

Foreign Language Anxiety: A Case of Thai EFL Learners at Ubon Ratchathani University

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Abstract

Despite the decades-long integration of EFL in the Thai education system, Thai EFL students in general still perceive the English language as very difficult to be learned and thus, respond negatively to acquiring the language. With their Foreign Language Anxiety (FLA), they carry to their EFL classes certain notions rooted in past and current experiences, and such beliefs can be influential on their present study and expectation of future performance. Employing Park's (2014) five-factor model into the Thai-translated Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) survey, the study identified the specific factors that 2nd-3rd year Thai EFL learners at Ubon Ratchathani University associate the most with their FLA. Overall, the research aimed to reveal the specific factors that contribute the most to the English language anxiety of the Thai students.

Keywords: FLA, performance, Thai EFL learners

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1 Introduction

Anxiety manifested in the foreign language learning process is situation-specific and unique (Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope, 1986; Liu, 2006; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1989). Set apart from general communication anxiety, Foreign Language Anxiety is defined as the worry and negative emotional reaction aroused when learning or using a second language (MacIntyre, 1998). Foreign Language Anxiety, experienced by learners of both foreign and second language, is about not being able to express one's true self using the new language. Gardner and MacIntyre in their 1991 study wrote that the feelings brought about by language anxiety, such as frustration, negative self-perception, and constant musings of poor performance are detrimental to the learners' acquisition, retention, and production of language. This establishes the constant finding of other research (Aida, 1994; Ganschow & Sparks, 1996; Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope, 1986; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1989; Matsuda & Gobel, 2004; Park, 2014; Trang, et al., 2013; von Worde, 2003) which posits that anxiety negatively affects language learning and achievement.

2 Rationale and background

2.1 Foreign Language Anxiety

Foreign Language Anxiety (FLA) is defined as a “distant complex self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings, and behaviors related to classroom language learning arising from the uniqueness of the language learning process” (Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope, 1986, p. 128). The more anxious students tend to avoid producing more complicated language which then negatively affects FL achievement (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991; Young, 1991).

To understand the complexity of language anxiety, Horwitz et al. (1986) developed the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) – a 33-item, self-report measured scored on a five-point Likert Scale, ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. It aimed to capture the specific essence of foreign language anxiety in a classroom setting and to provide investigators with a standard measure. The higher the score, the higher level of anxiety is. The FLCAS is based on an analysis of potential sources of anxiety in a language classroom, integrating three related anxiety constructs – communication apprehension (McCroskey, 1970), test anxiety (Sarason, 1978), and fear of negative evaluation (Watson & Friend, 1969), as posited by Horwitz, et al. (1986). These three elements make up the entirety of Foreign Language Anxiety (Aida, 1994).

According to McCroskey (1970), communication apprehension is defined as the person's level of fear or anxiety associated with another person or persons. In this sense, the communication can either be real or anticipated. With usual manifestations of communication avoidance and communication withdrawal, communicatively apprehensive people tend to shy away from conversations and are unwilling to interact with others especially during social meetings. This reluctance rooting from anxiety creates a big stumbling block for students in the ESL classroom (Foss & Reitzel, 1988; Lucas, 1984). The more students feel incompetent of the content or language of what they want to express, the more they become reluctant in producing the language.

The second element of foreign language anxiety, test anxiety, is defined by Sarason (1978, p. 214) as “the tendency to view with alarm the consequences of inadequate performance in an evaluative situation”. Being torn between their self-constructed worries about their capacity to do the test and the test itself, students lose focus on the test and give full way to their anxiety. They may introspect on thoughts like “I keep thinking that the other students are better at English than I am.”, “I am afraid that my English teacher is ready to correct every mistake I make.”, and “I am afraid that the other students will laugh at me when I speak English.” They become distracted and anxious during class, which interferes with their performance (Aida, 1994).

