

# Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety of Secondary Students of International Education Program for Basic Education, Piboonbumpen Demonstration School, Burapha University

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**Abstract.** *This study was conducted with the purpose of investigating the levels of foreign language classroom anxiety of secondary students in the International Education Program of Basic Education (IEP) of the Piboonbumpen Demonstration School in Burapha University. The levels of foreign language classroom anxiety between the secondary level 3 students and the secondary level 4 students were compared. The Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) and interviews were applied as a research instrument in this research. The mixed method sequential transformative strategy was used to analyze the quantitative and qualitative data collected. The average level of anxiety of all samples was found to be at the moderate level. The means were determined to be 89.78 for secondary level 3 and 89.30 for secondary level 4 students. The anxiety level of Secondary Levels 3 and Secondary Levels 4 students were compared using t tests for independent means. The result showed that there were no significant differences on the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety level amongst secondary level 3 and secondary level 4 students. From the sample of 122 students, eighteen students were selected for an in-depth interview. The results of these interviews revealed that foreign language classroom anxiety of IEP students was mostly due to the effect of the teachers.*

**Keywords:** Anxiety, Foreign Language Anxiety, Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety, Scale, Influence

## Introduction

Bilingual schools have become more popular in the past decade in Thailand. One of the advantages of education undertaken in a bilingual school is that the child is exposed to new languages at a young age, gaining a well-rounded and thorough academic education. Classes are taught in English, usually the target language. Many second language learners have to exert a lot of effort to keep up in both language and content in any of the language classes. Thus, most of them are faced with a feeling of mental or emotional strain or suspense, leading to anxiety. This type of anxiety is related to language learning and has been identified by psychologists as language anxiety.

Language teachers have long been aware of the fact that many of their students experience discomfort when using English as a medium language or language learning. As suggested by MacIntyre and Gardner (1991a), anxiety causes many potential problems for the foreign language students, because it can interfere with the “acquisition, retention and production of the new language” (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991, p. 86).

With these facts in mind, the researchers have endeavored to establish that IEP students also suffer from language anxiety, since their primary language of communication in most of their academic subjects is English, which is a language they are not familiar with, as it is not their native tongue.

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## Background and Objectives of the Study

The researcher is a classroom teacher at IEP where 70% of subjects are taught in English since its conception. The majority of the students are Thais who normally communicate in Thai, except while learning in class wherein English is a must. The foreign language teachers of IEP have observed that most of their students have difficulty learning and using English as a second language. Especially when the class is conceptual such as Math and Science, the task of teaching becomes even harder. The challenge to the students becomes twofold: acquiring the language skill and understanding the conceptual part. The acquisition part alone is enough to cause anxiety to the students. Because they are more familiar with their native tongue, using and learning a second language is quite a big hurdle for them.

Students who come to IEP for the first time usually feel disoriented and lost during the first few months of learning. They are not used to English speaking teachers explaining and sharing ideas in a language that is not their own. They experience foreign language anxiety resulting in worry and dread. Faced with this situation, they have extreme difficulty concentrating, become forgetful and exhibit avoidance behavior in the form of skipping classes and putting off homework, class projects and studying. Given students' responses to the fear and anxiety, instructors may assume they lack motivation, feel the class is unimportant or simply do not have the mental acuity to achieve even a rudimentary grasp of a second language (Horwitz, 1986).

Anxiety has also been proven to be a strong indicator of academic performance. It has been found to have a detrimental effect on students' confidence, self-esteem and level of participation. Anxious learners tend to volunteer answers less frequently and have a greater tendency to remain passive in classroom activities than their less anxious counterparts (Ely, 1986).

The above observations are very typical characteristics of several students in IEP. Consequently, foreign teachers have often demanded to the administration that the school should work on their screening procedures for applicants and accept only students who have at least an elementary background in the English language. However, parents see IEP as an opportunity for their children to learn and gain mastery of the English language. They expect the school to prepare their children for study in an international setting when it is time for them to pursue a higher level of education. It is quite a daunting task to expect from teachers who are faced with students experiencing foreign language anxiety.

Thus, the researchers felt the need for this study to be conducted. The primary objective of this research was to establish that IEP students who were studying in the academic year 2011 suffered from foreign classroom language anxiety and also to investigate their levels of foreign language classroom anxiety. It is also the purpose of this study to compare the levels of foreign language classroom anxiety of secondary 3 students and secondary 4 students and to identify the causes of this anxiety.

