CHAPTER IV
RESULTS

RESULTS

This chapter presents the results obtained from the questionnaires. There are 3 parts of information; background of respondents, opinions on needs and problems of using English for communication on the job, and learners' wants regarding English training. All results are based on data collected during 19th – 28th February 2007 from staff in the IT department of Thai Airways International.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The respondents were 30 staff members of Information Technology department. Of all the respondents, 50% were female. From the data obtained, more than half of the respondents' ages, 53.33%, were between 21-25 years, followed by 23.33% of the respondents with the age range of 26-30 years. 16.67% of the respondents were in the age range of 31-35 years and the smallest portion, 6.67% of the respondents, was the age range of over 35 years.

With reference to the level of education, most of the respondents, 86.67% held a bachelor's degree and the rest, 13.33%, held a master's degree. In terms of the years of service, 63.33% of the respondents have been working in the IT department for 6 to 10 years and 33.33% of the respondents have been in service for 1 to 5 years. Only 1 respondent, 3.33%, has over 10 years of service.

NEEDS AND PROBLEMS OF USING ENGLISH FOR COMMUNICATION ON THE JOB

The second part of the questionnaire explores the level of needs and problems in using English on the job. Opinions are ranked using a 5-point Likert Scale ranking from 1 to 5. The mean scores for each item have been derived in order to compare among items. The mean rankings of the needs and problems are presented together for each particular skill.

Table 1. Scale Descriptions

Needs		Problems	
Score	**Meaning**	**Score**	**Meaning**
5	Very great need	5	Very great problem
4	Great need	4	Great problem
3	Moderate need	3	Moderate problem
2	Little need	2	Little problem
1	Least need	1	Least problem

Question: In the following on-the-job activities, how would you rate the need of using English for communication and how much is the level of problem in using English?

Table 2. The Overall Mean Scores of Need and Problem Grouped by Skill, Ranked by Mean Scores

Skill	Need mean scores	Skill	Problem mean scores
Reading skill	3.79	Speaking skill	3.05
Writing skill	3.28	Writing skill	2.74
Listening skill	3.27	Listening skill	2.72
Speaking skill	3.05	Reading skill	2.21

Table 2 presents the overall mean scores of activities grouped by skill. Considering the need to use English, reading skill has the highest mean followed by writing, listening, and speaking skills respectively. This means respondents felt that the need to use English in reading activities is more than any other skills and, similarly, the need to use English in speaking activities is lowest.

Concerning the problem of using English, speaking skill gets the highest mean score followed by writing, listening, and reading skills respectively. The problem of using English in speaking activities is the highest and, similarly, the problem in reading activities is lowest.

Disparity can be found between the level of need and problem. Considering reading activities, it receives highest need mean score. Respondents feel that, relatively, English is needed most in reading but rate the problem level with the lowest mean score. On the other hand, speaking got lowest need mean score meaning that, comparatively, respondents felt that need level for English is lowest. However, speaking is rated as the most problematic area to the respondents.

Presented hereinafter are activities mean scores received from the respondents. All activities are grouped by skill and ordered similarly to what appears in the questionnaire. The scores are shown in a tabular format and each table presents each skill separately starting from speaking, listening, reading, and writing respectively.

Table 3. Mean Scores, S.D., and Ranks of the Level of Needs to Communicate in English for Speaking-Skill Activities

Speaking Skill	Needs			Problems		
	Rank	Mean	S.D.	Rank	Mean	S.D.
1. Ask for information from users or vendors regarding IT system, e.g., requirements, problems, or suggestions	1	3.50	0.78	6	2.93	0.87
2. Ask or discuss for clarification	1	3.50	1.20	3	3.13	1.01
3. Persuade or negotiate the business related to IT in order to meet objectives	3	3.13	1.25	4	3.10	1.12
4. Give work instructions regarding IT system, e.g., in servicing or helping users	5	3.03	1.10	7	2.63	1.03
5. Converse in non-face-to-face communication, e.g., telephone conversation	4	3.10	1.27	5	2.97	1.10
6. Lecture or present, e.g., presentation or demonstration of IT system	6	2.83	1.23	1	3.33	1.12
7. Being a host in an event, e.g., a seminar	7	2.27	1.57	2	3.27	1.60
Overall mean scores for speaking-skill items		3.05			3.05	

Among all the speaking items, what received the highest mean scores of 3.50 were *asking for information from users or vendors regarding IT system,* and *asking or discussing for clarification.* Relatively, English is needed the most in such activities.