Lastly, fear of negative evaluation is defined as “apprehension about others’ evaluations, distress, over their negative evaluations, and the expectation that others would evaluate oneself negatively” (Watson & Friend, 1969, p. 449). If they do anything wrong or incorrect with regards their foreign language production, they will be reprimanded or thought of negatively. Moreover, people who have constant fear of negative evaluation tend to compare their own language capabilities and competencies to others’. For instance, in a classroom speaking activity, anxious students might think that their classmate(s) will speak better English than them, so they would rather not participate in the oral activity or else they will receive negative feedback from their teacher or peers.

Although these three constructs upon which Horwitz et al built the FLCAS were widely used in relevant studies that followed, several other models were hypothesized by researchers. For instance, according to Park (2014), five models could be used to analyse the FLCAS. In that study, the five models were analyzed in terms of reliability using Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA), and *Model 4*, which consists of communication apprehension (15 items), foreign language class anxiety (the additional part; 9 items), fear of negative evaluation (6 items), and test anxiety (3 items) was reported to be the most reliable model for the analysis of FLCAS (as supported in Aida, 1994; Tóth, 2008).

2.2 Anxiety in Performing in the Classroom

Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope (1986) argued that poor performance in the language classroom is correlated to Foreign Language Anxiety (FLA). It was also pointed out in different studies that “anxiety exists in almost every aspect of L2/FL learning” (Liu & Jackson, 2008, p. 72), and that its effects reflect on the students’ understanding and speaking of the language.

Speaking publicly in the target language is particularly anxiety provoking for many students, even those who feel little stress in other facets of language learning (Horwitz, 1995). Manifestations of foreign language anxiety in students are shyness in volunteering answers or indifference in participating in oral classroom activities. Negative behaviors such as cutting or skipping classes or procrastinating on their homework are also evident among anxious students (Liu, 2006). Saito, Horwitz, & Garza (1999, p. 202) note that FLA as measured by the FLCAS “is most clearly associated with the oral aspects of language use: listening and speaking”; therefore, other aspects of language learning anxieties such as reading and writing are not reflected in the scale. In Horwitz et al.’s 1986 study, it was noted by clinicians that

students would show most symptoms of worries and anxieties during listening and speaking tests. Speaking in class is one of the most anxiety-inducing and difficult activities in the foreign language classroom according to students. The implicit show of communication and language reticence manifested in actions like shaky hands, use of fillers during speaking activities or exams, and the “freeze” moments during speaking activities in class show how affective anxiety can be as a factor to language learning.

In Thailand, even after three decades have passed since EFL was first institutionalized from the primary through tertiary levels, many students (including English majors) are still experiencing FLA (Namsang, 2011). Thai students tend to be shy and anxious in the EFL classroom, hence affecting their performance (Wilang and Satitdee, 2015). Thus, it is important to investigate the factors that lead them to experiencing FLA and explore how those factors affect their performance.

2.3 Research questions

As discussed above, anxiety in the foreign language classroom is pervasive and can be detrimental to students’ foreign language acquisition and production. Given the uniqueness and specificity of FLA, more studies should be done so that the discrepancies of the analyses and definitions surrounding FLA will be given clarity (Park, 2014).

Furthermore, it is particularly important to consider that FLA has different triggers and manifestations in different cultures (Horwitz, 2014). Given the number of foreign language/second language learners in the world, this issue needs further exploration with various groups of learners around the world (Liu, 2006). Thailand compared to other Asian countries which regard the English language as an official language, do not necessarily have all the avenues to use the language in their daily lives, although it is one of the most visited countries and tourist destinations in the world with over a million tourists in Bangkok alone in 2016. The mandatory integration of English in Thai schools has been in implementation for more than four decades now; the English language being taught from preschool to college, but most Thai people still wouldn’t be able to produce the language. Thai people are also known to be a group of people that pay a huge attention to how they conduct themselves in public, which makes them want to avoid mistakes at all costs, especially when it comes to social interactions such as those that need the use of language. Hence, from this point of view, it would be very interesting to study FLA in the Thai context.

