

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE AND RESEARCH

Details of the scope of literature review and related research were presented in the following order.

1. Anxieties/Foreign Language Anxiety/Speaking-in-class Anxiety
2. Types of Anxiety
3. Components of EFL Anxiety and Related Factors
 - 3.1 Communication Apprehension (CA)
 - 3.2 Test Anxiety
 - 3.3 Fear of Negative Evaluation
4. Factors Associated with EFL Speaking Anxiety in Class
 - 4.1 Learners' Beliefs about English Speaking
 - 4.2 Instructors' Beliefs about English Teaching
 - 4.3 English Speaking Classroom Procedure
5. Related Research Review
6. FLCAS and Five categories of Factors Contributing to Speaking-in-class Anxiety

Anxieties/Foreign Language Anxiety/Speaking-in-class Anxiety

Anxiety can be associated with “threats to self-efficacy and appraisals of situations as threatening” (Papamihel, 2002, p. 331) or an uneasy feeling due to something threatening (Koba et al., 2000). Meanwhile Scovel (1978, p. 34) defined anxiety as an emotional state of “apprehension, a vague fear that is only indirectly associated with an object.” Another researcher Spielberger (Horwitz et al., 1986, p. 125 as cited in Spielberger, 1983, unpagged) defined anxiety as the subjective feeling of tension, apprehension, nervousness, and worry associated with an arousal of the autonomic nervous system.

It has been widely recognized that the phenomenon is some kind of “mental block” (Horwitz, 1986) against language learning or speaking by ESL instructors, researchers, and learners. It is not until quite recently that a more refined and focused attention has been made to the conceptual base of the term (Ohata, K., 2005), “foreign language anxiety” or more simply “language anxiety” (MacIntyre, 1990). The most cited definitions for language anxiety are the ones given by Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986), MacIntyre and Gardner (1994), and MacIntyre (1999). A definition on language anxiety with respect to foreign language anxiety was proposed by Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986, p. 128) as a “distinct complex of self-perception, beliefs, feelings, and behaviors related to classroom language learning.” Another definition of language anxiety was stated by Garden and MacIntyre (Oxford, 1999, p. 217 as cited in Gardner and MacIntyre, 1993, unpagged) as “the fear or apprehension learners sometimes feel when they are expected to perform in a target language in which they are not proficient.” Then, MacIntyre (1999, p. 27) refines his definition of language anxiety as “the worry and negative emotional reaction aroused when learning or using a second language.”

In conclusion, language anxiety is the mental condition of self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings, and behaviors or any expression resulted from tension, fear, and worry related to the language learning process (Tanveer, 2007). Speaking-in-class-Anxiety is associated with the emotional reactions or feelings when one speaks English under uneasy, fearful, nervous, or worrying situations in ESL classrooms (Huang, H. 1994). The following section on Types of Anxiety explains further details about language anxiety.

Types of Anxiety

This section introduces the types of anxiety. Pappamihel (2002) divides anxiety into two types: trait anxiety and state anxiety. Trait anxiety is a person’s tendency to feel anxious regardless of the situations they are exposed to. In regard to this, Worde (1998) argues that trait anxiety is a part of a person’s character and is a permanent disorder. Richmond and McCroskey as cited in Runey, (2001) define trait anxiety as “a relatively enduring personality type” (p.2). In other words, anxiety might be caused by their personality. Meanwhile, state anxiety is a type of anxiety which

occurs when learners are exposed to particular conditions or situations. For instance, state anxiety occurs in learners who feel anxious when they are requested to give an oral presentation or when they do not understand their teachers' instruction during the class. Language Anxiety has also been referred to as State Anxiety (Young, 1991) depending on the specific situation that causes the anxiety. Daly and McCroskey (1994) refer to language anxiety as communication apprehension. This is defined as an individual's level of fear of anxiety associated with real or anticipated communication with another person or persons (Daly and McCroskey, 1984). McCroskey, Fayer, and Richmond (1982) argue that the primary concern with the phenomenon of communication apprehension results from its close association with communication avoidance. This phenomenon perfectly applies to the situations experienced by the researcher in EFL speaking classes where most students, especially in Thailand, prefer to sit quietly in the corner of the classroom to avoid being called upon by their teachers. Therefore, many researchers wonder what factors cause this phenomenon in EFL speaking classes.

