhancing their ability to communicate.

2.5 Problems in English Communication

In Thailand, there have been a number of studies investigating the problems in English communication. These focus on oral and aural skills (speaking and listening) used during interaction.

2.5.1 Productive skills problems “L2 learners are always having to compensate for the limited vocabulary at their disposal” (Cook 1996) which may cause difficulty to speak with correct accents. Bunthong, (2014) stated four factors (1) poor pronunciation
(2) speaking anxiety (3) lacking of grammatical and phonetics knowledge (4) limited knowledge of English vocabulary cause speaking problems.

2.5.2 **Receptive skills problems** caused by pronunciation, is one of the most common problems encountered by Thai Airways cabin crew (L2) who are unfamiliar with the accents of native speakers and foreign passengers with regard to listening and was the major problem especially Australian and Indian accents (Permtanjit, 2003; Chenaksara, 2005). Moreover, lack of control of a speaker over the speed at which speakers speak can fail to provide the important information, words, and signals (Hamouda, 2013). In addition, the limitation of vocabulary depends on knowledge and interpretation of listeners’ background also can cause listening problems (Underwood, 1989).

2.6 **Related Studies**

Regarding previous studies, English language and communication abilities play a key role in international business. Suthaceva (2013) stated that to create effective communication to impress passengers when providing service is important. Front line staff and cabin crew are the most essential part of the service experience related to passengers’ satisfaction and an airline’s success (Volkman, 2012). A number of researches have been conducted to investigate the needs and problem of cabin crew.

Permtanjit (2003) analyzed cabin crew English problems and difficulties concerning in-flight procedures in their jobs in Thai Airways during the basic course. The participants were 105 Thai Airways cabin crew who had worked for a maximum of one year. Questionnaires and semi-structured interviews were used. The results revealed that lack of familiarity with accents and pronouncing specific consonants were two major problems that THAI cabin crew mostly encountered. Secondly, speaking and listening skills were the two most important language skills for Thai cabin crews. Also, knowledge of job-related vocabulary and cultural differences were essential for enhanced effectiveness of English. Finally, it was shown that English language training courses should use polite language and in-flight vocabulary as a supplement to the core handbook. The result of this research was limited to only Thai Airways cabin crews who had worked for a maximum of one year experience.
Chenaksara (2005) conducted a study on needs analysis for English communication skills of Thai Airways International cabin crew trained in a general conversation course, pronunciation course, public address course, service on board, safety procedure course, and others. Most of the cabin crew were female aged over 30 years old with more than 7 years’ experience as participants in this survey. The data was collected from 330 cabin crews by questionnaire. The result revealed that cabin crew at 18.5% took English courses besides those given by the company and the reason was to communicate fluently, to enhance English skills, to be promoted to higher positions, respectively. English communication skills of listening and speaking of Thai Airways cabin crew in intercontinental flights during the period in November-December 2004 found that listening was the major problem especially in Australian and Indian accents, the speaking problem was lack of vocabulary in terms of updated news, cooking terms, customs formality, and cultural differences. Moreover, she recommends that some interesting aspects for further studies of the English communication skills of front line staff functions such as cockpit crew, check-in staff, ticketing staff, and reservation staff etc. and English communication courses on non-working routines should be undertaken.

Another related research by Tangniam (2006) is Thai Airways ground staff performing their jobs duties leading to greater passenger services satisfaction; they are also one part of the department to fulfill the airline business. It might conclude that in their routine, they need to interact with passengers in many aspects concerning services. Tangniam (2006) investigated the English language needs of Thai Airways ground staff. The participants consisted of 218 ground staff from three functions: KP (Airport Customer Services), LP (Special Services), and LL (Baggage Services). The majority of participants were females and the age was ranged between 30-39 years. Most of them have graduated with a bachelor’s degree and have been working as ground staff for 7-14 years. The study showed that all ground staff perceived that the English language was essential and agree 100% unanimously. They assessed their English proficiency as fair in all four skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing. For this study, they viewed listening as “mostly difficult” and ranked down speaking, writing and reading skills. Listening skills for various accents and idiomatic use was “extremely need”. Need of speaking for explaining the reason in case of flight irregularities or being
denied a seat on an overbooked flight when mistakes occur were advised as “extremely needed.” Importantly, they needed to learn how to speak polite language in refusing, requesting, clarifying or confirming messages, expressing empathy, offering assistance and giving directions. Moreover, using appropriate Aviation English for telephone conversations in order to avoid miscommunication in terms of the Aviation alphabet provided by International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) including consonant and vowel sounds, intonations and word stress, are needed to communicate effectively through a public announcement system.

Reading the Passenger Handling Manuals (PHM) and Ground Operation Manuals (GOM) were viewed as something they might learn by their experience or from senior staff about job procedures. Writing skills including conducting telexes correctly to aviation format was the only one of the writing skills viewed as “mostly difficult.” In addition, the research analysis of communicative competence of Canale and Swain (1980) identify four dimensions. Firstly, grammatical competence refers to grammatical and lexical capacity. Secondly, sociolinguistic competence refers to social context in which communication take place, including relationship and purpose of their interaction. Thirdly, discourse competence refers to the comprehension of individual message element. Fourthly, strategic competence refers to strategies that communicators manipulate to communicate. Considering results in the appropriate English language, there are needs to develop ESP (English for Specific Purposes) courses for staff in performing their jobs.

Anantawan (2010) examined the communication problems between Thai and foreign cabin crews of Thai Airways International. This study sought to find out the communication problems between participants’ work, experience and English communication problems. The participants, work experience and English communication problems as well as to figure out the relationship between foreign cabin crews, Chinese, Taiwanese, Japanese and Korean representing the whole population of over four thousand Thai cabin crew and around three hundred foreign cabin crew. A four thousand Thai cabin crew and around three hundred foreign cabin crew. A questionnaire was used to collect data using random sampling technique. The result of...
this research show that there was no relationship between English exposure experience and four types of communication problems. Both participants who have had English exposure experience and those who have not had any have a “low” degree of problems in cultural problems, production problems and receptive problems. However, the degree of accent problems was “high” in the range of more than 5-10 years and more than 15 years except those who have had experience in staying with an English native speaker family, whose degree of accent problems was “low” level.

Tontanavetchakul (2011) investigated the intercultural communication of Thai cabin crew working in international airlines. A self-administered online questionnaire by Google Docs was used as a data collecting instrument during December 2010 to January 2011. The subjects were 60 Thai female cabin crew working with 5 major foreign airlines; Asiana Airlines, China Airlines, Emirates Airline, EVA Air, and JAL Ways that employ Thai cabin crew where English is not the primary language. The results identified barriers to effective intercultural communication in four factors which are cultural biases, language differences, nonverbal misinterpretation, and high anxiety and stress. The study found that language differences and difficulties were the most common problem especially accents and pronunciation. Moreover, the participants recommended training courses should be provided about local language, cultures, and etiquette of nationalities.