This study is aimed at identifying FLA factors that may impact the class performance of Thai EFL learners. The research questions to guide this study are:

1. To what extent or level do Thai EFL learners at Ubon Ratchathani University experience Foreign Language Anxiety?
2. What foreign language anxiety factor applies most to Thai EFL students in Thailand?
3. Is there a difference between the anxiety of Foreign Language Anxiety between English and non-English majors?

3 Methodology

3.1 Research Design

A non-correlation quantitative between groups type study, the present research focused on exploring foreign language anxiety in the Thai EFL context using the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS). In modification to Horwitz et al.'s (1986) original model for FL anxiety, this study utilized *Model 4*, a four-construct design (communication apprehension, test anxiety, fear of negative evaluation, and foreign language class anxiety) hypothesized by Park (2014). The difference between Horwitz et.al.'s original three-construct model and Park's hypothesized four-model construct is that some items related to Communication Apprehension which refer to foreign class language anxiety were named as such.

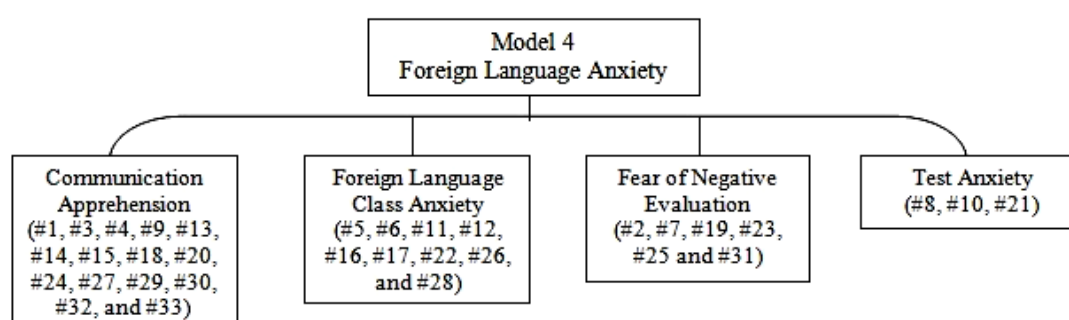


Fig.1 Model 4 of the Foreign Language Anxiety, (Park, 2014)

3.2 Participants

A total of 274 students were enquired for this research. To be exact, 128 English and Communication students (English major) and 146 Tourism students (non-English major) from Ubon Ratchathani University, a state university in the south part of Northeastern Thailand, participated in the conduct of the study. These groups are found best fit to participate in the study for three reasons: (1) English and Communication and Tourism majors take up the most exposure, experience, and number of EFL courses at UBU, (2) The participants have already taken up the basic Foundation English, and English Oral Communication courses and other mandatory English skills courses such as Presentation Skills, and elective courses like English in Careers, and (3) Their English courses particularly focus on listening and speaking skills to which the FLCAS applies best.

3.3 Research instrument

3.3.1 Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale

Conducted in the quantitative tradition, the study utilized the Thai-translated Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS). The FLCAS was used because of its overall reliability as the most-used research instrument to determine levels of FLA. Initially, the original version of FLCAS (Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope, 1986) was studied in terms of its appropriateness to the Thai foreign language classroom context. The FLCAS was then translated to Thai to elicit the reallest possible answers from the participants. The scale was composed of Strongly Agree (SA) – 5, Agree (A) – 4,

Neutral (N) – 3, Disagree (D) – 2, and Strongly Disagree (SD) – 1. The accuracy of the Thai translation of the questionnaire was twice consulted to native Thai linguistics experts. Afterwards, the questionnaire was piloted to 100 students studying Bachelor of Arts in English and Communication at Ubon Ratchathani University, and returned to the consultants for double-checking purposes. The FLCAS was then administered to respondents from different English courses such as English for Liberal Arts Students and Presentation Skills, among others. Each class was given around a maximum of 15 to 20 minutes to complete the one-page survey.