The following items that got mean scores greater than 3.00 are item3, *persuading or negotiating the business related to IT in order to meet objectives,*

item4, *Giving work instructions regarding IT system*, and item5, *Conversing in non-face-to-face communication.* Respondents felt that English is needed more for these activities compared to items in the last group. In the last group, items possess mean scores lower than 3.00 which are item6, *lecturing or presenting regarding IT system,* and item7, *Being a host in an event.*

Comparing the among all speaking items, IT staff felt that English is more needed in such day-to-day activities as asking for information, discussing for clarification, negotiating business, and giving instructions. The level of need for English is less in activities such as lecturing, presenting, or being a host in an event.

Concerning problem level in speaking activities, respondents felt that using English is most problematic in *lecturing or presenting regarding IT system* with the mean of 3.33. Less problem was perceived in such items as *being a host in an event*, *asking or discussing for clarification,* and *persuading or negotiating the business related to IT in order to meet objective,* all of which got mean scores greater than 3.00. Respondents felt the lowest problem levels in *asking for information from users or vendors regarding IT system, giving work instructions regarding IT system,* and *conversing in non-face-to-face communication.*

Considering the parity between the level of respondents' needs and problems in their speaking activities, data indicates disparity when compared. Items that got lowest need level are *lecturing or presenting regarding IT system,* and item7, *Being a host in an event*, nonetheless, their problem mean scores are highest.

Table 4. Mean Scores, S.D., and Ranks of the Level of Needs to Communicate in English for Listening-Skill Activities

Listening Skill	Needs			Problems		
	Rank	Mean	S.D.	Rank	Mean	S.D.
8. Understand conversation regarding IT system	1	3.50	0.94	2	2.87	0.90
9. Understand face-to-face presentation regarding IT system	2	3.23	1.07	2	2.87	0.82
10. Understand and follow work instructions provided by others	5	3.00	1.06	5	2.37	0.89

(Table continues)

(Table 4. continued)

Listening Skill	Needs			Problems		
	Rank	Mean	S.D.	Rank	Mean	S.D.
11. Understand the non-face-to-face conversation, e.g., telephone conversation	4	3.20	0.86	1	2.97	0.80
12. Understand non-face-to-face presentation or demonstration, e.g., demonstration video	2	3.23	1.01	4	2.53	0.78
Overall mean scores for listening-skill items	3.27			2.72		

Regarding the level of need for listening activities based on mean scores, respondents felt that, relatively, English is needed the most for *understanding conversation regarding IT system* with the highest mean scores of 3.50. English was relatively less needed in *understanding face-to-face presentation, understanding non-face-to-face demonstration,* and *understanding non-face-to-face conversation..* Respondents felt that, relatively, the need level for English was lowest for *understanding and following instructions.*

Considering the problem level based on mean scores, English was relatively most problematic in *understanding non-face-to-face conversation* with the highest mean scores of 2.97. The problem was relatively less in *understanding conversation regarding IT system, understanding face-to-face presentation,* and *understanding non-face-to-face demonstration.* For the respondents, problem level was relatively lowest for *understanding and following instructions.*

Table 5. Mean Scores, S.D., and Ranks of the Level of Needs to Communicate in English for Reading-Skill Activities

Reading Skill	Needs			Problems		
	Rank	Mean	S.D.	Rank	Mean	S.D.
13. Read textbook, manual, technical text, article regarding IT system	1	4.43	0.63	2	2.40	0.72
14. Read a study report regarding IT system	4	3.97	0.81	2	2.40	0.77
15. Read contracts-related documents, i.e., TOR, MOU*	7	3.53	1.38	1	2.70	1.24

(Table continues)

(Table 5. continued)

Reading Skill	Needs			Problems		
	Rank	Mean	S.D.	Rank	Mean	S.D.
16. Read presentation handout regarding IT system	6	3.93	0.78	5	2.23	0.86
17. Read work instructions	4	3.97	0.81	4	2.27	0.64
18. Read a message generated by IT system, i.e., alert, error, help.	3	4.10	0.66	8	2.00	0.69
19. Read minutes of meeting	10	3.17	1.26	7	2.10	0.88
20. Read a memorandum	9	3.23	1.22	8	2.00	0.69
21. Read E-Mail	2	4.27	0.78	6	2.17	0.79
22. Read charts or diagrams regarding IT system	8	3.30	1.12	10	1.90	0.71
Overall mean scores for reading-skill items		3.79			2.21	