Kositchart (2011) investigated Thai AFS exchange students’ problems and needs in English listening and speaking proficiency in the United States of America. The objective was to examine what types of conversation English language problems that Thai exchange students experienced most during their stays in the United States between 2008-2009 and 2009-2010 academic years, and to explore types of resources that exchange students used as a tool and strategies for solving or overcoming conversation difficulties. Two hundred Thai AFS students were the population of this study. The participants were 57 Thai AFS exchange high school students who participated in the AFS Program in the United States of America between 2008-2009 and 2009-2010 for a one year program staying with American host families. The total sample was two hundred participants, one hundred participants from each year. Online questionnaires were used as the instrument to collect the data from 200 respondents via e-mail. The results showed that the AFS participants encountered a range of English
difficulties especially unfamiliar words, and unable to comprehend jokes, metaphors or puns when communicating with native English speakers. Moreover, when having difficulty comprehending conversation, the participants solve problems with using a talking-dictionary, listened to the detail and form of words together in context.

Wisawajareonkit (2015) studied English communication problems among Thai employees and investigated an English training course to improve English communication skills of Thai employees in a Japanese trading company in Sathorn area. The population was 120 divided into three groups: 21 sales staff, 70 sales coordinator staff, and 29 administrative staff. A questionnaire was used to collect data using purposive sampling which aimed to study a particular segment of the population. The results of this research show that mostly sale staff do not have problems in English communication skills and they would like to take a speaking English course to improve their communication with customers. For sales coordinator staff, they prefer to take a course in listening, speaking for telephone conversation course and writing for sending e-mail. Administrative staff do not use English with customers; thus, they focus only on productive skills which are speaking and writing. The most common problem was English speaking skill. The two main problems with the highest mean score in English were “unable to understand accents and unable to understand rapid speech”

Chuanchaisit (2009) studied types of communication strategies (CSs) used by lower-ability students and pedagogical implications of helping lower abilities student to improve their oral communication abilities through the selection of effective communication strategies (CSs). The population was 300 third-year English major students enrolled in the speaking course in the Faculty of Humanities in the second semester of the year 2008 at the University of the Thai Chamber of Commerce (UTCC). The participants were 100 students who were categorized into two groups based on the average grades of their previous English courses. The objectives of the strategies used a Speaking Task Inventory (SUSTI) and the Oral Communication Test (OCT) to assess their communication strategies (CSs) use. The results found that the high ability students tend to use risk-taking strategies, whereas the low ability students used time-gaining strategies or risk-avoidance depending upon limited knowledge, which seemed to be an obstruction to their use of communication strategies (CSs). The study suggested
that students should be taught both linguistic knowledge and communication strategies (CSs) to promote their effective language learning.
CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

This chapter provides the methodology about (1) population and sample, (2) research instruments, (3) data collection procedure and (4) data analysis.

3.1 Population and Sample

The study investigated 77 participants who are working in TG company as a senior cabin crew under QV department using English for communication; all are native Thai speakers and at the level of English proficiency with the minimum requirement of the TOEIC (Test of English for International Communication) score at 550. The sample population was limited to TG senior cabin crew categorized as the cabin crew who were required for these particular new services which includes working position ranking of IM, AP, ASE and AHE. A questionnaire was used to collect data using purposive sampling aimed to study a particular segment of a population. The participants are flying on the particular aircraft type of Airbus A380, Airbus A330, Boeing 777 working in only new first class and new business class on international routes, which are long-haul flights such as flights to London, Frankfurt, and Paris.

3.2 Research Instruments

In this study, the research instrument to collect the data was the questionnaires which were written in both Thai and English. The questionnaire was composed of closed-ended and open-ended questions. The participants were asked about demographic data, their problems with English use in terms of oral communication and the strategies they used when they are facing problems during conversation with foreign guests. The closed-ended questionnaire was adapted from: “How Competently Do You Communicate?” L.B. Rosenfeld and R.M. Berko, Glenview, IL: Scott, Foresman, Little, Brown (www.faa.gov), Wisawajareonkit (2015) and Chuanchaisit (2009), focusing on these parts as follows.
Part I: Demographic Data

In this part, general and educational background aims at ages, gender, education, field of study, current position, standardized test of TOEIC, TOEFL, IELTS score, and years of experiences of TG cabin crew were designed in the form of closed-ended questions.

Part II: Barriers of English Communication

This section was concerned with their English ability while communicating with their foreign guests. The questionnaires were adapted from: “How Competently Do You Communicate?” L.B. Rosenfeld and R.M. Berko, Glenview, IL: Scott, Foresman, Little, Brown and Wisawajareonkit (2015) focusing on the problems that caused communication barriers in terms of listening and consisted of 10 closed-ended items and speaking consisted of 10 closed-ended items. A Five-Point Likert Scale was used to measure the frequency and levels of the problems and were presented with the following criteria in table 3.1.

Table 3.1 Interpretation of Scores Results in Communication Barriers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Interpretation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Never</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Rarely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Often</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Always</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Part III: Communication strategies

In this section, the questionnaires were adopted from the study done by Chuanchaisit (2009) according to the taxonomy’s framework of communication strategies (CSs) from Corder (1983), Dörnyei & Scott (1997), Nakatani (2005 & 2006), and Cohen (2004). The participants were asked to rate their problems and the strategies they used to overcome the problems consisting of 15 closed-ended items based on a five-point Likert scale. The criteria were classified in table 3.2.
Table 3.2 Interpretation of Rating Results in Communication Strategies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Interpretation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Never</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Rarely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Often</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Always</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Part IV: Open-ended question for TG crew to give suggestions**

In this final section, an open-ended question was added to provide an opportunity for the participants to express their ideas in in-depth responses.

**3.3 Data Collection Procedure**

The participants were randomly selected. The convenience sampling technique was used for participant selection and the data was collected by hand and via the crew mailbox.

The researcher asked for permission from the QV department and was allowed to conduct this research study. A total of 80 questionnaires were distributed to participants, 79 questionnaires were returned and there were 77 questionnaires that could be analyzed in this study. These were completed and returned to the researcher’s mail box at Thai Airways International’s Crew Center, Suvarnabhumi Airport during 20 March-30 April, 2018.

**3.4 Data Analysis**

The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences Program (SPSS) version 23 analyze the quantitative data. The results of the questionnaire were categorized, interpreted, and tabulated on computer sheets.