Since the design of this research adopted a mixed methods research strategy, the objectives consisted of two types:

### Quantitative Objectives:

To investigate the levels of Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety of secondary students of IEP; and

To compare the levels of Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety between secondary level 3 students and secondary level 4 students

## Qualitative Objective:

1. To identify the possible causes of Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety of secondary students of IEP from the content analysis of the interviews of selected students.

## Research Questions

This research attempted to answer the following questions:

Quantitative research questions:

1. What is the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety level of IEP students, as measured by the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale?
2. Is there a difference between the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety level of secondary level 3 students and secondary level 4 students?

Qualitative research question:

What are the possible causes of Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety of IEP students?

## Literature Review

### What is Anxiety?

Anxiety is commonly described by psychologists as a state of apprehension, a vague fear that is only indirectly associated with an object (Hilgard, Atkinson, & Atkinson, 1971). People often experience a general state of worry or fear before confronting something challenging such as a test, examination, recital, or interview (Hilgard, Atkinson, & Atkinson, 1971). These feelings are easily justified and considered normal. Anxiety is considered a problem when symptoms interfere with a person's ability to sleep or otherwise function. Generally speaking, anxiety occurs when a reaction is out of proportion with what might be normally expected in a situation (Hilgard, Atkinson, & Atkinson, 1971).

### What are the symptoms of anxiety?

People with anxiety disorders often experience symptoms similar to those exhibited by a person suffering from a general illness, heart attack, or stroke. A few of these symptoms are trembling, churning stomach, nausea, diarrhea, headache, backache, and heart palpitations. When they feel some of these symptoms occurring, it just heightens the anxiety level. They tend to think something worse is happening to them (Hilgard, Atkinson, & Atkinson, 1971).

### Causes of Anxiety

There are several causes of anxiety. They may be environmental factors, medical factors, genetics, brain chemistry, substance abuse, or a combination of these (Antworten, n.d.). It is also possible that people become anxious because they have a habit of believing that the worst will happen. In other words, they always look at things in a negative way. Instead of the cup being half-full, it is half-empty for them. Because of this type of disposition, almost any small distraction or problem that comes up becomes a cause of extreme stress for these people (Antworten, n.d.).

### How is anxiety diagnosed?

Anxiety is not easily diagnosed by a simple test. It takes an experienced psychiatrist, clinical psychologist, or a mental-health professional to diagnose it and identify its causes. The first step usually involves the analysis of a person's medical background and personal history done by a physician. Then a physical examination is performed and other laboratory tests are done, as needed. These tests may provide useful information about a medical condition that may be the cause of the physical illness or other anxiety symptoms (Antworten, n.d.).

Psychologists usually distinguish between three categories of anxiety: trait anxiety, state anxiety, and situation-specific anxiety. A person experiencing trait anxiety has a relatively stable personality. He or she has a tendency to be overly anxious at most times in different situations.

State anxiety, on the other hand, is a transient condition. It occurs as a response to a particularly anxiety-provoking stimulus, such as an important job interview or an anticipated public performance. Thus, it is temporary only and occurs at a particular instant. The moment the stimulus is gone, the anxiety passes. The third type of anxiety is situation-specific anxiety. This shows a trait that happens repeatedly in specific situations. It refers to the persistent nature of some anxieties. It is often triggered by a particular type of situation or event, such as public speaking, examinations, or class participation (Antworten, n.d.).

### **The Language Anxiety**

Some research has been done into second or foreign language anxiety. It revealed that anxiety has a negative effect on the language learning process of an individual. It also showed that there is a difference between language learning anxiety and other forms of anxiety.

Other research that has been conducted about language learning anxiety has indicated that language learning can be classed as situation-specific anxiety (Horwitz, 2001). That is, a trait which recurs in language learning situations, namely the classroom.

In general, there are two approaches to the description of language anxiety:

(1) Various combinations of situational factors may result in language anxiety which is considered to be a basic human emotion (McIntyre & Gardner, 1989, cited in McIntyre, 1995, p.11). For instance, a particularly timid student may feel anxious when asked to recite in English in front of the class. Language anxiety is a combination of other anxieties that create a separate form of anxiety intrinsic to language learning (Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope, 1986, p.128).