Components of EFL Anxiety and Related Factors

Horwitz et al. (1986, p. 127) outlined three components of foreign language anxiety: (1) communication apprehension (CA), (2) test anxiety, and (3) fear of negative evaluation. Due to its emphasis on interaction, the construct of communication apprehension is also relevant to the conceptualization of foreign language anxiety (McCroskey, 1977 as cited in Howitz, 1986, p. 127). Daly and McCroskey (1994) refer to language anxiety as communication apprehension. As the focus is on ESL speaking-in-class anxiety, communication apprehension will be explained in more detail than the other two components.

1. Communication Apprehension (CA)

Communicating and speaking is a very centralized skill to our way of thinking of language learning. Often, when we refer to one's knowledge of a language, we intend to convey an understanding of only the ability to speak the language. Many researchers have pointed out that the skill producing most anxiety is speaking (MacIntyre and Gardner, 1991). What distinguishes speaking is the public nature of

the skill, the embarrassment suffered from exposing our language imperfections in front of others. (Arnold, 2000, p. 3)

One of the most popular topics in the field of communication and speaking is the tendency on the part of some people to avoid and even fear communicating orally (Daly, 1991, p. 3). Most of the studies are based on McCroskey's conceptualization of CA as "an individual's level of fear or anxiety associated with either real or anticipated communication with another person or persons" (McCroskey's, 1997a, p.78 as cited in Apaibanditkul, 2006, p. 3). Meanwhile Horwitz et al. (1986, p. 128) defines communication apprehension as "a type of shyness characterized by fear or anxiety about communicating with people."

Communication anxiety may be specific to just a few settings (e.g., public speaking), and may exist in most everyday communication situations, or may even be part of a general anxiety trait that arises in many facets of an individual's life (Friedman, 1980 as cited in Taylor, 1987, p. 1). It is often considered that learners' own personalities such as quietness, uncommunicativeness, and shyness contribute to communication apprehension. These feelings of quietness, uncommunicativeness, and shyness vary greatly in different people and situations. McCroskey and Bond (1980, 1984 as cited in 1987, p. 1) investigated seven possible factors that could result in the quietness or shyness of a child (this can equally offer an explanation of adult CA): (1) low intellectual skills, (2) speech skill deficiencies, (3) voluntary social introversion, (4) social alienation, (5) communication anxiety, (6) low social self-esteem, and (7) ethnic/cultural divergence in communication. However, Daly (1991, p. 5) presents explanations in the development of CA which suggest that the development of CA in an individual results from his/her nature or his/her surroundings.

When we discuss about situational CA, the causes are numerous. Buss (1980) lists novelty, subordinate status, formality, conspicuousness, dissimilarity, unfamiliarity, and degree of attention as the major sources of situational CA. Richmond and McCroskey state that "these causes vary from one person to another or from one situation to another" (1998 as cited in Apaibanditkul, 2006, p. 4). Communication apprehension obviously plays a large role in second/foreign language anxiety. People who are apprehensive about speaking in dyads or groups are likely to

be even more anxious when doing so in a second/foreign language class where “in addition to feeling less in control of the communicative situation, they may feel that their attempts at oral work are constantly being monitored” (Horwitz, et al., 1986, p. 127). McCroskey, 1998 as cited in Apaibanditkul, 2006, p. 4) labels this kind of apprehension as classroom communication apprehension (CCA). The focus on group work and oral presentation in the communicative classroom can be particularly intensified for students who have communication apprehension (Shams, 2006, p. 9).