3.4 Data analysis

The data was analysed using traditional descriptive statistics as used in Horwitz et al's (1986) article. First, the responses from the scale were processed on the Google forms, categorizing them as from an English major or a non-English major. Next, using analysis data toolpak, the data from Google forms was converted into a pivot table. In this step, the values from each item was analysed so that the individual frequencies and percentages could be extracted. Third, the all the variables from the previous step were laid out on another table, but this time, categorizing them with the specific model factor they belong to. Nine positively-worded items (particularly, Q2, Q5, Q8, Q11, Q14, Q18, Q22, Q28, and Q32) were marked so that they will be reversely-scored. The header columns were marked as 1+2, 1, 2, 3, 4+5, 4, 5, respectively (Strongly Disagree (SD) – 1, Disagree (D) – 2, Neutral (N) – 3, Agree (A) – 4, and Strongly Agree (SA) – 5). The percentage sums (1+2) and (4+5), and neutral percentages were compared to interpret if the item's collective response is leaning towards anxiety or non-anxiety. Afterwards, each item is categorized according to their model factor. This will be the basis table from which the items would be ranked as either Anxiety or Non-anxiety depending on model factor. Fourth is interpreting the result of each item. In order to compute the frequency and percentage of the data from the responded FLCAS, the numerical values were processed onto a pivot table. The table data was categorized as referring to (1) Overall (both English and non-English major), (2) English major, and (3) Non-English major. The frequency and percentage were processed to elicit the following: (1) Interpretation of each FLCAS item result as either representing Anxiety or Non-anxiety, (2) The ranking of FLCAS items in a specific model factor which the respondents think best represent their anxiety, neutrality, or non-anxiety, (3) the FLCAS items which English and non-English majors support, and (4) the model factor that the respondent groups find most representing their FLA. These three aspects of data analysis were all applied to each model factor (communication apprehension, foreign language class anxiety, fear of negative evaluation, and test anxiety).

4 Results

4.1 Communication apprehension

Table 1 Overall ranking and interpretation for Communication Apprehension response values

	SD	D	N	A	SA		Interpretation	Ranking
Q1	8	16	63	133	54	274	Anxiety	1
	2.92%	5.84%	22.99%	48.54%	19.71%	100.00%		
Q3	24	49	82	83	36	274	Anxiety	11
	8.76%	17.88%	29.93%	30.29%	13.14%	100.00%		
Q4	37	63	77	68	29	274	Non-anxiety	
	13.50%	22.99%	28.10%	24.82%	10.58%	100.00%		
Q9	10	31	52	108	73	274	Anxiety	2
	3.65%	11.31%	18.98%	39.42%	26.64%	100.00%		
Q13	15	41	80	97	41	274	Anxiety	8
	5.47%	14.96%	29.20%	35.40%	14.96%	100.00%		
Q14	17	83	76	69	29	274	Anxiety to non-anxiety	12
	6.20%	30.29%	27.74%	25.18%	10.58%	100.00%		
Q15	20	64	61	84	45	274	Anxiety	9
	7.30%	23.36%	22.26%	30.66%	16.42%	100.00%		
Q18	17	83	122	41	11	274	Anxiety	12
	6.20%	30.29%	44.53%	14.96%	4.01%	100.00%		
Q20	8	46	64	110	46	274	Anxiety	5
	2.92%	16.79%	23.36%	40.15%	16.79%	100.00%		
Q24	4	35	66	131	38	274	Anxiety	3
	1.46%	12.77%	24.09%	47.81%	13.87%	100.00%		
Q27	12	49	89	98	26	274	Anxiety	10
	4.38%	17.88%	32.48%	35.77%	9.49%	100.00%		
Q29	7	48	79	95	45	274	Anxiety	7
	2.55%	17.52%	28.83%	34.67%	16.42%	100.00%		
Q30	13	45	73	89	54	274	Anxiety	6
	4.74%	16.42%	26.64%	32.48%	19.71%	100.00%		
Q32	10	54	107	69	34	274	Non-anxiety	
	3.65%	19.71%	39.05%	25.18%	12.41%	100.00%		
Q33	4	34	73	110	53	274	Anxiety	4
	1.46%	12.41%	26.64%	40.15%	19.34%	100.00%		

