

THE INFLUENCE OF CULTURE, GENDER AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT ON FOREIGN LANGUAGE ANXIETY

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ABSTRACT

Although a multitude of research studies have been conducted on communication anxiety, studies investigating cultural factors and communication anxiety from both a reading and writing perspective are limited. To help educators, the present study compared students from Thailand and the People's Republic of China (PRC) at an international university, in order to discover if culture, gender and academic achievement are significantly related to reading and writing anxiety.

The results indicated that overall reading anxiety was not significantly different for Thai and Chinese students but an inclusion of gender shows that Chinese male students experienced more reading anxiety compared to Thai male students but Chinese and Thai female students showed no differences. In addition, Chinese students who possessed a lower grade point average displayed higher overall reading anxiety.

Writing anxiety was manifested overall, more by Chinese students than Thai students and an in-depth analysis revealed that the somatic dimension was more for Chinese students but the avoidance dimension was higher for Thai students. Furthermore, when gender was considered, Thai female students displayed more somatic anxiety compared to Chinese female students. Chinese male students on the other hand had higher somatic anxiety and avoidance compared to the Thai male students. When grade point average was included it was found that overall Thai students had better grades but still more avoidance compared to Chinese students with lower grades but more somatic anxiety.

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INTRODUCTION

“Neither comprehension nor learning can take place in an atmosphere of anxiety.”(Rose Kennedy)

In the Thai cultural context, like many other South-East Asian cultures, English is a foreign language for the general population. Apart from native speakers, a large number of students are apprehensive about studying a foreign language. Hewitt and Stefenson, 2011, agree that learning a foreign language can be a stressful factor for many learners.

The literacy rates for the English-speaking population in Thailand is only 27.16 % according to Crystal (2003, pg 109). The TOEFL scores of 76 for all four parts of reading, writing, speaking and listening proficiency was below the international average of 81 in 2013 for Thailand (Educational Testing Services (ETS) report, 2013). The literacy rate for the English-speaking population in the People's Republic of China (PRC) is only 0.73 % according to Jian Yang (April 2006). The TOEFL scores of 77 for all four parts of reading, writing, speaking and listening proficiency was below the international average of 81 in 2013 in the People's Republic of China (Educational Testing Services (ETS) report, 2013).

The above statistics indicate a case of Xenoglossophobia/Anglophobia which is the fear, anxiety, tension, worry, apprehension associated with learning a second language or a foreign language. The task of the foreign language teacher is to motivate students but often anxiety is the barrier that inhibits students from even attempting to speak or learn a second language (Horwitz, Horwitz & Cope, 1986; pg 125). Although there are several concepts used interchangeably for language anxiety like, communication anxiety, communication apprehension, unwillingness to communicate, shyness anxiety, communication adaptability and communication competence, the use depends on the field of application. At present the term Foreign Language Anxiety (FLA) or Specific Anxiety Reaction has gained plenty of popularity relatively and in general can refer to the anxiety or fear that a person experiences when communicating in a real situation with another person in a language other than the mother tongue. This is true of a culture like Thailand or People's Republic of China in which, there exist plenty of language barriers since English is foreign language and educators find that teaching English can be exhausting and frustrating in that, students often hesitate to speak up in classrooms with fear of being incorrect or being laughed at. Most students feel that they can go through life without speaking English and before long switch to speaking in their own mother tongue in front of foreigners since only a very tiny number are confident enough to carry out conversation with foreigners.

Language anxiety could also include specific dimensions like reading, writing, speaking and listening. Some researchers have discovered that listening and speaking instilled the most anxiety (Horwitz, E. K.; Horwitz, M. B & Cope, J. (1986). The definition proposed by Horwitz et al. (1986; pg 128) is rather general and states that foreign language anxiety (FLA) is **“a distinct complex of self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings, and behaviors related to classroom language learning arising from the uniqueness of the language learning process”**. Three factors important in this definition are firstly, communication anxiety which refers to fear that occurs in the process of listening or speaking to others. Secondly, test anxiety refers to stress experienced physiologically, before or after taking an exam and which can hinder performance and finally, fear of negative evaluation which refers to fear of onlookers or an audience that makes a judgment of their language ability. In 1986, Horwitz et al developed the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) that focused on speaking in the classroom situation. Writing anxiety can be measured using the Second Language Writing Anxiety Inventory (SLWAI) (Cheng, 2004) and consists of three factors which includes, Somatic anxiety which refers to physical aspects of anxiety like being nervous and tense, Cognitive anxiety which is related to thinking about performance, negative expectations and others' perceptions and finally, Avoidance Behavior which includes avoidance of writing.