(2) The second approach proposes that there is something unique to the language learning experience that makes some individuals nervous. When this nervousness or anxiety is restricted to the language learning situations, it is categorized as situation-specific anxiety. Such situations may be public speaking, examinations, job interviews or class participation (Ellis, 1994, p. 480).

Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986) made a valuable contribution to theorizing and measurement in language learning anxiety. They considered anxiety as being comprised of three components: communication apprehension, test anxiety and fear of negative evaluation. Horwitz and colleagues viewed the construct of foreign language anxiety as more than a sum of its parts and defined foreign language anxiety as a distinct complex of self perceptions, beliefs, feelings and behaviors related to classroom learning arising from the uniqueness of the language learning process (Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope, 1986). Emerging from this research was the thirty-three item Foreign Language Anxiety Scale (FLCAS). This scale has been used in a large number of research projects (Horwitz, 2001). It has been found to be reliable and valid (Aida, 1994, cited in Cheng, Horwitz & Schallert, 1999). Most language learning anxiety research has focused on a one dimensional domain of anxiety. This conceptualization reflects the anxiety that occurs in classroom settings (Aida, 1994, citing Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope, 1986).

### **What Causes Language Anxiety?**

What causes language anxiety was the central question of this research study and is of interest to all language teachers and learners. Taking into consideration anxiety as a highly influential construct in language learning, second language anxiety researchers have tried to investigate the sources or reasons that language anxiety can come from both academic and social contexts. The researchers have suggested different strategies to cope with it. The fact that language anxiety is a psychological construct, it most likely stems from the learner's own 'self' (Schwartz, 1972, cited in Scovel 1991, p.16), that is, the way he or she perceives herself or himself, how he looks at the way others perceive him or her (e.g., peers, teachers, interlocutors) and the target language communication situations, such as his/her beliefs about L2/FL learning.

According to Sparks and Ganschow (1993b), insufficient command of the target language may be the result, as well as the cause, of language anxiety. That is to say, it may be experienced due to linguistic difficulties in L2/FL learner's pace in learning and using the target language. Within social contexts, language anxiety may be experienced as a result of outside factors (Schwartz, 1972, cited in Scovel, 1991, p.16), such as different social and cultural environments, particularly the environments where L1 and L2/FL learning takes place. Also, the target language is a representation of another

cultural community. Due to this factor, there is a predisposition among some people to experience such anxiety because of their own concerns about ethnicity, foreignness, and the like (Gardner, cited in Horwitz & Young, 1991, p. viii). Other important factors that cause language anxiety for L2/FL speakers may be the social status of the speaker and the interlocutor, a sense of power relations between them, and gender. A thorough investigation of these factors could assist language teachers to ease anxiety in the classroom setting and make the classroom environment less anxiety-provoking. The result of this investigation could potentially improve classroom learners' performance in the target language.

### **Classroom Anxiety**

Almost every student experiences anxiety when it comes to learning. Being asked to speak in front of the class or answer a teacher's questions is a common source of anxiety for students. Even an upcoming examination is something to be anxious about, especially when they know that it will be a difficult test. Such temporary feelings of anxiety are instances of state anxiety. However, some students are anxious most of the time, even when the situation is not especially dangerous or threatening. For example, some students get excessively nervous even before very easy exams, while others may be so anxious about learning mathematics that they cannot concentrate on the simplest math assignment. A learner who shows a pattern of responding with anxiety, even in non-threatening situations, has a case of trait anxiety, a chronic condition that often interferes with optimum performance. Their anxieties will most likely cause them to lose focus on the task at hand, resulting in a poor performance. They may be so preoccupied with their self-doubts that may hamper their creativity and critical thinking.

Several researches have shown that anxiety interferes with several types of learning. It is termed as a 'second/foreign language anxiety' when it is associated with learning a second or foreign language. It is a complex and multidimensional phenomenon (Young, 1991, cited in Onwuegbuzie, Bailey, Daley, 1999, p. 217) and it is defined by McIntyre and Gardner (1991) as an emotional feeling that causes tension, apprehension, nervousness, and worry. It has also been found that the feelings of tension or nervousness focus on the two basic task requirements of foreign language learning, which are listening and speaking (Horwitz *et al.*, 1986, p. 29), because both these skills cannot be separated during interactions.