Notes: The scale was composed of Strongly Agree (SA) – 5, Agree (A) – 4, Neutral (N) – 3, Disagree (D) – 2, and Strongly Disagree (SD) – 1

As shown in table 1, for the first model factor, it can be clearly seen that Thai EFL learners, both English and Non-English majors, are most apprehensive of communicating or speaking English in their class – “I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking English. (item 1)” (68.25%). Overwhelmingly, the respondents endorsed the rest of the items indicative of communication apprehension “I start to panic when I have to speak with preparation in the English class.” (item 9) (66.06%);

“I feel very anxious about speaking English in front of other students” (item 24) (61.68%); “I get nervous when the English teacher asks questions which I haven’t prepared in advance.” (item 33) (59.49%); “I can feel my heart pounding when I’m going to be called on in the English class.” (item 20) (56.93%); “I feel overwhelmed by the number of rules I have to learn to speak English” (item 30) (52.19%); “I get nervous when I don’t understand every word the English teacher says.” (item 29) (51.09%); “It embarrasses me to volunteer answers in my English class (item 13) (50.36%); “I get upset when I don’t understand what the teacher is correcting.” (item 15) (47.08%); “I get nervous and confused when I am speaking English in class.” (item 27) (45.26%); “I tremble when I know I am going to be called on in English class.” (item 3) (43.43%); “I feel confident when I speak English in class.” (item 18) (36.5%); and “I would not be nervous speaking English with native speakers.” (item 14) (36.5%). It can be noted that on item 14, the respondents were anxious to non-anxious when it comes to speaking English with native speakers. Only item 4, “It frightens me when I don’t understand what the teacher is saying in English” (36.50%), was rejected. Specifically, English majors supported 12 and rejected three statements; Non-English majors supported 14 and rejected one statement.

4.2 Foreign language class anxiety

Table 2 Overall ranking and interpretation of Foreign Language Class Anxiety responses

	SD	D	N	A	SA		Interpretation	Ranking
Q5	18	61	87	72	36	274	Non-anxiety	
	6.57%	22.26%	31.75%	26.28%	13.14%	100.00%		
Q6	54	93	82	33	12	274	Non-anxiety	
	19.71%	33.94%	29.93%	12.04%	4.38%	100.00%		
Q11	36	58	113	53	14	274	Neutral to anxiety	
	13.14%	21.17%	41.24%	19.34%	5.11%	100.00%		
Q12	22	48	83	95	26	274	Anxiety	3
	8.03%	17.52%	30.29%	34.67%	9.49%	100.00%		
Q16	5	46	63	116	44	274	Anxiety	1
	1.82%	16.79%	22.99%	42.34%	16.06%	100.00%		
Q17	77	81	72	31	13	274	Non-anxiety	
	28.10%	29.56%	26.28%	11.31%	4.74%	100.00%		
Q22	18	69	93	72	22	274	Non-anxiety - Neutral - Anxiety	
	6.57%	25.18%	33.94%	26.28%	8.03%	100.00%		
Q26	28	45	71	75	55	274	Anxiety	2
	10.22%	16.42%	25.91%	27.37%	20.07%	100.00%		
Q28	7	73	113	68	13	274	Neutral	
	2.55%	26.64%	41.24%	24.82%	4.74%	100.00%		

Table 2 explains that Thai EFL learners, both English and Non-English majors, are generally non-anxious when it comes to Foreign Language Anxiety Class. Item 16 –

“Even if I am well prepared for the English class, I feel anxious about it.” (58.39%); item 26 – “I feel more tense and nervous in my English class than in my other classes” (47.45); and item 12 – “In the English class, I can get so nervous I forget things I know.” (44%) are all supported by the respondents. Overwhelmingly, six out of nine items under were rejected by the respondents. Three items rendered under non-anxiety: item 5 – “It wouldn’t bother me at all to take more foreign language class” (39.42%); item 6 – “During my English class, I find myself thinking about things that have nothing to do with the course.” (53.65%); item 17 – “I often feel like not going to the English class.” (57.66%); and item 22 – “I don’t feel pressure to prepare very well for the English class.” (34.31%). Items 11 and 28, “I don’t understand why some people get so upset over English classes” (41.24%), and “When I’m on my way to the English class, I feel very sure and relaxed” (41.24%) rendered as neutral, respectively.