With the establishment of the Asean Economic Community (AEC) Thailand will be exposed to plenty of diversity. It is necessary for educators at the international level to probe into the question **“Do students from different cultures, with different genders and different academic performance experience language anxiety or particularity English Language anxiety”?** The researchers will include 2 cultures namely Thailand and the People's Republic of China so as to investigate the degree of anxiety experienced by these groups and suggest ways in which to cope with the level of anxiety.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The concept of communication apprehension was initiated by McCroskey (1970), with the idea of understanding why some persons in general had difficulty communicating with others and the fear that goes along with the real or anticipated communication. In recent times a more in-depth view is analyzed to discover if persons are more likely to experience anxiety in all situations (Trait Anxiety) or if a person experiences anxiety in a certain situation (State Anxiety) like with a person-group or at some moment in time. In 1982 McCroskey, developed the Personal Report of Communication Apprehension scale (PRCA) which consisted of 24 Likert-type items, grouped into 4 categories of apprehension like public, small groups, meeting or dyadic / interpersonal encounters. A similar measure to replace the Personal Report of Communication Apprehension Scale was the Communication Anxiety Inventory, developed by Booth-Butterfield and Gould in 1986. This instrument consists of 2 parts which are, Form Trait (CAI Trait) and Form State (CAI State) Form Trait measures person's predispositions to experience anxiety generally with regard to 3 contexts: dyadic encounters small groups and public speaking and consists of 21 Likert-type items.

Form State measures a person's anxiety at a given point of time, in a given situation and with different persons or a person and consists of 20 Likert-type items.

Researchers like McIntyre and Gardner believed that language anxiety includes speaking, writing and listening (1994, pg 284) but Cheng, Horwitz, and Schallet (1999) stated that a clear distinction can be made between foreign language classroom anxiety and writing anxiety. In fact, it was Cheng et al. (1999) who first attempted to use factor analysis to distinguish between anxieties with regard to different second language skills. He also developed a scale called the Second Language Writing Anxiety Inventory (Cheng, 2004). Horwitz et al. (1986) distinguished between communication apprehension (Mc Croskey, 1987) and foreign language anxiety and stated that although a person may show no communication apprehension while using a native language, the person can display foreign language anxiety, which includes test anxiety and fear of being negatively evaluated. Mustapha et al. (2010) study indicates that most English foreign language students experienced high levels of communication apprehension. Devi and Feroz (2008) indicated that communication apprehension may have no linear relationship with oral presentations performance of students.

Guiora (1983) also believed that language learning can be stressful for a person since it affects self-esteem and worldview. A person would prefer to protect their national identity than to be proficient in a second language (Beebe, 1983). Holbrook (1987) in addition agreed that an individual's communication anxiety can affect self-esteem, social skills and oral communication. If the person has closer psychological and social distance with the target group, the more likely it is to acquire language skills (Schumann, 1997). McCroskey and Andersen (1976), found communication anxiety to be related to academic achievement in that, GPAs of students with higher communication anxiety were lower than that of students with low communication anxiety. Besides, students with higher communication anxiety also preferred to study in mass classes than in classes which were smaller. Liu and Huang (2011) indicated that among the affective factors, language anxiety can be a very effective predictor of students' performance. Studies indicate that higher communication anxiety can result from internal factors like stuttering (Blood, Blood, Tellis, & Gabel, 2001) or personality traits like introversion (Opt & Loffredo, 2000). External factors, like the kind of task or assignment can impact communication anxiety (Witt & Behnk, 2006). It is also true that communication anxiety is higher when one communicates in a language other than the first language (Young's (1989). Chakrabarti and Sengupta (2012) research on 146 Indian students indicated that anxiety in general was high but test anxiety was the component that caused most anxiety. In addition, communication anxiety can be the result of both individual factors like cognitive skills and personality and cultural factors like student-teacher relationships, power orientation, humor and not the students themselves (Zhang, 2005). A more recent view is that speaking anxiety can be experienced when students' are not allocated enough time for responding when asked questions by teachers (Chang, 2012).