* TOR stands for Term of Reference. MOU stands for a Memorandum of Understanding

Regarding need level based on mean scores, respondents felt that English is relatively most needed in *reading textbook, manual, technical text, article regarding IT system* with the highest mean scores of 4.43. The level of need is relatively high, greater than 4, for *reading E-mail* and *reading a message generated by IT system* as well. It is not surprising that the mentioned activities got high need mean scores. Working in the IT field, it is the nature of the work that references from many sources are extremely essential in order to function effectively and documents presenting IT knowledge and information are mostly written in English. The three lowest-score items were *reading charts or diagrams, reading a memorandum,* and *reading meeting minutes* which received mean scores of lower than 3.50.

Regarding problem level, all items got the mean scores of lower than 2.50. Looking at the scale description in Table1, it can be implied that respondents felt using English for reading is less problematic to them. The area that respondents felt most problematic was *reading contracts related documents.*

Table 6. Mean Scores, S.D., and Ranks of the Level of Needs to Communicate in English for Writing-Skill Activities

Writing Skill	Needs			Problems		
	Rank	Mean	S.D.	Rank	Mean	S.D.
23. Write user manual or reference for IT system	2	3.63	0.96	1	3.20	0.96
24. Write study report regarding IT system	6	3.33	0.99	1	3.20	1.06
25. Write contracts-related documents, i.e., TOR, MOU	8	3.00	1.55	5	2.83	1.32
26. Write handout for presentation	5	3.47	1.17	3	3.00	0.87
27. Write work instructions	3	3.57	0.94	7	2.67	0.76
28. Write message to be displayed in IT system, i.e., alert, error, help	4	3.53	0.97	11	2.33	0.80
29. Take notes to record the conversation regarding IT system, i.e., requirements, problems, suggestions	7	3.27	0.98	10	2.47	0.78
30. Take notes in presentation	8	3.00	1.02	9	2.53	0.94
31. Write minutes of meeting	12	2.67	1.30	4	2.97	1.33
32. Write memorandum	10	2.97	1.19	6	2.73	0.98
33. Write E-mail	1	4.20	0.76	7	2.67	0.76
34. Write charts or diagrams regarding IT system	11	2.73	1.23	11	2.33	0.71
Overall mean scores for writing-skill items		3.28			2.74	

* TOR stands for Term of Reference. MOU stands for a Memorandum of Understanding

Considering the level of need based on mean scores, respondents felt English is relatively most needed for *writing E-mail* with mean scores of 4.20. Likewise, The levels of need are relatively high, greater than 3.00, for activities number 23 to 30 as well. On the other hand, *writing a memorandum* and *writing charts or diagrams* showed relatively low mean scores, less than 3.00 and the lowest score item was *writing minutes of meeting,* with a mean score of 2.67. This implies that, relatively, the need level of English is low in such activities.

Concerning the problem level, mean scores are highest for such long text as *writing user manual or references* and *writing IT study report* with the mean scores of 3.20 followed by *writing handout for presentation*, mean scores 3.00. All other

writing activities got mean scores lower than 3.00 and the lowest were *writing message to be displayed in IT system* and *writing charts or diagrams.*

LEARNERS' WANTS FOR LEARNING ENGLISH

The third part of the questionnaire explored learners' wants regarding English training. The data is illustrated in Table 7 below.

Table 7. Learners' Wants Regarding English Training

	Frequency	Percent
Reasons for attending an English Training course		
- To apply knowledge to the job	28	93.30
- To gain knowledge	25	83.30
- To gain opportunity of career advancement	23	76.70
- To be proud of having English ability	7	23.30
- To have a chance of meeting people	6	20.00
- To gain social acceptance	4	13.30
English skill that respondents want to improve the most		
- Speaking	13	43.30
- Writing	9	30.00
- Listening	7	23.30
- Reading	1	3.33

Regarding the respondents' reason for learning a language, the majority of the respondents indicated that 93.3% were interested in applying knowledge to their jobs, 83.3% were interested in gaining knowledge, 76.7% pointed to gaining opportunity of career advancement, 23.3% felt they would be proud of being able to communicate in English, 20% were interested in meeting new people, 13.3% wanted to gain social acceptance.

Most of the respondents, 43.3%, stated that they would like to improve speaking skill. The next rank was writing skill which 30% of the respondents selected. There were 23.3% of the respondents showing intention to improve their listening skill. Lastly, only 1 person, equivalent to 3.33%, would like to improve the reading skill.