Specifically, English majors supported three and rejected six statements; Non-English majors supported two and rejected one statement with one neutral. It can be posited that English majors have a slightly higher anxiety than Non-major students when comes to Foreign Language Anxiety most probably because their major is a foreign language in itself.

4.3 Fear of Negative Evaluation

Table 3 Overall ranking and interpretation of Fear of Negative Evaluation responses

	SD	D	N	A	SA		Interpretation	Ranking
Q2	18	90	82	60	24	274	Anxiety	4
	6.57%	32.85%	29.93%	21.90%	8.76%	100.00%		
Q7	7	24	75	91	77	274	Anxiety	1
	2.55%	8.76%	27.37%	33.21%	28.10%	100.00%		
Q19	41	81	71	58	23	274	Non-anxiety	
	14.96%	29.56%	25.91%	21.17%	8.39%	100.00%		
Q23	7	30	72	111	54	274	Anxiety	2
	2.55%	10.95%	26.28%	40.51%	19.71%	100.00%		
Q25	23	60	100	64	27	274	Neutral - Anxiety - Non-anxiety	
	8.39%	21.90%	36.50%	23.36%	9.85%	100.00%		
Q31	28	49	84	84	29	274	Anxiety	3
	10.22%	17.88%	30.66%	30.66%	10.58%	100.00%		

As reflected in table 3, four items were endorsed by the respondents: item 7 – “I keep thinking that the other students are better at English than I am.” (61.31%); item 23 – “I always feel that the other students speak better English than I do.” (60.22%); item 31 – “I am afraid that the other students will laugh at me when I speak English.” (41.24%); and item 2 – “I don’t worry about making mistakes in the English class.” (39.42%). Item 19 – “I am afraid that my English teacher is ready to correct every mistake I make.”, and item 25 – “The English class moves so quickly I worry about getting left behind.” rendered under non-anxiety and neutral, respectively. It can be noted that item 25 was specifically leaning to Neutral-Anxiety-Non-anxiety. Overall, Thai EFL learners, both English and Non-English majors, have fear of negative evaluation.

Specifically, English majors supported four and rejected one statement with one neutral; Non-English majors supported five and rejected one statement. It can be posited that non-English majors are slightly more anxious of negative evaluation than English majors.

4.4 Test Anxiety

Table 4 Overall anxiety ranking and interpretation of Test Anxiety responses

	SD	D	N	A	SA		Interpretation	Ranking
Q8	47	98	83	38	8	274	Anxiety	2
	17.15%	35.77%	30.29%	13.87%	2.92%	100.00%		
Q10	4	18	38	78	136	274	Anxiety	1
	1.46%	6.57%	13.87%	28.47%	49.64%	100.00%		
Q21	45	92	64	54	19	274	Non-anxiety	
	16.42%	33.58%	23.36%	19.71%	6.93%	100.00%		

Table 4 explains that Thai EFL learners in general have test anxiety. Item 10 – “I worry about the consequences of failing my English class.” (78.1%) reflects the highest endorsement from the respondents, followed by item 8 – “I am usually at ease during English tests in my class” (52.92%). Item 21 – “The more I study for an English test, the more confused I get.” was rejected by the respondents. Specifically, both English and Non-English majors endorsed two and rejected one statement. It can be posited that both groups of student have the equal regard for test anxiety. However, it can also be noted that Non-English majors are more test-anxious than English majors: Item 8 – (English major: 43.75%; Non-English: 60.96%); Item 10 – (English major: 73.46%; Non-English: 82.19%). Overall, it can be posited that both English and Non-English majors experience Foreign Language Anxiety with a higher regard to FLA leaning to Non-English majors.