It is also true that students from different cultures could experience different levels of second language anxiety. Chinese students who perceive competence in the English language as a means to acquire a potential job in the future may suffer from higher anxiety levels (Liu, 2006). The pressure to study English is purely economical and English is learned by force for the reason of acquiring a better position in the future (Gan, Humphreys & Hamp-Lyons, 2004; Yong & Campbell, 1995). Chinese students studying English in China may experience different anxiety levels than when studying English in another culture. On the other hand, it is extremely difficult for Thai learners to be good in spoken English (Khamkhien, 2010) since they do not get an opportunity and avoid interaction in English (Wariyachitra, 2003). Boonkit (2010) revealed that in a Thai context, undergraduate students are not able to speak English since they lack confidence to communicate in international situations. Young (2004) agreed that the majority or minority language groups and differences in language anxiety are needed for future study.

Gender could also have an impact on learning foreign language and as pointed out by Sung and Padilla (1998), motivation for females in American elementary and secondary schools was higher than for males. MacIntyre *et al.* (2003) discovered higher anxiety for boys of grade 9 than girls. Lin & Rancer (2003) agreed that intercultural communication apprehension was experienced more by men than women. Kobayashi's (2002) reported that the female Japanese students are more interested and had more positive attitudes towards studying English. McLean & Anderson (2009) on the other hand found that females are more inclined to experience anxiety and fear while studying a foreign language. The fact remains that gender difference in performance anxiety can be debatable (Matsuda & Gobel, 2004). In collective cultures like Singapore, although males experience foreign language anxiety, they may be reluctant to admit it since it will be perceived as a sign of weakness and hence culture can play an important role in explaining foreign language anxiety and gender according to Lowe and Ang's (2012). Mohammadi and Mousalou (2013) study on Iranian students discovered that mixed gender classrooms provoked more anxiety. Tianjian (2010) found that speaking anxiety depends largely on the level of the group rather than on gender.

The question that needs to be addressed is “**Do students from different cultures, different genders and with different levels of academic performance have different levels of communication anxiety**”?

OBJECTIVES and HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

The main objective of this study is to compare culture, gender and academic achievement with foreign language reading and writing anxiety. Six hypotheses were formulated as given below.

1. There are significant differences in the reading communication anxiety of Thai and Chinese students.
2. There are significant differences in the writing communication anxiety of Thai and Chinese students.
3. There are significant differences in the reading communication anxiety of Thai and Chinese female and male students.
4. There are significant differences in the writing communication anxiety of Thai and Chinese female and male students.
5. There are significant differences in the reading communication anxiety of Thai and Chinese students with different academic performance.
6. There are significant differences in the writing communication anxiety of Thai and Chinese students with different academic performance

DESIGN, METHODOLOGY and TECHNIQUES of DATA ANALYSIS

The disproportional stratified random sampling technique was utilized whereby the researcher distributed 400 structured questionnaires to Thai and Chinese students. A total of 351 completed questionnaires were obtained at an international university in Thailand. Thai male students amounted to 72 and females to 92. Chinese male students amounted to 83 and females’ to104.