(a) The data concerning the general and educational background (part I) was presented as frequency and percentages.
(b) Mean and standard deviations were computed to determine the types of problems in English listening and speaking skills (part II) and the participants’ strategies regarding using English for communication on the performance of cabin crew in their English language (part III).

The mean score ($\bar{x}$) was used to interpret the level of communication problems based on the criteria of Rensis Likert (1932) as shown in table 3.3.

**Table 3.3 Interpretation of A Five-Likert Scale**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>Problem / Strategies</th>
<th>Mean Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Always (81-100%)</td>
<td>4.50-5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Often (51-80%)</td>
<td>3.50-4.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Sometimes (21-50%)</td>
<td>2.50-3.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Rarely (1-20%)</td>
<td>1.50-2.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Never (0%)</td>
<td>1.00-1.49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER 4
RESULTS

This chapter reports the results of research problems and strategies employed by Thai Airways senior cabin crew. The results were calculated statistically and presented in three parts as follows:

Part I: The data, derived from personal data concerning gender, age, educational background, work experiences, rank position, and English proficiency were presented as frequency and percentages.

Part II: Types of problems in English listening and speaking skills based on a five-point Likert scale was used to score the participants’ level of communication barriers of English communication.

Part III: Shows the mean score (\(\bar{x}\)) of the communication strategies used to solve problems between Thai Airways senior cabin crew and their guests during oral English communication.

Part IV: Presents the results of the open-ended questions.

4.1 Demographic Data of the Participants

In this part, the descriptive analysis data which includes gender, age, educational background, work experiences, rank position, and English proficiency were obtained from questionnaires. The data was presented in tables in the form of frequency and percentage.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>38.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>61.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Demographic Data of the Participants (n=77)
As illustrated in Table 4.1, the frequency and percentage of TG senior cabin crew in the sample shows that the most of the participants were female at 61.04% and 38.96% were male.

Table 4.2 Age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age(Years)</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>21-25</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26-30</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-35</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36-40</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>22.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41-45</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>28.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46-60</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>46.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Demographic Data of the Participants (n=77)

As can be seen in table 4.2, the results show that 46.75% in the age range of 46-60 years accounted for the largest group. A total of 28.57% were between 41-45 years and 22.08% were between 36-40 years, while 2.60% of participants were aged between 31-35.

Table 4.3 Educational Background

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Educational Background</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor’s Degree</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>72.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master’s Degree</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>27.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctorate Degree</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Demographic Data of the Participants (n=77)
Table 4.3 presents the frequency and percentage of educational background. The results indicate that the participants who graduated with a bachelor's degree at 72.73% were the majority.

**Table 4.4 Work Experience**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Working Experience (Years)</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6-10 years</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-15 years</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>20.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-20 years</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>22.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-25 years</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>32.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 25 years</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>23.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>77</td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Demographic Data of the Participants (n=77)

Table 4.4 shows in terms of work experience of Thai senior cabin crew with Thai Airways, most of the participants had work experience between 21-25 years of experience at 32.47%, more than 25 years of experience at 23.38% followed by 16-20 years of experience at 22.08%, and 11-15 years of experience at 20.78%, while 6-10 years of experience was only 1.30%.

**Table 4.5 Rank Position**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank Position</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IM</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AP</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASE</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>32.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AHE</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>51.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>77</td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Demographic Data of the Participants (n=77)

Table 4.5 displays the frequency and percentage of rank position. The results indicate that most of the senior cabin crew at 51.95% are working as a rank position of
AHE, follow by rank position of ASE at 32.47%, rank position of AP at 10.39%, and rank position of IM at 5.19%, respectively.

Table 4.6 Standardized English Proficiency Test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOEIC Score</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>555-650</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>16.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>655-750</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>35.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>755-850</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>32.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>855-990</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>16.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Demographic Data of the Participants (n=68), 9 participants no data.

As indicated by the data in Table 4.6, most of the participants had TOEIC scores ranging among 655-750 at 35.30% and 755-850 at 32.30%, was rated (\(\bar{x}=762.94\)).

4.2 Participants’ Communication Barriers

Table 4.7 Experience of Unsuccessful Communication Using English with Foreign Guests

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experience of Unsuccessful Communication</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>85.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>14.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Demographic Data of the Participants (n=77)

As can be seen in table 4.7, the frequency and percentage of the participants who experienced the communication problems with foreign guests is shown. The results show that the majority of 85.71% of the participants have encountered communication problems, while 14.29% of them have not.
Table 4.8 Frequency of Encountering Communication Problems with Guests

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency of Problem Occurrence</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Every flight</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most of the time</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>64.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rarely</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>16.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No experience of problem occurrence</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>14.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Table 4.8, the results are displayed in the range of the period of time in which the participants have had the experience of encountering communication problems with guests. The findings show that the biggest group of 64.94% of the participants had experienced problems sometimes. While 14.29% have had no experience encountering communication problems with guests.

The questionnaire contained twenty questions focusing on ten questions of listening and ten questions of speaking problems. Seventy-seven participants answered the questions in this part (n=77). The results are shown in the following tables in the form of descriptive statistical data including percentage, mean (\(\bar{x}\)), and standard deviation.