2. Test Anxiety

Test Anxiety is also contributing to ESL speaking anxiety. According to Horwitz, et al. (1986) test anxiety “refers to a type of performance anxiety stemming from a fear of failure.” EFL tests generally have a listening test, writing test, and speaking test. All these different tests are types of evaluations for classroom learning. In other words, language classroom tests continuously present an evaluative situation. It is also important to note that oral testing has the potential to provoke both Test and oral communication anxiety simultaneously in vulnerable students (1986, p. 127). Most of the subjects said that they feared taking tests because of three main reasons. First, the test-taking situation would make them anxious. Second, they worried that getting a bad grade would lead to other psychological stresses such as fear of embarrassment or diminished self-confidence. Third, learners felt pressured to think that they had to organize their ideas in a short period of time for the exams (Ohata, 2005). In Ohata’s survey of Japanese students’ test anxiety survey, one of the participants (F) said: (Ohata, 2005, p. 11)

...The more I prepared for the exam, the more confused I got with so many things going on in my head. How could I organize my ideas in English in such a limited time! But if I couldn’t make it in time, my efforts would be totally ruined!

3. Fear of Negative Evaluation

Fear of negative evaluation is an extension of the second component (test anxiety) of second/foreign language anxiety because it is not limited to test-taking situations (Tanveer, 2007); rather, it may occur in the classroom when the oral tasks

are required. We always hear students expressing serious concerns about various kinds of evaluative situations in which their knowledge and performance of English were to be monitored by people around them. In Ohata (2005)'s study, participants H and A expressed their severe psychological stress in the class presentations: (Ohata, 2005, p. 9)

...While doing my presentation, I become so conscious about the facial expressions of other students and teacher. If I notice they looked bored or confused, I feel my face blushed and go to a panic, and what is worse, I forget everything I have planned to say.

Horwitz, et al. (1986, pp. 127-128) believe that, besides communication apprehension, test anxiety and fear of negative evaluation are the causes for a description of second/foreign language anxieties; it is more than just the collection of these three components: "we conceive foreign language anxiety as a distinct complex of self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings, and behaviors related to classroom language learning arising from the uniqueness of the language learning process" (Horwitz, et al., 1986).

Factors Associated with EFL Speaking Anxiety in Class

The previous section has established the conceptual basis of language anxiety with relation to its three components. All these components strongly interact with learners, instructors, and classroom settings. This section further reviews literature on ESL speaking anxiety related to learners, instructors, and EFL classroom settings.

1. Learners' Beliefs about English Speaking

The following belief has been found to cast considerable influence upon the ultimate achievement and performance in the target language. For example, one of Horwitz et al. (1986)'s subjects stated: (Horwitz, et al., 1986, p. 123)

...I just know I have some kind of disability: I can't learn a foreign language no matter how hard I try.

The researchers use terms, such as ‘erroneous’ or ‘irrational’ to indicate certain widely held “beliefs about language learning which can be a source of anxiety” (Gynan, 1989 as cited in Onwuegbuzie, et al., 1999, p. 220). Gynan (1989, cited in Onwuegbuzie, et al., 1999, p. 221) reported that learners believed that pronunciation was the most important aspect of language speaking. Similarly, Horwitz (1988 as cited in Ohata, 2005, p. 138) noted a number of beliefs from learners about language learning; examples are as follows. 1) Some attach great importance to speaking with an excellent native (L1)-like accent. 2) Some students believe that accuracy must be sought before saying anything in English. 3) Some hold that in EFL speaking, learning is basically an act of translating from English or any second/foreign language. 4) Some believe that EFL learning is a special gift not possessed by all. 5) Others believe that it is not O.K. to guess an unfamiliar second/foreign language word. 6) Some view that two years are sufficient in order to gain fluency in an EFL class. These different beliefs on ESL learning could lead learners to different levels of anxieties. According to Young (1991, p. 428), erroneous beliefs about language learning can contribute greatly to creating language anxiety in students.