For reading communication anxiety the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale developed by Horwitz, E. K., Horwitz, M. B., & Cope, J. (1986) consisting of 33 items was utilized with 9 items scores reversely. The sum total of 33 indicates low reading anxiety while the sum total of 165 indicates high writing anxiety. For writing the anxiety the Second Language Writing Anxiety Inventory (SLWAI) (Cheng, 2004), consisting of 22 items with 3 subscales to measure cognitive, somatic and avoidance behavior was used. The sum total of 65 and above indicates high anxiety, a sum total below 50 low anxiety and scores in-between, moderate anxiety. The value of Cronbach’s Alpha for reading was 0.83 and writing was 0.74 indicates an acceptable internal consistency. For the Descriptive analyses measures of central tendency such as the mean, median and mode and measures of variability such as standard deviation, skewness and kurtosis and fiduciary limits were utilized to find out the differences in reading and writing communication anxiety between Chinese and Thai students.

For the Inferential analyses, t-test and Annova was used to find out differences in gender and communication anxiety and to compare GPAs and reading and writing communication anxiety of both Thai and Chinese students.

Major Findings and Discussion

**TABLE 1.COMPARISON OF READING COMMUNICATION ANXIETY
OF THAI and CHINESE STUDENTS**

Communication Reading Anxiety	Mean (SD.)		Critical Ratios for Differences (t-score)
	Thai (164)	Chinese (187)	
Reading	2.9714 (0.47)	3.0277 (0.38)	-1.237

Remarks: t-values are significant at * p<.05

Source: D.B. June, Foreign Language Anxiety

Table 1 indicates that there are no significant differences in the reading communication anxiety of Thai and Chinese students since the mean score for the reading communication anxiety of Thai students is 2.87 and for the Chinese students is 3.02. The t-test score of -1.237 indicates that this difference is negative and not significant at the .05 level (p<.05). Therefore, hypothesis 1 is not supported by the data.

**TABLE 2.COMPARISON of WRITING COMMUNICATION ANXIETY
 OF THAI AND CHINESE STUDESTS**

Communication Writing Anxiety Dimensions	Mean (SD.)		Critical Ratios for Differences (t-score) -4.16*
	Thai (164)	Chinese (187)	
	2.711 (0.46)	2.8984 (0.39)	
Cognitive Dimension	2.8145 (0.59)	2.8199 (0.576)	0.087
Somatic Dimension	2.7448 (0.629)	2.8403 (0.57)	0.07
Avoidance Behavior	2.766 (0.508)	2.7269 (0.49)	0.734

Remarks: t-values are significant at * p<.05
 Source: D.B. June, Foreign Language Anxiety

Table 2, indicates that there are significant differences in writing communication anxiety of Thai and Chinese students, with Chinese students obtaining a higher overall mean of 2.89 compared to Thai students with a mean of 2.72. Hence, hypothesis 2 is supported by the data. The t-score of -4.16 indicates a negative and statistically significant relationship at the .05 level (p<.050). A further analysis of the 3 dimensions of writing anxiety shows that although there were no significant differences in the cognitive anxiety of Thai and Chinese students Chinese students possessed higher levels of somatic anxiety with a mean of 2.84 in relation to the Thai students with mean of 2.74. Furthermore Thai students displayed higher avoidance behavior with a mean of 2.76 in relation to Chinese students with a mean of 2.72.

A survey conducted by the Pew Research indicates that out of 21 countries China stood number one for academic pressure on their children. Parents' expectations of children are high because of the one child policy and children in turn try to meet their parents expectations since they have spent plenty of money for them to study abroad but in the process students become irritated, anguished and feel inferior (Cited in Bin, 2006). As stated earlier, often language proficiency is influenced by emotional states, which include negative feelings that have an impact on performance (Hou, 2009). A study conducted in Malaysia on engineering students additionally found that Chinese students experienced the most amount of anxiety, especially somatic anxiety compared to the other two ethnic groups (Min & Rahmat, 2014). Liu and Jacksons (2008) study on Chinese students indicted that more than one third of them experience anxiety in the classroom and fear of being evaluated negatively which leads to unwillingness to communicate and worry about public speaking. Liu (2007), Kyriacou & Zhu (2008), Wang (2008) studied Chinese university and high school students and found that studying English was important for career and life reasons and that extrinsic reasons like praise from the teacher, exam results and graduating were more important. Stevens (1997) pointed out that providing knowledge and facts to pass examinations is the core aspect of a teacher's job for Chinese students. The above reasons could account for Chinese facing more somatic anxiety which could lead to being nervous and stressed out.