Table 4.9 Listening and Speaking Problems

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Listening Problems</th>
<th>5 Always (%)</th>
<th>4 Often (%)</th>
<th>3 Sometimes (%)</th>
<th>2 Rarely (%)</th>
<th>1 Never (%)</th>
<th>(\bar{x})</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
<th>Level of Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I am able to understand perfectly all different English accents.</td>
<td>1 1.30%</td>
<td>43 55.84%</td>
<td>30 38.96%</td>
<td>3 3.90%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3.54</td>
<td>0.59</td>
<td>Often</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Table continued)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Listening Problems</th>
<th>5 Always (%)</th>
<th>4 Often (%)</th>
<th>3 Sometimes (%)</th>
<th>2 Rarely (%)</th>
<th>1 Never (%)</th>
<th>𝜍</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
<th>Level of Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2. I am able to understand slang, idiomatic expressions, or colloquialisms.</td>
<td>2 2.60%</td>
<td>19 24.68%</td>
<td>47 61.04%</td>
<td>9 11.69%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3.18</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I am able to remember the entire information.</td>
<td>4 5.19%</td>
<td>34 44.16%</td>
<td>36 46.75%</td>
<td>3 3.90%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3.51</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>Often</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I am able to understand a speaker's main idea.</td>
<td>22 28.57%</td>
<td>49 63.64%</td>
<td>5 6.49%</td>
<td>1 1.30%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4.19</td>
<td>0.60</td>
<td>Often</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I am able to understand technical terms.</td>
<td>4 5.19%</td>
<td>30 38.96%</td>
<td>36 46.75%</td>
<td>6 7.79%</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.39</td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. I pay attention to the intonation.</td>
<td>22 28.57%</td>
<td>42 54.55%</td>
<td>11 14.29%</td>
<td>2 2.60%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4.09</td>
<td>0.72</td>
<td>Often</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. I pay attention to the pronunciation.</td>
<td>27 35.06%</td>
<td>41 53.25%</td>
<td>8 10.39%</td>
<td>1 1.30%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4.22</td>
<td>0.68</td>
<td>Often</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. I pay attention to words which the speaker emphasizes</td>
<td>33 42.86%</td>
<td>39 50.65%</td>
<td>4 5.19%</td>
<td>1 1.30%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4.35</td>
<td>0.64</td>
<td>Often</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. I pay attention to the speaker's eye contact, facial expression and gestures</td>
<td>45 58.44%</td>
<td>31 40.26%</td>
<td>1 1.30%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4.57</td>
<td>0.52</td>
<td>Always</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. I anticipate what the speaker is going to say based on the context.</td>
<td>17 22.08%</td>
<td>47 61.04%</td>
<td>13 16.88%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4.05</td>
<td>0.62</td>
<td>Often</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*(Table continued)*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Speaking Problems</th>
<th>5 Always (%)</th>
<th>4 Often (%)</th>
<th>3 Sometimes (%)</th>
<th>2 Rarely (%)</th>
<th>1 Never (%)</th>
<th>x</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
<th>Level of Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11. I speak naturally and effectively.</td>
<td>10 12.99%</td>
<td>50 64.94%</td>
<td>17 22.08%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3.91</td>
<td>0.58</td>
<td>Often</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. I speak appropriate words (avoid jargon or slang).</td>
<td>20 25.97%</td>
<td>38 49.35%</td>
<td>17 22.08%</td>
<td>2 2.60%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3.99</td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td>Often</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. I speak appropriate pronunciation.</td>
<td>8 10.39%</td>
<td>43 55.84%</td>
<td>25 32.47%</td>
<td>1 1.30%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3.75</td>
<td>0.65</td>
<td>Often</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. I speak with correct grammar tenses.</td>
<td>11 14.29%</td>
<td>29 37.66%</td>
<td>33 42.86%</td>
<td>4 5.19%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3.61</td>
<td>0.79</td>
<td>Often</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. I speak with correct words order.</td>
<td>9 11.69%</td>
<td>37 48.05%</td>
<td>29 37.66%</td>
<td>2 2.60%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3.69</td>
<td>0.71</td>
<td>Often</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. I speak without anxiety.</td>
<td>13 16.88%</td>
<td>46 59.74%</td>
<td>18 23.38%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3.94</td>
<td>0.63</td>
<td>Often</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. I speak in a warm tone.</td>
<td>33 42.86%</td>
<td>40 51.95%</td>
<td>3 3.90%</td>
<td>1 1.30%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td><strong>4.36</strong></td>
<td><strong>0.62</strong></td>
<td>Often</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. I speak at a rate that is neither too fast or too slow (take a breath between sentences).</td>
<td>17 22.08%</td>
<td>40 51.95%</td>
<td>20 25.97%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3.96</td>
<td>0.69</td>
<td>Often</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. I speak fluently (avoiding &quot;uh&quot;, &quot;uhm&quot;, &quot;you know&quot;, awkward pauses, etc).</td>
<td>4 5.19%</td>
<td>29 37.66%</td>
<td>43 55.84%</td>
<td>1 1.30%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3.47</td>
<td>0.62</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. I am able to express complex ideas.</td>
<td>2 2.60%</td>
<td>21 27.27%</td>
<td>45 58.44%</td>
<td>7 9.09%</td>
<td>2</td>
<td><strong>3.18</strong></td>
<td><strong>0.73</strong></td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.9 presents the oral communication as rated by the participants when communicating in English with foreign guests. Overall, most participants when
listening pay attention to the speaker’s eye contact, facial expression and gestures rated at the “always” level of frequency (\(\bar{x} = 4.57\)) followed by speaking in a warm tone (\(\bar{x} = 4.36\)).

For the other two problems, the participants had difficulties speaking. The results of the speaking problems showed that the participants had problems to express complex ideas (\(\bar{x} = 3.18\)) and the participants had difficulties to understand slang, idiomatic expressions, or colloquialisms which was rated (\(\bar{x} = 3.18\)) for listening problem with results the same.

4.3 Communication Strategies

The last part presents communication strategies used by the participants when encountering communication problems with foreign guests. The questionnaire contained 15 questions as follows.

**Risk-Taking strategies**
- Social affective strategies used in items no.1,9,15
- Accuracy-oriented strategies used in items no.10,11
- Non-verbal strategies used in items no.2,13
- Help-seeking strategies used in items no.3,5,6
- Circumlocution strategies used in item no.14

**Risk-Avoidance strategies**
- Message abandonment strategies used in items no.7,8
- Message reduction strategies used in items no.4
- Time-gaining strategies used in items no.12