5 Discussion

Anxiety is evidently an affective factor in the Thai EFL students’ performance in the classroom. For instance, classroom activities such as discussions and speaking tests are impeded by their apprehension to communicate (MacIntyre, 1995). The position of Park (2014) and Horwitz (2014) regarding the need for a more culture-specific context in FLA research is supported by this study. Moreover, in response to the two aforementioned researchers, this paper puts forward that it is significant to research on

the foreign language anxiety of students based on model factors, and that other model factors can be modified or derived from other culture contexts. Based on the conduct of the research, *Model 4* (communication apprehension, foreign language classroom anxiety, text anxiety, and fear of negative evaluation) proves to be a good model for the case of Thai students. More factors could be derived respective of research design and objectives. This implies that foreign language anxiety varies on the culture or society the students belong to; it is not an anxiety that has fixed and permanent anxiety factors. As part of the culture-specificity of FLA, the translation of the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety also plays a significant part in the study of foreign language anxiety itself. Certain words from the original translation might be modified to suit the needs of the research. In short, in order to find out the root causes and solutions to address foreign language anxiety among students, researchers and academics alike should look at FLA as an anxiety triggered and manifested in different cultures and contexts. Thai EFL students are in general apprehensive to communicate, and this is because they are most of the time unsure of the accuracy of the content and context of the foreign language (English) they are using. Afraid of making mistakes, they are not motivated and unable to fully express their inner thoughts and intended messages. This is in parallel with established research (Aida, 1994; Ganschow & Sparks, 1996; Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope, 1986; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1989; Matsuda & Gobel, 2004; Park, 2014; Trang et al., 2013; von Worde, 2003) which explains that students who have foreign language anxiety are not able to fully express themselves in the way they really intend to. Eventually, this leads to lower FL achievement, especially in speaking activities which require the most visible and interactive usage of foreign language in the classroom. In order to fully understand the anxiety that students face in the foreign language classroom, researchers and academics should first look into the utmost factor that causes the problem, and find a way to lessen or eradicate it. When it comes to Thai EFL students, it can be posited that the unwillingness to communicate pushes them the most towards foreign language anxiety, not the foreign language classroom itself. Generally speaking, there is a close discrepancy of anxiety (high scores) between English and non-English major students, which could be a bit alarming especially for the case of English major students who are already in their third year majoring in English and Communication. Given that the highest percentage falls to statement 1 (“I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking English.”), it could be thought that English major students perhaps still lack the language competence they need to be confident of their capacity to express themselves in English. Overall, among both English and non-English majors, communication apprehension is the culture-specific context that researchers and academics teaching English as a Foreign Language in Thai universities should look into. What could be the reason for the Thai EFL students’ overwhelming communication apprehension? What could be done to help students lessen or eradicate their unwillingness to communicate? Future research could focus on these questions. Moreover, pedagogical strategies could also be planned and devised in order to make Thai EFL students more assertive and less apprehensive in the foreign language classroom.

6 Conclusion

This study supported the established findings of other research (Aida, 1994; Gobel & Matsuda, 2003; Horwitz, Horwitz & Cope, 1986; Liu, 2006; Park, 2014; Trang, 2013; Worde, 2003) which posits that Foreign Language Anxiety is evident across different foreign language and EFL contexts. This is the first FLA research in the Thai EFL context that used Park's model 4 (2014). This research aimed to find the specific anxiety constructs that Thai EFL students experience in general, and found out that from Park's (2014) model, only foreign language class anxiety was the anxiety construct they do not generally experience or become anxious of. It could be hypothesized from this finding that Thai EFL students generally do not feel upset about going to the foreign language class, but very anxious about the experiences that they might have inside the foreign language classroom. For the rest of the constructs, especially Communication Apprehension which students find the most overwhelming, Thai EFL teachers can find ways and teaching techniques or strategies to motivate students to talk freely and with confidence (communication apprehension). Related to the pedagogical implications, as for future research, academics, specifically those at Ubon Ratchathani University can do an intervention study to find out how the students' FLA could be addressed, and what specific parts of their academic experience they are anxious about.

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