Chang and Munro-Smith (2003) agreed that in Chinese culture learners take plenty of time to grasp materials because of long-term orientation rather than get things done quickly. Hofstede (2003) stated that for Chinese, virtue is concerned with tasks in life involves acquiring skills, education, working hard, being patient, persevering and thrifty.

Thai students, like the Chinese also have slightly higher levels of extrinsic motivation according Kitjaroonchai and Kitjaroonchai (2012) but would prefer to study in an atmosphere which is relaxed and fun which reflects in less worry and stress. Thai people can control their physiological and nervous states better since they are taught at a young age not to express too much emotion. Marinating a cool heart (Jai Yen) and calmness is the essence of Thai culture. Life also involves large amounts of fun (Sanuk) and is not to be taken seriously, even in work situation. Finally, Thais accept difficulty as a normal part of life, do get perturbed and brush off problems with saying never mind (Mai Pen Rai) according to Atmiyanandana and Lawler (2004) Thais also have high reverence for authority and prefer to be reserved much more than Chinese than to rebel with superiors (Holmes & Tangtongtavy, 1995). It is an arduous task to get Thai students to express themselves unless they are questioned and would rather be passive and unwilling to participate without the guidance for the teacher (Deveney, 2005 & Dhanarattigannon, 2008). Thailand has never been colonized (Kachru, 1992) and English is regarded as a foreign rather than a second language (Haynes, 2008) All these aspects could account for Thai students avoiding the situation than facing adversity.

TABLE 3.COMPARISON OF READING ANXIETY OF THAI AND CHINESE SUDENTS ON THE BASIS OF GENDER

Communication Reading Anxiety	Mean (SD.)				Critical Ratios for Differences (F-score)
	Thai(164)		Chinese(187)		
	Male (92)	Female (72)	Male (104)	Female (83)	
Reading Anxiety	2.987 (0.466)	2.95 (0.474)	3.1247 (0.4)	2.95 (0.356)	3.488*

Remarks: F-values are significant at * $p < .05$
 Source: D.B. June, Foreign Language Anxiety

Table 3, indicates that there are no significant differences in the reading communication anxiety of Thai and Chinese female students since the reading anxiety mean was 2.95 and exactly the same for both genders. However, there are significant differences in the reading communication anxiety of Thai and Chinese male students with Chinese male students obtaining a much higher reading communication anxiety with a mean of 3.1247 in relation to Thai males with a mean of 2.98. This score indicates a positive and statistically significant relationship at the .05 level ($p < .05$). Hence, hypothesis 3 is partly supported by the data. Dörnyei (2001) agreed that females in general perform better than males with language learning since their confidence levels make them more adept. Shi and Liu (2006) supported these findings and found that although there were not much differences in the foreign language ability of male and females. Male students had much more language reading anxiety since females students are considered better at language learning in China and are not only confident in reading but perform overall much better in standardized test like College English Test (CET). Shi and Liu (2006) agreed that a negative correlation exist between reading anxiety and scores in the College English Test (CET) and this can affect Chinese students English reading and English achievements. Green and Oxford (1995) agreed that compared to males, females tended to use more learning strategies, make more correct guesses, pursue learning opportunities and deal with emotional issues better like reading anxiety hence their reading ability was better as well.

Bin (2006) discovered that Chinese society is patriarchal and more value is given to the male gender, causing mothers to take care of sons excessively well. This could often result in poor self-care and negligence of Chinese male students study abroad. Being an only child in the family, often results in Chinese children becoming selfish, self-centered, paranoid and impulsive. The new environment can cause loneliness because of lack of integration and personality and value differences