2. Instructors’ Beliefs about English Teaching

Besides learners’ beliefs about language learning, some instructors’ beliefs related to language learning and teaching could contribute to language anxiety as well. Some instructors believe that their role is more like an order giver’s than a facilitator’s. Meanwhile, other instructors believe their role to be “less a counselor and friend and objected to a too friendly and in authoritative student-teacher relationship” (Brandl 1987 as cited in Onwuegbuzie, et al., 1999, p. 220). These beliefs have been found to contribute to the learner’s language anxiety (Young, 1991, p. 428). Another example, in error correction, some instructors’ believe that their role is to correct rather than to facilitate students when they make mistakes and this exacerbates second/foreign language anxiety in students (Brandl 1987 as cited in Onwuegbuzie, et al., 1999, p. 220). The instructors’ inappropriate methods of teaching and their reluctance to develop rapport with their learners can also contribute to learners’ anxiety in their foreign language studies (Worde, 1998). In this regard, Onwuegbuzie, et al. (1999) recommended that instructors should be aware that adult learners can



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easily become anxious in their ESL learning. He further adds that teachers need to show their positive reinforcement, encouragement, and empathy to their students.

Recognizing these beliefs from learners, as well as the teachers, the EFL classroom as a language activity surrounding plays a very important role in the whole language learning process.

3. English Speaking Classroom Procedure

During different activities in the classroom procedure, the ones that required students to speak in front of the whole class have been found to be the most anxiety provoking. Students in the focus groups seemed to prefer speaking in small groups rather than speaking in front of the whole class. Young (1991, p. 429) found that more than sixty-eight percent of her subjects reported feeling more comfortable when they did not have to get in front of the class to speak. Similarly, Koch and Terrell (1991, as cited in Horwitz, 2001, p. 118) found that giving a presentation in the class, oral tasks, and discussion in large groups are the most anxious activities. Content that is familiar and easy to understand appears to cause less anxiety of their speaking performance. Earlier, Horwitz, et al. (1986, p. 123)'s subject reported a similar situation. They stated: (Horwitz, et al., 1986, p. 123)

...Sometimes when I speak English in class, I am so afraid I feel like hiding behind my chair. When I am in my Spanish class I just freeze! I can't think of any thing when my teacher calls on me. My mind goes blank.

This indicated that any measure to treat language anxiety should not fail to exploit learning environments where students feel relatively free of anxiety (Jones, 2004, p. 34). We can conclude that language speaking anxiety cannot be defined in a linear manner, but rather that it might be better construed as a complex, psychological phenomenon contributed to by many different factors (Skehan, 1989).

Related Research Review

There are numerous studies in Thailand that have been done to investigate EFL anxieties the students have been experiencing. For example, in the study by Chalore, et al. (2006), an investigation of the anxiety of 340 twelfth-grade students studying English at Prasatwittayakarn School of Surin Educational Office, Region 3 was conducted. Chalore, et al (2006) used FLCAS (Foreign language Class Anxiety Scale) and found that the anxiety of the subjects was at the high level. Another finding of their study was that there was a mildly negative relationship between the anxiety and the achievement in ESL learning. The study about the existence of EFL learning anxiety is very popular in Thailand. However, few of them explored the factors contributing to the anxiety of EFL students. The factors contributing to the EFL learning or speaking studies have mostly been done in China, Japan, Indonesia, Singapore, Spain and other countries. These studies all have significant findings as demonstrated below.

Ohata (2005) explored the nature of language anxiety from the perspective of five Japanese learners of English, especially in reference to their self-reflective accounts of emotional difficulties encountered in the U.S. college setting. He interviewed participants using several questions in terms of when, how, and why they would feel anxious in their EFL learning and speaking performance. He also used the FLCAS. He found that five typical sources affected his subjects' EFL anxiety. These were: 1) fear of negative evaluation/fear of embarrassment in front of others, 2) lack of self-confidence in their English proficiency and the subject matter, 3) competitiveness, 4) test anxiety, and 5) culturally fixed beliefs about learning and learning procedures. This study took in-depth interviews with each participant; however, there were only five participants in total.

Marwan (2007) investigated Indonesian students' English language anxiety. The researcher used a modified version FLCAS with 100 university students in lower and higher levels of English. Their English levels were determined by Test of English as A Foreign Language (TOEFL). He found five categories of factors contributing to the subjects. They were: 1) lack of confidence, 2) lack of preparation, 3) fear of failing the class, 4) fear of making mistakes, and 5) difficulty in understanding the teachers' instructions. The result suggested that there were three factors which learners believe

have contributed to their EFL anxiety, namely lack of preparation, lack of confidence, and fear of failing the class. Of these three factors, most participants believed that lack of preparation was the main factor of their anxiety followed by lack of confidence. Only a few participants claimed fear of failing as a factor of anxiety.