### **Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety**

Foreign Language Anxiety (FLA) is recognized by researchers as an affective factor in foreign language learning and usually discussed alongside other individual learner differences. It is also considered as a relatively new and developing area within the scope of foreign language research (Gardner & MacIntyre, 1993). It is thus important to present an overview of anxiety in general and then consider the different forms it may disclose itself in. Different researchers have approached FLA from different aspects. In general, psychologists define anxiety as a state of apprehension, uncertainty, and fear resulting from the anticipation of a realistic or imagined threatening event or situation. Foreign Language Anxiety or more precisely, Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety (FLCA) is considered to be a situational anxiety experienced in the confines of the foreign language classroom (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991a, 1991b, 1994).

Horwitz and Young viewed FLCA 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 and Young, 1991, p. 31). In all of these specifications, the context or situation-dependent nature of foreign language anxiety is emphasized.

### **The Influences from Teachers**

Experts on adolescent psychology have confirmed that socially supportive relationships can have powerful and lasting effects on the lives of children and youth. Social relationships are important to them, as it can buffer the effects of stressful life events, especially during transitional periods and times of stress. The transition from childhood into adolescence is one such example of times of stress. Elias and Butler (1999) described the middle school years as a time of cognitive awakening, realignment of social influences, intense psychological change, and more often than not, emotional turbulence. This stage of growth is a particularly delicate one, where the future of the youth hangs in



the balance. In the classroom, the teacher takes on the central role in student learning. How the teacher plans the lessons, his or her knowledge of the learners and the learning process, and his or her beliefs and values all have a huge impact on the students. This is especially significant when the teacher is not a passive participant, but rather an active designer of students' interactions in the classroom. It is very important for teachers to realize the effect they have on the students and reflect on their values and practice while teaching in a learning environment. (Costantino, 2008).

#### **The Influences from Peers in the Classroom**

Children of all ages need to feel that they fit in. As children become adolescents, the need to belong and be part of a group is as strong as ever during this transitional period. Friendships become closer and play an important role in determining who they are and where they are headed in the future.

Encountering academic difficulties is a fairly common problem for teenagers. Apart from that, they also experience social, behavioral and emotional problems among other things. Peer influence has been looked upon as having a negative effect by some parents and educators. Peer group, as a positive medium for problem-solving development, has not been fully considered, although it is possible that it might present significant opportunities for childcare practitioners and educators.

Children build knowledge bases that help them navigate social situations as they grow into adolescence. A number of studies have suggested that peer influence has a considerable effect on the cognitive skill development of a person during adolescence. Dodge's (1993) research indicated that poor peer relationships were closely associated with social cognitive skill deficits. He found that adolescents who had developed positive peer relationships generated more alternative solutions to problems, provided more mature solutions, and were more laid-back than those teens who had developed negative peer relationships. Along those same lines, Bansal (1996) found that adolescents who compared themselves negatively in reference to their peers experienced a reduction in attention to problem-solving tasks.

#### **A Short Historical Background of the International Education Program for Basic Education, (IEP) , "Piboonbumpen" Demonstration School , Burapha University.**

In 2001, Dr. Somsak Lila, director of Piboonbumpen Demonstration School, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Chalong Tubsree, Dean of Faculty of Education and Ms. Keota Jaroensuk, former head teacher of English department at Piboonbumpen Demonstration School initiated the English Immersion Program or EIP as a research project with a focus on international education development. However, the curriculum used is the National Curriculum that has been revised and approved by the Thai Ministry of Education. EIP is a part of the Piboonbumpen Demonstration School where English is the main instructive language in classrooms.

In 2004, the name of the program was changed to "International Education Program for Basic Education or IEP" and relocated to a new building in accordance with the changes in the school administrative system, educational reform and providing more facilities and a better environment for study. Currently there are 21 teachers and 10 staff members to supervise 206 students from secondary 1 to 6 (IEP website, 2009).

## **Methodology**

### **Research Design**

A mixed methods research design was used. It involves both collecting and analyzing quantitative and qualitative data. It is a research design with philosophical assumptions as well as methods of inquiry. As a methodology, it involves philosophical assumptions that guide the direction of the collection and analysis of data and the mixture of qualitative and quantitative approaches in many phases in the research process. As a method, it focuses on collecting, analyzing, and mixing both quantitative and qualitative data in a single study or series of studies. By mixing the sets of data collected, the researcher forms a more complete picture of the problem than if either set of data had been used alone (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007).