TABLE 4. COMPARISON OF WRITING COMMUNICATION ANXIETY OF THAI AND CHINESE STUDENTS ON THE BASIS OF GENDER

Communication Writing Anxiety Dimensions	Mean (SD.)				Critical Ratios for Differences (F-score)
	Thai(164)		Chinese(187)		
	Male (92)	Female (72)	Male (104)	Female (83)	
	2.7046 (0.492)	2.7163 (0.427)	2.8993 (0.356)	2.8976 (0.41)	17.305*
Cognitive Dimension	2.759 (0.699)	2.856 (0.486)	2.71 (0.5467)	2.9 (0.588)	54.848*
Somatic Dimension	2.746 (0.735)	2.92 (0.524)	2.81 (0.536)	2.86 (0.598)	55.446*
Avoidance Behavior	2.6 (0.571)	2.89 (0.4195)	2.84 (0.516)	2.87 (0.415)	53.583*

Remarks: F-values are significant at * $p < .05$
 Source: D.B. June, Foreign Language Anxiety

Table 4 also indicates there are significant differences in the writing communication anxiety of Thai and Chinese female students with Chinese female students obtaining a higher overall mean of 2.89 in comparison to the Thai female students with a mean of 2.71. The same applies to writing communication anxiety of Thai and Chinese male students, with Chinese male students obtaining a higher mean of 2.89 in comparison to Thais with a mean of 2.70. Hence, hypothesis 4 is supported by the data. A further analysis into the dimensions of writing anxiety reveals that the cognitive differences were not much for both genders of Thais and Chinese but the Thai females had more somatic anxiety with a mean of 2.92 compared to Chinese females with a mean of 2.86. The Chinese male students had more somatic anxiety with a mean of 2.81 than the Thai male students with a mean of 2.74. The avoidance behavior of both Thai and Chinese female students are not significant but the avoidance of Chinese males is higher with a mean of 2.84 compared to Thai males with a mean of 2.6 only.

Compared to their male counterparts Thai females engage in more vocabulary learning strategies (VSL) which make them more adept to write better than males according to Boonkongsaen and Intaraprasert (2014) and Siriwan (2007). Compared to Chinese females Thai females are rather mild and this makes Chinese females adapt more easily to a foreign environment (Bin, 2006) resulting in lower levels of somatic anxiety.

On the other hand Chinese males have higher somatic anxiety than the Thai males since Chinese males show less aptitude for studying English and need to exert higher level of effort for performance (Cui, 2011). This results in higher avoidance since students would prefer to ignore courses or majors that are related to writing (Cheng, 2002: 648). Cheng (2004; 316) also agreed that students can experience a **writer's block**, because of the physiological impact like tension, cognitive interferences, nervousness and avoidance of writing.

TABLE 5. CORRELATION OF COMMUNICATION READING ANXIETY AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF THAI AND CHINESE STUDENTS

Communication Anxiety and Cumulative GPA	GPA	Mean (SD.) Reading	Critical Ratios for Differences (t-score)
Thai	2.986 (0.58)	2.9714 (0.47)	29.843*
Chinese	2.79 (0.59)	3.0277 (0.38)	43.332*

Remarks: t-values are significant at * $p < .05$
 Source: D.B. June, Foreign Language Anxiety

Table 5 indicates that Thai students have higher GPAs with as mean of 2.98 in relation to Chinese students with a mean of 2.79. Chinese students have higher reading communication anxiety with a mean of 3.02 in comparison to Thai students with a mean of 2.97. Therefore, hypothesis 5 is supported by the data. The t-test scores for Thais, for GPAs and reading anxiety is 29.84 and for Chinese is 43.33 which indicate a positive and significant relationship at the 0.05 ($p < .05$) level of significance. This implies that Chinese have lower GPAs but higher the reading anxiety. Recent research conducted by Carrier & Jewell, 1966; Zeidner, 1998; Cassady & Johnson, 2002; Chapell *et al.*, 2005, indicates that students test anxiety can result in a decrease in academic performance., in that students who were less anxious performed much better (Cassady & Johnson, 2002). Studies conducted earlier indicate a negative correlation between foreign language reading anxiety and proficiency in reading (Hou, 2009; Sellers, 2000). Chinese students are considered as international in Thai culture and try hard to understand the Thai English accent which results in plenty of confusion in comparison to their culture and ultimately a low GPA. Chinese may suffer from culture shock since they lack familiar cues compared to their home culture (Davis, 2001, pg 308) and experience problems with customs, language and educational styles of another culture (Liu, 2001). Often language proficiency is influenced by emotional states, which include negative feelings that have an impact on performance (Hou, 2009). Hou (2004) agreed that each culture has its distinct set of rules and norms which results in communication differences and although the same language is used difficulties arise.