The data obtained from questionnaires were then analysed and rearranged according to the ranking of the mean (\(\bar{x}\)) using descriptive statistical procedures including percentage, mean (\(\bar{x}\)), and standard deviation (S.D).
Table 4.10 The Use of English Communication Strategies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Communication Strategies</th>
<th>5 Always (%)</th>
<th>4 Often (%)</th>
<th>3 Sometimes (%)</th>
<th>2 Rarely (%)</th>
<th>1 Never (%)</th>
<th>( \bar{X} )</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
<th>Level of Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4. I use the words which are familiar to me. (Message-reduction strategies)</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4.45</td>
<td>.597</td>
<td>Often</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I ask for repetition when a message is not clear to me; such as &quot;could you say it again?&quot;; &quot;Pardon?&quot; (Help-seeking strategies)</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4.35</td>
<td>.644</td>
<td>Often</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. When the message is not clear, I ask participants for clarification directly. (Help-seeking strategies)</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4.31</td>
<td>.544</td>
<td>Often</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. I give a good impression to the listener. (Social-affective strategies)</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4.30</td>
<td>.650</td>
<td>Often</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. I use eye contact (always face to guest, relaxed facial expression). (Non-verbal strategies)</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4.27</td>
<td>.641</td>
<td>Often</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. I correct myself when I notice that I have made a mistake. (Accuracy-oriented strategies)</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4.21</td>
<td>.635</td>
<td>Often</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. I encourage myself to use English even though it may risk making mistakes. (Social-affective strategies)</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3.95</td>
<td>.759</td>
<td>Often</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Table continued)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Communication Strategies</th>
<th>5 Always (%)</th>
<th>4 Often (%)</th>
<th>3 Sometimes (%)</th>
<th>2 Rarely (%)</th>
<th>1 Never (%)</th>
<th>χ²</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
<th>Level of Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8  1. I try to enjoy the conversation. (Social-affective strategies)</td>
<td>12 15.58%</td>
<td>46 59.74%</td>
<td>18 23.38%</td>
<td>1 1.30%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td><strong>3.90</strong></td>
<td>.661</td>
<td>Often</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9  13. I use gestures if I cannot express myself. (Non-verbal strategies)</td>
<td>20 25.97%</td>
<td>26 33.77%</td>
<td>29 37.66%</td>
<td>1 1.30%</td>
<td>1 1.30%</td>
<td><strong>3.82</strong></td>
<td>.884</td>
<td>Often</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 14. I describe the characteristics of the object instead of using the exact word that I am not sure of. (Circumlocution strategies)</td>
<td>14 18.18%</td>
<td>36 46.75%</td>
<td>24 31.17%</td>
<td>3 3.90%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td><strong>3.79</strong></td>
<td>.784</td>
<td>Often</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 6. I try to elicit help from my interlocutor indirectly; such as rising intonation. (Help-seeking strategies)</td>
<td>14 18.18%</td>
<td>35 45.45%</td>
<td>25 32.47%</td>
<td>2 2.60%</td>
<td>1 1.30%</td>
<td><strong>3.77</strong></td>
<td>.826</td>
<td>Often</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 12. I use some fillers to fill pauses or phrases; like &quot;actually&quot; &quot;well&quot; &quot;it is difficult to explain&quot; in order to gain more time to think about what I should speak. (Time-gaining strategies)</td>
<td>11 14.29%</td>
<td>24 31.17%</td>
<td>36 46.75%</td>
<td>6 7.79%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td><strong>3.52</strong></td>
<td>.837</td>
<td>Often</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 11. I think of what I want to say in Thai, then construct the English sentence. (Accuracy-oriented strategies)</td>
<td>3 3.90%</td>
<td>21 27.27%</td>
<td>35 45.45%</td>
<td>12 15.58%</td>
<td>6 7.79%</td>
<td><strong>3.04</strong></td>
<td>.952</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Table continued)
As indicated by the data in Table 4.10, the ranking of use of CSs is at very high use (\(\bar{x} = 4.45\)) to low use (\(\bar{x} = 1.94\)). The five most reported CSs used were message-reduction strategy (\(\bar{x} = 4.45\)), followed by help-seeking strategy (\(\bar{x} = 4.43\)), help-seeking strategy (\(\bar{x} = 4.31\)), social-affective strategy (\(\bar{x} = 4.30\)) and non-verbal strategy (\(\bar{x} = 4.27\)). The least five CSs reported were message abandonment strategy (\(\bar{x} = 1.94\)), followed by message abandonment strategy (\(\bar{x} = 2.49\)), accuracy-oriented strategy (\(\bar{x} = 3.04\)), time-gaining strategy (\(\bar{x} = 3.52\)) and help-seeking strategy (\(\bar{x} = 3.77\)).

Item no. 4 shows that message reduction is the highest (\(\bar{x} =4.45\)), the majority of participants at 50.65% always used the words which are familiar to them when they faced problems.

Considering Item no. 5, the participants at 46.75% often asked for repetition when the message is not clear.

Item no. 3 shows that the highest percentage of the participants at 61.04% often asked the interlocutor for clarification directly.

Item no. 15, which was under social-affective strategies, reported in the fourth rank, shows that 49.35% of the participants often give a good impression to the listener.

Moreover, the participants believed that whilst communicating across different cultures, non-verbal strategies were regarded as the most important as seen in Item no. 2, which was the use of eye contact at 51.95% of the participants.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Communication Strategies</th>
<th>5 Always (%)</th>
<th>4 Often (%)</th>
<th>3 Sometimes (%)</th>
<th>2 Rarely (%)</th>
<th>1 Never (%)</th>
<th>(\bar{x})</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
<th>Level of Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Item no. 14</td>
<td>1 1.30%</td>
<td>5 6.49%</td>
<td>33 42.86%</td>
<td>30 38.96%</td>
<td>8 10.39%</td>
<td>2.49</td>
<td>.821</td>
<td>Rarely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. I give up expressing a message if I cannot make myself understood. (Message-abandonment strategies)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item no. 15</td>
<td>1 1.30%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>20 25.97%</td>
<td>28 36.36%</td>
<td>28 36.36%</td>
<td>1.94</td>
<td>.864</td>
<td>Rarely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. If I face some language difficulties, I will leave a message unfinished. (Message-abandonment)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Item no. 10 shows that 55.84% of the participants often correct themselves when noticing that they have made a mistake under accuracy-oriented strategy.

Item no. 9 shows that 58.44% of the participants often encouraged themselves to use English even though it may risk making mistakes.

Item no. 1 shows that 59.74% of the participants often tried to enjoy the conversation under social-affective strategies, and 37.66% of the participants used gestures to express themselves sometimes according to Item no. 13.

Item no. 14 shows that 46.75% of the participants often employed an indirect way of speaking to enhance their communication or described the characteristics of the object instead of using the exact words that they were not sure of and none of them ever use the circumlocution strategy.

Item no. 6 shows that only 1.30% of the participants never try to elicit help from the interlocutor indirectly such as using a rising intonation, while 45.45% of the participants often use this technique under help-seeking strategy.

In terms of risk-avoidance strategies, it was found that the participants sometimes used some fillers to fill pauses or phrases, using expressions like “uhm”, “er” and “well”. There were 46.75% of the participants who used time-gaining strategies when they cannot think of that what they should speak.

Whereas for the message abandonment strategies, which were Item no. 7 the majority of the participants at 42.86% sometimes give up expressing a message if they cannot make themselves understood and Item no. 8 has the lowest (\( \bar{x} = 1.94 \)) at only 1.30% of the participants who always left a message unfinished.

### 4.4 Comments and Suggestions

The open-ended questions asked for the participants’ suggestions about the use of communication strategies (CSs) and their English communication problems whilst the participants were communicating with their foreign guests.

From the findings, the participants suggested that help-seeking strategy, such as seeking assistance from interlocutors whenever an inflight communication problem between a passenger and a flight attendant arose by asking for repetition when a
message is not clear, trying to understand their jokes and guessing the message are the most helpful strategies when communicating with foreigners.

In addition, the participants suggested trying to improve English knowledge and keep practicing for developing the skills to proficiency was the social-affective strategy that was considered as the most useful strategy to develop their English oral communication.

Moreover, the participants suggested that TOEIC score is not a factor to determine whether they can speak English language fluently. Knowledge in a variety of aspects of viewpoints could be applied to communicate with foreigners in various professional careers. It may imply that the participants used problem solving technique communication in terms of resources from frame of reference which includes knowledge from education background, race, cultural value, gender, life experiences, attitude and personality. The participants also indicated that because of the different varieties of accents of passengers on board, they use their experiences and use familiar words under message-reduction strategies to achieve his or her goal to run through the communication.