This research employed the sequential transformative strategy. Like the other sequential models, this strategy has two distinct data collection phases; however, either method may be used first and

priority given to either quantitative or qualitative phases or both. The results of the two phases are integrated during the interpretation phase, similar to the two sequential methods above; however, a theoretical perspective guides the transformative model. The purpose of this strategy is to employ the methods that will best serve the theoretical perspective of the researcher.

### **Research Setting**

The study was conducted at the International Program for Basic Education of the Piboonbumpen Demonstration School in Burapha University, Chonburi. The school adapts the National Curriculum approved by the Ministry of Education, and uses English as a medium of communication. The students study for a period of 30 hours a week in which 70% percent of the classes are in English.

### **Population/Sample**

The target population was the 175 students of IEP which consisted of 75 secondary level 3 students and 100 secondary level 4 students in the academic year of 2011. The sample of 122 students was selected by stratified random sampling. The number of students in the sample was determined by the Yamane's (1967) sample size table.

The population was secondary students in grade 7 to 11 or secondary level 3 students which consist of Mattayomsuksa 1-3 and secondary level 4 students which consists of Mattayomsuksa 4-5. In order to avoid the anxiety bias from the university entrance examination, which is a critical time for students, the secondary students from grade 12 or Matthayomsuksa 6 were not included in this study.

Six students from each group were chosen at random for interview.

### **Research Instrument**

The Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) was used as the quantitative instrument. This questionnaire consisted of 33 statements which were divided into four categories including communication anxiety, fear of negative evaluation, test anxiety and anxiety of English classes. The respondents were asked to rate each item on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 ("strongly disagree") to 5 ("strongly agree").

An interview schedule was used as the qualitative instrument. Selected students from secondary 3 and secondary 4 were interviewed individually by the researcher. The interview schedule consisted of the following questions:

1. What kind of influences have you got from your teachers in English lessons? (When they are asking questions, correcting errors, taking turns)
2. What are the effects (if there is a negative influence)? What do you do to cope with this influence?
3. In your opinion, how can your teachers help the students feel less anxious?
4. How do you assess your performance in English compared to other students in the class? (What makes you think so?)
5. Do you think peer pressure affects your anxiety level? If so, in what way? If there is a negative effect, what do you do to cope with this pressure?

The interviews were recorded and answers were later categorized into either teacher influence, student influence or others.

## **Data Collection**

### **Quantitative Research**

The researcher handed out and collected the questionnaire to the sample population of 122 students during their class with the researcher. They were instructed to answer as spontaneously as possible and that they should not feel any fear of committing any mistakes since it was not a test to be graded. The answers to the questionnaires were organized and analyzed to classify the students' level of anxiety.

### Qualitative Research

The selected students were given an in-depth interview. During the interview, the questions were sometimes not according to a specified order, while new questions were added depending on the flow of each interviewee's responses. The researcher interviewed 18 students to assess their foreign language classroom anxiety. The tape recorder was used as a main interviewing instrument and its contents were later analyzed, grouped and transcribed by the researcher. To help native Thai students overcome the language barrier, Thai was used as the medium language; however the non-Thai students were asked in English to help encourage them to express their feelings as freely as possible.

### Results

| Secondary Level | n  |       | SD    | Level of Anxiety |
|-----------------|----|-------|-------|------------------|
| 3               | 52 | 89.78 | 12.06 | Moderate         |
| 4               | 70 | 89.30 | 11.63 | Moderate         |

The results showed that the mean which was 89.78 and 89.30 and standard deviation which was between 12.06 and 11.63 of foreign language classroom anxiety and level of anxiety of secondary 1-5 students were at middle of the range of possible scores. This indicated that the foreign language classroom anxiety and the level of anxiety of secondary level 3 and 4 students were at the moderate level. The independent samples t-test also showed that there is no difference between the mean anxiety level of secondary 3 and secondary 4 students.