Besides, Chinese are the minority and a sense of inferiority could emerge since the student–teacher interactions are unequal and students become silent because of threat to their social identity and fear of cultural and social embarrassment (Doughty & Pica, 1986). A study conducted at Bouyei College, in Thailand, by Wei & Yodkamlue (2012) found that Chinese students' anxiety can be attributed to their pronunciations and poor spoken English, which was consistent with the findings of Q.F. Zhang *et al.* (2003) and Tanveer (2007)

TABLE 6. CORRELATION OF COMMUNICATION WRITING ANXIETY AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF THAI AND CHINESE STUDENTS

Communication Writing Anxiety Dimensions	GPA	Mean (SD.) Writing	Critical Ratios for Differences (t-score)
Thai	2.986 (0.58)	2.711 (0.46)	29.843*
Cognitive Dimension	2.986 (0.58)	2.8145 (0.59013)	1.595
Somatic Dimension	2.986 (0.58)	2.7448 (0.62955)	0.897
Avoidance Behavior	2.9862(0.58029)	2.766(0.50811)	3.074*
Chinese	2.79 (0.59)	2.8984 (0.39)	40.920*
Cognitive Dimension	2.79 (0.59)	2.8199 (0.57638)	31.448*
Somatic Dimension	2.79 (0.59)	2.8403 (0.5708)	31.426*
Avoidance Behavior	2.79 (0.59)	2.7269(0.49028)	31.574*

Remarks: t-values are significant at * $p < .05$
Source: D.B. June, Foreign Language Anxiety

Table 6 indicates that Thai students have higher GPAs with as mean of 2.98 in relation to Chinese students with a mean of 2.79. Chinese students have much higher writing communication anxiety with a mean of 2.89 in comparison to Thai students with a mean of 2.71. Therefore, hypothesis 6 is supported by the data. The t-test scores for Thais is 29.84 and for Chinese is 40.92 which shows that Chinese have lower GPAs and higher the writing anxiety. A further analysis found that somatic dimension was higher for Chinese than Thais but the avoidance was higher for the Thais than Chinese. Cheng (2004: 331) summarized that cognitive anxiety, which is close to test anxiety can impact the second language writing anxiety since cognitive interferences exist and focusing on the assignment may be problematic. He agreed that there is a negative relationship between anxiety and performance. Obviously the somatic anxiety of Chinese would be higher because expectation from parents which usually does not motivate but dissuades them (Wang, 2003) Hypothesis 2 indicates that several factors could be responsible for Thais having high degree of avoidance.

SCOPE, LIMITATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

This seminal research investigated only communication anxiety in Thai and Chinese cultures at one international university with a sample size of 351 only. Therefore limited generalizations can be made. It is imperative for teachers to segregate students with reading and writing anxiety and discover the reasons behind this anxiety. Action research, training programs or ice breaking activities like role-plays, project learning, workshops and team work can be developed for students to cope with foreign language learning and enhance engagement. Students must get the opportunity to transfer what is learnt in the training programs to the classroom environment. Furthermore, a single questionnaire to test reading and writing anxiety that was in English and Chinese was distributed to students without incorporating other measures like interviews, surveys and observations. This research could also be carried out on different faculties, age groups, nationalities, cross-culture students etc. By becoming aware that others too face similar problems strategies to overcome fear can be found. This research can also be expanded to other areas like gathering information about the learning styles of student in order to align the students' method of studying with the learning style which can enhance motivation and engagement.. Students can also become aware that others too have similar problems so they form into cohesive work groups and find strategies to deal with their fears, inhibitions and misconceptions about the language-learning process.

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