The findings of this study will be summarized and discussed in the next chapter.
CHAPTER 5
CONCLUSION, DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter presents (1) a summary of the study, (2) a summary of the finding, (3) discussion of the results, (4) the conclusion, and (5) gives recommendations for the further study.

5.1 Summary of the Study

This section summarizes the objectives, participants, instruments and procedure used in the study.

5.1.1 Objectives of the study

1. To investigate English communication problems between Thai Airways senior cabin crew and their foreign guests.

2. To investigate communication strategies used by Thai Airways senior cabin crew when facing communication problems.

5.1.2 Participants, instruments, and procedures

The participants of this study were 77 Thai Airways senior cabin crew, comprising 47 females and 30 males.

The instrument used for data collection in this study was a questionnaire consisting of three parts of closed-ended questions and one part of open-ended question. A five-point Likert scale was used to score: demography, types of problems in English listening and speaking skills, level of barriers of English communication, the strategies used to solve problems between participants and their foreign guests during oral English communication, and participants’ suggestions.

The researcher asked for permission from the QV department and was allowed to conduct this research study. A total of 80 questionnaires were distributed and returned to the researcher's mail box at Thai Airways International Crew Center, Suvarnabhumi Airport during 20 March-30 April, 2018. Data was analyzed by using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences program (SPSS). The findings are presented
by frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation. The last part is the suggestions from participants and is presented in descriptive form.

5.2 Summary of the Findings

The results of the study can be summarized as follows:

5.2.1 Demography of the participants

The participants of this study were 77 Thai Airways senior cabin crew, both male and female. The results showed that the most of the participants were female at 61.04%, whereas 38.96% of the participants were male. In addition, the largest age group of the participants was in the range of 46-60 years old at 46.75%. In terms of educational background, the participants who graduated with a bachelor’s degree 72.73% were the majority. Moreover, for work experience, most of the participants had worked between 21-25 years at 32.47%, while only 1.30% of the participants had worked between 6-10 years. As the rank position, there were 51.95% at the position of AHE. The total of the participants who had TOEIC scores was 68 (n=68) (mean=762.94).

5.2.2 Participants’ Communication Problems

The participants were asked to rate their problems in listening and speaking skills when communicating with foreign guests.

5.2.2.1 In terms of experience of unsuccessful communicating using English with foreign guests, most of the participants have encountered communication problems at 85.71%. The biggest group of 75.75% of the participants had experienced problems which occurred sometimes while 14.29% of them have not.

5.2.2.2 Listening skills: The results showed that the majority of the participants at 61.04% had problems with being able to understand slang, idiomatic expressions, or colloquialisms ($\bar{x} =3.18$), which occur sometimes was the most significant problem.

The participants also sometimes had difficulties with being able to understand the technical terms ($\bar{x} =3.39$).
On the contrary, the majority of participants 55.84% are often able to understand perfectly all different English accents (\(\bar{x} = 3.54\)). In addition, the participants often have no problems with remembering the entire information (\(\bar{x} = 3.51\)). Moreover, the participants often have no problems with being able to understand a speaker’s main idea (\(\bar{x} = 4.19\)).

Focused on the behavior of the participants whilst listening with foreign guests, the study revealed that the participants always pay attention to the speaker’s eye contact, facial expression and gesture (\(\bar{x} = 4.57\)) was the most popular reported.

5.2.2.3 Speaking skills: The results indicated that the problems in speaking were at 58.44%. The majority of participants had difficulties about expressing complex ideas (\(\bar{x} = 3.18\)). However, the participants often speak in a warm tone (\(\bar{x} = 4.36\)). Moreover, the participants speak without anxiety (\(\bar{x} = 3.94\)) at a rate that is neither too fast or too slow (\(\bar{x} = 3.96\)), and used appropriate words avoiding jargon or slang (\(\bar{x} = 3.99\)) with natural and effective speech (\(\bar{x} = 3.91\)).

5.2.3 Participants’ Communication Strategies

Fifteen communication strategies were listed in the questionnaire adapted from the study done by Chuanchaisit (2009) according to the taxonomy’s framework of communication strategies (CSs) from Corder (1983), Dörnyei & Scott (1997), Nakatani (2005 & 2006), and Cohen (2004). The results of the communication strategy ranking found that the participants’ preference of Communication Strategies at very high use (\(\bar{x} = 4.45\)) to low use (\(\bar{x} = 1.94\)).

The most popular Message- reduction strategies reported were the participants use the words which are familiar to them was the most used strategies (\(\bar{x} = 4.45\)). The second rank was Help-seeking strategies; the participants also asked for repetition when a message is not clear (\(\bar{x} = 4.35\)), followed by asking to interlocutors for clarification directly for Help-seeking strategies (\(\bar{x} = 4.31\)).

In addition, social-affective strategies reported in the fourth rank. It shows that the participants often give a good impression to the listener (\(\bar{x} = 4.30\)).
Furthermore, it can be seen that the participants believed that whilst communicating across different cultures *non-verbal strategies* were regarded as important by using eye contact ($\bar{x} = 4.27$).

In terms of risk-avoidance strategies as the least three used strategies, it was found that the participants sometimes used *time-gaining strategies* to fill pauses or phrases using expressions like “uhm” “er” “well” when they cannot think of what they should speak ($= \bar{x} 3.52$). While *message abandonment strategies* were the lowest ($\bar{x} = 1.94$) only 1.30% left messages unfinished and rarely give up expressing a message if the participants cannot make themselves understood ($x = 2.49$).

**5.2.4 Participants’ suggestion in the open-ended question**

According to the open-ended question asking for the participants’ comments and suggestions, it was revealed that when they face problems in English communication, they use various CSs such as help-seeking strategies, social-affective strategies, and message-reduction strategies to solve their communication problems. In addition to the CSs techniques or tools, some of the participants also pointed out that knowledge background from several sources and experience could be applied to problems solving to more effectively communicate.

**5.3 Discussion**

This section concern the discussion of the significant results related to the theories and relevant research.

**5.3.1 Participants’ Communication Problem: Listening Skill**

The results showed that Thai Airways senior cabin crew sometimes having difficulties to understand slang, idiomatic expressions, or colloquialisms was the most significant problem in listening skills. Also, participant D commented in part IV that “trying to understand their jokes and guess the meaning is the most difficult situation when communicating with foreigners” The results of the study related to Kositchart (2011) who investigated Thai AFS exchange students’ problems and needs in English listening and speaking proficiency in the United States of America and found that the
unfamiliar words and being unable to comprehend jokes, metaphors or puns were the problems of Thai AFS exchange students. Moreover, the results of the current study partially supported Wishom (2004), who stated that vocabulary, misinterpretation and cultural differences are affecting communication.