Table 2 Percentages of students who were influenced by teachers, peers and others

| Influences                   | Number of students | Percentage |
|------------------------------|--------------------|------------|
| Influences of Teacher (n=18) |                    | 5          |
| Group 1                      | 1                  | 28         |
| Group 2                      | 5                  | 33         |
| Group 3                      | 6                  | 66         |
| Total                        |                    |            |
| Influences of Peer (n=18)    |                    |            |
| Group 1                      | 0                  | 0          |
| Group 2                      | 3                  | 17         |
| Group 3                      | 3                  | 17         |
| Total                        |                    | 34         |
| Influences of Peer (n=18)    |                    |            |
| Group 1                      | 1                  | 5          |
| Group 2                      | 1                  | 5          |
| Group 3                      | 0                  | 0          |
| Total                        |                    | 10         |

The findings also revealed that possible causes of foreign language classroom anxiety were communication apprehension and fear of negative evaluation confirming the result of Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope (1986). The interviews with various students revealed that most of them experienced foreign language anxiety because of teacher influence. The teacher influence was mostly based on the behavior of the teacher in class while asking students questions and requiring them to speak in front of the class. A lot of students experienced a high level of anxiety when their teacher looked at them intently while waiting for them to answer. This made them feel that they had done something wrong. The students suggested that the teacher should be friendlier during classes and



listen patiently while encouraging through their smiles and nods. They also thought that they would feel less anxious when the teacher avoided calling students at random to recite.

Finally, two students implied that parents' influence also play a part in the foreign language anxiety of the students. Their parents' expectation of them being good in English and foreign language classes put the students on edge. However, the other 16 respondents did not feel the same way

## Discussion

The results of the interviews revealed two factors that influence the students' foreign language classroom anxiety: the teacher and their peers. These two factors were considered to be the major influences on student learning, based on numerous literature perused by the researcher. One particular study, (Hattie, n.d.), revealed that some of the major influences on student learning are teacher in-service education, instructional media, and challenge of goals, testing, ability grouping, audio visual aids, and physical attributes of the school. Surprisingly, peer influence scored low in that study. However, there is literature that revealed how teenagers' close friends or peers can influence their college aspirations and how poor peer relationships were closely associated with social cognitive skill deficits (Cohen, 1983). The literature perused led the researcher to the premise that teachers and peers are the key figures in the learning environment of the school. It is with this premise that this study was undertaken (Tate, 2001).

Finally, the results of the interviews supported the premise that the anxiety source of IEP students is primarily the teacher's behavior and their peers' attitude. This result is not unexpected because, in the school setting, the main participants are the teacher and students and the focus is their interaction. Numerous studies have been conducted revealing the effect of teaching strategies and teaching approaches on the academic achievement of students. This clearly showed that learning is greatly influenced by the teacher. The teacher plays a central role in classroom learning. The student merely responds to the stimulus provided by the teacher. If the teacher is passive and focuses more on teaching the students what to think than how to think, the students lose interest in learning.

## Implications

Since the study showed that the students of IEP suffer from foreign language classroom anxiety due primarily to the teacher's influence, it would be helpful for the learners if their teacher recognized this perception and planned to create a relaxing environment for them. The instructor should understand that foreign language anxiety can be an impediment to their effectively learning a foreign language. Calling students at random should be avoided. Instead, teachers should encourage voluntary participation and oral performance only from those who are willing and ready; then giving rewards to those who do so. This would relieve some apprehension from most students and may open up their minds to foreign language learning.

This study has also established the influence of peer pressure on foreign language classroom anxiety of IEP students. Since this is the case, it would be helpful for the teacher to employ techniques that acknowledge and maximize positive peer influences in the classroom.

## Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, it is seen that the possible causes of foreign language classroom anxiety are communication apprehension and fear of negative evaluation, confirming the findings of Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope (1986). The teacher influence was mostly based on the behavior of the teacher in class, by asking students questions and requiring them to speak in front of the class. Further studies about the characteristics and roles of teachers in class should be conducted to add new aspects regarding classroom anxiety to the foreign language learning. Since this study was focused on the foreign language anxiety of IEP students only, the results cannot be generalized to a larger population. Therefore, further studies should be done with a bigger population and more diverse types of students from different bilingual schools in Thailand. Since the focus of this study was to find out the foreign

language anxiety of IEP students and the possible causes, it would be interesting to focus on the relationship between demographic data of the participants and the foreign language anxiety. Thus, more correlational research on this topic is suggested.

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