Barley (2011) reported the findings of his study investigating factors contributing to the speaking-in-class anxiety of a group of 313 Chinese ESL first-year university students in Hong Kong. By using the FLCAS of Horwitz et al., the study revealed five categories of factors leading to the group's speaking-in-class anxiety. These factors caused different levels of anxiety as listed in a decreasing order: factor 1 - speech anxiety and fear of negative evaluation, factor 2 - uncomfortable when speaking with native speakers, factor 3 - negative attitudes towards the English classroom, factor 4 - negative self-evaluation, and factor 5 - fear of failing the class/consequences of personal failure.

FLCAS and Five Categories of Factors Contributing to Speaking-in-class Anxiety

One of the greatest contributions of Barley's study in 2011 was that the five factors were analyzed from the original version of FLCAS in the speaking-in-class area. There were 33 items in FLCAS in total. These five factors were as follows:

Factor 1 was speech anxiety and fear of negative evaluation. It included fifteen items as follows.

1. I tremble when I know that I'm going to be called on in English speaking class.
2. It frightens me when I don't understand what the teacher is saying in English.
3. I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in English class.
4. In English speaking class, I can get so nervous I forget things I know.
5. It embarrasses me to volunteer answers in my English speaking class.
6. Even If I am well prepared for English speaking class, I feel anxious about it.
7. I am afraid that my English teacher is ready to correct every mistake I make in speaking.

8. I can feel my heart pounding when I'm going to be called on in English speaking class.

9. I feel very self-conscious about speaking English in front of other students.

10. I feel more tense and nervous in my English speaking class than in my other classes.

11. I get nervous and confused when I am speaking in my English class.

12. I get nervous when I don't understand every word the English teacher says.

13. I am afraid that other students will laugh at me when I speak English.

14. I get nervous when English teacher asks questions which I haven't prepared in advance.

15. I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in my English class.

Factor 2 was uncomfortable when speaking with native speakers. It included four items as follows:

1. I would probably feel comfortable around native speakers of English.

2. I would not be nervous speaking English with native speakers.

3. I don't understand why some people get so upset over English speaking classes.

4. I am usually at ease during tests in my English speaking class.

Factor 3 was negative attitudes towards the English class. It included three items as follows:

1. I often feel like not going to my English speaking class.

2. It wouldn't bother me at all to take more English speaking classes.

3. During English speaking class, I find myself thinking about things that have nothing to do with the course.

Factor 4 was negative self-evaluation. It includes two items as follows:

1. I always feel that other students speak the English better than I do.

2. I keep thinking that the other students are better at English than I am.

Factor 5 was fear of failing the class/consequences of personal failure. It included three items as follows:

1. I worry about the consequences of failing my English speaking class.

2. I don't feel pressure to prepare very well for English Speaking class.

3. I get upset when I don't understand what the teacher is correcting.

It should be noted that, in Barley (2001)'s study, Items 2, 30, 28, 18, 21, and 25 from FLCAS were not included. These six items were not considered as relative to the five factors; however, these six items were listed in FLCAS although the scores were not counted. The six items are listed as follows.

1. When I'm on my way to English speaking class, I feel very sure and relaxed.

2. I feel confident when I speak in English class.

3. I feel overwhelmed by the number of rules I have to learn to speak English

4. I do not worry about making mistakes in English speaking class.

5. The more I study for an English speaking test, the more confused I get.

6. English speaking class moves so quickly that I worry about getting left behind.

Barley's study was done in May 2011. It offers the most updated data for ESL speaking-in-class analysis. Therefore, FLCAS is obviously a very useful instrument for exploring the anxieties of speaking-in-class. Understanding those factors would help us to have more efficient EFL classroom settings and speaking environments. The present study used these factors to analyze the variance percentage in investigating the factors contributing to speaking-in-class anxiety of English majors in Naresuan University. The next chapter was the methodology of the current study.