5.3.2 Participants’ Communication Problem: Speaking Skill

Regarding the speaking problems of Thai Airways senior cabin crew, the results showed that being able to express complex ideas was the most significant problem. These results supported the theories of Corder (1983), which state that sometimes L2 learners may not be able to express messages which they wish to convey to interact with interlocutors successfully. The results also indicated that Thai Airways senior cabin crew always use nonlinguistic signal resources such as mime, gestures, eye contact, and facial expression to help in expressing the meaning to communicate and convey their message as an effective tool to communicate with non-native English speakers. This supported Philpott (1983), who found that nonverbal cues or visual codes such as pay attention to the speaker's eye contact, facial expression and gestures supplants the spoken word. This could explain why people tend to believe more on what they see than what they hear.

In relation to non-verbal strategies while speaking, the results supported the communication competence theory of Canale and Swaine (1980; cited in Tangniam, 2006), who claimed that the use and the function of verbal and non-verbal communication strategies (strategic competence) can enhance communicative competence where necessary and enable learners to overcome difficulties when L2 communication breakdowns occur.

5.3.3 Participants’ Communication Strategies

The results showed that Thai Airways senior cabin crew always used the words which are familiar to them when they are faced with problems was the highest mean score of the message reduction strategies. This indicated that they had used risk-avoidance strategies to overcome their English oral communication problems although there seems to be some disagreement as to the characteristics of avoidance behavior in language learners.
The message reduction strategies is reported often used and at highest mean on the questionnaire responses by Thai Airways senior cabin crew who tended to continue the flow of the conversation and used new or familiar words rather than used message abandonment strategies such as give up expressing a message or left message unfinished if they cannot make themselves understood.

Help-seeking strategies has been ranked in second and third, indicating that Thai Airways senior cabin crew use repetition and clarification techniques to request the explanation of the unfamiliar words and confirm the message in order to make themselves clearly understood.

On the other hand, the lowest ranked reported was message abandonment strategies. It seems that Thai Airways senior cabin crew rarely give up expressing a message or left a message unfinished.

5.4 Conclusion

5.4.1 This study revealed that the two major problems of oral communication were being able to understand slang, idiomatic expressions, or colloquialisms and being able to express complex ideas whether they communicated with native or non-native English speaker guests.

5.4.2 The results indicated that Thai Airways senior cabin crew often speak in a warm tone and aim to pay attention to the interlocutor by using non-verbal language such as eye contact, and facial expression while communicating.

5.4.3 The results showed that problems occurred sometimes. When Thai Airways’ senior cabin crew had problems in oral communication the most significant communication strategy used by Thai Airways senior cabin crew was to use the communication strategy of message-reduction and using the words which are familiar to them for the assurance many foreign guests look for. On the other hand, they rarely used the communication strategy of message abandonment.
5.5 Recommendations for Further Study

Based on the results and conclusion of this study, this study involved a very small number of participants in one setting over a limited time period and dealt with only one side of Thai Airway senior cabin crew. Therefore, any attempts to generalize from these data can only be tentative.

Further study should be conducted on both side of interlocutors and could be done to examine various groups by a test, then classify them as levels of high and low proficiency groups to find out whether there is any relationship between the employment of different strategies and participants' levels of language proficiency. So that the result would be more generalized, it is possible that further study is needed to investigate the use of message reduction strategies which has been identified as an avoidance strategy or to convey a message with interlocutors successfully.

This study focused on problems and strategies of English communication by using quantitative data, interviews are recommended for further studies.

However, it is hoped that features of the data presented in this study may resonate with other researcher in different contexts to develop effective communication in depth.
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APPENDIX
APPENDIX

QUESTIONNAIRE

This questionnaire is a part of a research paper submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirement for a Master Degree of Arts in English for Career, Language Institute, Thammasat University. Your response will be confidential and used for academic purpose only. Your cooperation in completing this questionnaire will be highly appreciated.

Part I: Personal Data / ข้อมูลส่วนตัว

1. Gender /
   ___ Male ชาย   ___ Female หญิง

2. Age /
   ___ 20-25   ___ 31-35   ___ 41-45
   ___ 26-30   ___ 36-40   ___ 46-60

3. Educational background /
   ___ Bachelor's Degree / ปริญญาตรี   ___ Doctorate Degree / ปริญญาเอก
   ___ Master's Degree / ปริญญาโท   ___ Others / อื่น ๆ

4. How long have you been working at Thai Airways Company Limited? /
   ระยะเวลาการทำงานกับ บริษัท การบินไทย จำกัด (มหาชน)
   ___ 1-5 years / ปี   ___ 16-20 years / ปี
   ___ 6-10 years / ปี   ___ 21-25 years / ปี
   ___ 11-15 years / ปี   ___ More than 25 years ปี

5. Rank Position / ตำแหน่งงาน
   ___ IM   ___ AP   ___ ASF   ___ AHF
   ___ ASE   ___ AHE   ___ ASR   ___ AHR

Ref. code: 25605921040175HYS
6. Standardized English Proficiency Test คะแนนผลสอบวัดระดับความรู้ทางภาษาอังกฤษตามมาตรฐาน

___ TOEIC
___ THAI-TEP
___ TOEFL
___ TU-GET
___ IELTS
___ CU-TEP
___ Others

please specify score: ______ points. โปรดระบุผลคะแนน

Part II: Barriers of English Communication / อุปสรรคในการสื่อสารภาษาอังกฤษ

1. Have you had any experience of unsuccessful communication using English with foreign guests? (Both native English speakers and non-native English speakers) / ท่านเคยประสบปัญหาการสื่อสารไม่บรรลุผลกับลูกค้าต่างชาติหรือไม่? (ชาวต่างชาติที่ใช้ภาษาอังกฤษเป็นภาษาแม่และไม่ใช้ภาษาอังกฤษเป็นภาษาแม่)

___ Yes / เคย

___ No / ไม่เคย

If yes, how often do the problems occur?
___ Every flight / ทุกเที่ยวบิน
___ Most of the times / ตลอดมาก
___ Sometimes / บางครั้ง
___ Rarely / แทบจะไม่เคย

The following are the problems that caused communication barrier in terms of listening.
Please check (✓) in front of the item you choose.

5=Always  สม่ำเสมอ
4=Often  ส่วนใหญ่
3=Sometimes บางครั้ง
e=Rarely  น้อย ๆ ครั้ง
1=Never  ไม่เคย
### Listening Problem

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Always</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Never</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I am able to understand perfectly all different English accents. /ฉันสามารถเข้าใจทุกสักนึงของภาษาอังกฤษ</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. I am able to understand slang, idiomatic expressions, or colloquialisms. /ฉันสามารถเข้าใจสแลงหรือสัมบัติพูดได้</td>
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<td>3. I am able to remember the entire information. /ฉันสามารถจักซึ่งทั้งหมดได้</td>
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<td>4. I am able to understand a speaker’s main idea. /ฉันสามารถเข้าใจความสำคัญของผู้พูด</td>
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<td>5. I am able to understand technical terms. /ฉันสามารถเข้าใจศัพท์เทคนิคได้</td>
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<td>6. I pay attention to the intonation. /ฉันให้ความสนใจโทนเสียง</td>
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<td>7. I pay attention to the pronunciation. /ฉันให้ความสนใจในการออกเสียง</td>
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<td>8. I pay attention to words which the speaker emphasizes. /ฉันให้ความสนใจคำที่ผู้พูดนิยม</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. I pay attention to the speaker’s eye contact, facial expression and gestures. /ฉันให้ความสนใจในทางลักษณะทางท่าทางของผู้พูด</td>
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<tr>
<td>10. I anticipate what the speaker is going to say based on the context. /ฉันคาดหมายว่าผู้พูดจะพูดอะไรโดยขึ้นอยู่กับบริบท</td>
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<tr>
<td>Speaking Problem</td>
<td>Always (5)</td>
<td>Often (4)</td>
<td>Sometimes (3)</td>
<td>Rarely (2)</td>
<td>Never (1)</td>
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<td>11.I speak naturally and effectively. / ฉันพูดตามธรรมชาติและมีประสิทธิผล</td>
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<td>12.I speak appropriate words (avoid jargon or slang). / ฉันพูดถูกต้องตามหลักภาษาหรือหลักภาษาที่เหมาะสม</td>
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<tr>
<td>13.1 speak appropriate pronunciation. / ฉันพูดออกเสียงอย่างเหมาะสม</td>
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<td>14.1 speak with correct grammar tenses such as “I went to the airport yesterday.” / ฉันพูดถูกต้องตามหลักภาษาหรือหลักภาษาที่เหมาะสม  “I went to the airport yesterday.”</td>
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<td>15.I speak with correct words order. / ฉันพูดถูกต้องตามลำดับประโยค</td>
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<td>16.I speak without anxiety. / ฉันพูดโดยปราศจากความวิตกกังวล</td>
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<td>17.I speak in a warm tone. / ฉันพูดในโทนน่ารักและเป็นสุภาพ</td>
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<td>18.I speak at a rate that is neither too fast or too slow (take a breath between sentences) / ฉันพูดในอัตราเร็วที่เหมาะสมไม่เร็วหรือเร็ว</td>
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<td>19.I speak fluently (avoiding “uh,” “uhm” “you know,” awkward pauses, etc) / ฉันพูดอย่างคล่องแคล่ว โดยไม่มีการหยุดนิ่งในคำหรืออิมเมจ you know เป็นต้น</td>
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</table>
20. I am able to express complex ideas. / ฉันสามารถแสดงความคิดที่ซับซ้อน

Part III: Communication Strategies
The following are communication strategies to solve communication problems.
Please put a √ in front of the item you choose.
5=Always  4=Often  3=Sometimes  2=Rarely  1=Never

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Communication Strategies</th>
<th>Always 5</th>
<th>Often 4</th>
<th>Sometimes 3</th>
<th>Rarely 2</th>
<th>Never 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I try to enjoy the conversation. / ฉันรู้สึกสนุกับการสนทนา</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. I use eye contact (always face to guest, relaxed facial expression). / ฉันสับสนทนาด้วยความ平稳และผ่อนคลาย</td>
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<td>3. When the message is not clear, I ask my participants for clarification directly. / เมื่อข้อความที่สื่อสารไม่ชัดเจน ฉันมีคู่สนทนาเพื่อความกระจ่างในพันธกิ</td>
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<td>4. I use the words which are familiar to me. / ฉันใช้คำพูดที่คุ้นเคย</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. I ask for repetition when a message is not clear to me; such as “could you say it again?” “Pardon?”/ ฉันขอคู่สนทนาทวนคุณพูดซ้ำอีกครั้ง เมื่อข้อความที่สื่อสารไม่ชัดเจน</td>
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</table>

Ref. code: 25605921040175HYS
6. I try to elicit help from my interlocutor indirectly; such as rising intonation. / ฉันพยายามค้นหาช่องทางในการรับความช่วยเหลือจากผู้สนทนากับฉันโดยไม่ตรงไปตรงมา เช่น การออกเสียงสูงท้ายประโยค

7. I give up expressing a message if I cannot make myself understood. / ฉันจะเลิกจะสื่อสารถ้าฉันไม่สามารถจะให้ผู้สนทนาเข้าใจได้

8. If I face some language difficulties, I will leave a message unfinished. / ถ้าฉันเผชิญกับความยากลำบากทางภาษา ฉันจะจบการสนทนาทันที ซึ่งอาจจะไม่ให้พูดถึงประโยคสุดท้าย

9. I encourage myself to use English even though it may risk making mistakes. / ฉันพยายามใช้ภาษาอังกฤษ แม้จะมีความเสี่ยงที่จะทำให้เกิดข้อผิดพลาด

10. I correct myself when I notice that I have made a mistake. / ฉันพยายามแก้ไขที่ผิดพลาดที่มีเมื่อฉันรู้ว่าผิดพลาด

11. I think of what I want to say in Thai, then construct the English sentence. / ฉันคิดในภาษาไทยก่อนแล้วจึงสร้างประโยคสุทท์ในภาษาอังกฤษ

12. I use some fillers to fill pauses or phrases; like “actually” “well” “it is difficult to explain” in order to gain more time to think about what I should speak. / ฉันใช้คำเติมแต่งประโยคระหว่างพูดหรือใช้สำเนา เมื่อไม่รู้ว่าจะพูดอะไร หรือ เพื่อให้เวลาให้ตัวเองคิดถึงอะไรที่จะพูดต่อไป
**Part IV: Suggestion**

Please answer these questions by using your own opinion.

1. **Suggestion** โปรดให้คําแนะนํา

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13. I use gestures if I cannot express myself. / ฉันใช้ภาษีทางการ</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>14. I describe the characteristics of the object instead of using the</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>exact word that I am not sure of. / ฉันอธิบายลักษณะของสิ่งที่ต้องการจะใช้</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>15. I give a good impression to the listener. / ฉันพยายามสร้างความ</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>ประทั้งที่ดีต่อผู้ฟัง</td>
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</tbody>
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Thank you for your time and cooperation.
BIOGRAPHY

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