AN ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS OF

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Title: Competencies of Informational Speaking as Perceived by Selected

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Abstract approved:_____

\Lloyd E. Crisp

This study explored the applicability of a small portion of Western

communication theory and practice to an Eastern culture. It compared

the opinions or professional judgments of five Thai speech instructors

who had obtained their doctorates in American universities with those of

five American speech instructors who hold doctorates in the same dis-

cipline.

The study was designed to investigate the assumed differences

between Thai and American speech instructors with respect to their

judgment of the level of importance of selected competencies in public

informational speaking. An instrument was developed and administered to

five Thai and five American speech instructors. Internal consistency of

the instrument was determined, and a statistical test was used to

ascertain differences and similarities of the two groups of instructors'

responses.

Within the limitations discussed in the study, the results revealed

that the Americans rated 30 of 35 items higher than Thai speech

instructors. However, the higher ratings were significant only for those items relating to eye contact, language usage, ability to analyze an audience, and speaker interest in sharing information.

Definite conclusions regarding the differences in ratings between American and Thai speech instructors on the level of importance of selected competencies in informational speaking cannot be drawn from the results because of the limitation within which the study was accomplished. Additional research is needed. The questionnaire should be further developed and tested by submitting it to a larger sample of speech instructors. However, the results did lend support to the theoretical rationale that the Western rhetorical theory involved is not directly applicable to the Eastern culture of Thailand.

COMPETENCIES OF INFORMATIONAL SPEAKING AS PERCEIVED BY
SELECTED AMERICAN AND THAI SPEECH PROFESSORS

by

Sukkarnya Kulthongkham

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INTRODUCTION

Overview of this Study

This study explored the applicability of a small portion of Western
communication theory and practice to an Eastern culture. It compared
the opinions or professional judgments of Thai University speech in-
structors who had obtained their doctorates in United States' univer-
sities with an equal number of American speech instructors who hold
doctorates in the same discipline. The study was designed to
investigate the assumed differences between Thai and American speech
instructors with respect to their judgment of the level of importance of
selected competencies in public, informational speaking.

Introduction to the Problem

When American students meet their instructor they usually say "hi"
or "hello" with a smile. In Thailand, Thai students first "wai" when
they meet an instructor before saying a word. If Thai students did not
wai, their instructor would be quite upset.

The wai is not just a way of saying hello without using
words, it is an action of respect. As such, its use conforms
to all that we will have to say about Thai values and atti-
tudes. It is the most significant of the many social actions
that reinforce Thai social structure. (Cooper, 1984, p. 2)

The wai is an old Thai traditional way of paying respect. The wai

is made when palms are held together with fingers upward, head down to

touch the thumbs of both hands. The wai is just one significant example

of Thai ways of communication.

Communication between people from different cultures is not an easy

task. People from different cultures perform different behaviors, think

in different ways, and have different expectations and predictions about

other people's behavior. Miller and Steinberg (1975) point out that

individuals use various levels of data to predict other people's be-

havior. The first level of data is "cultural"; people in a culture

generally behave in a similar fashion because of shared norms, values

and postulates.

Gudykunst and Kim (1984, p. 35) write:

Communication with the (sic) strangers is influenced by
cultural, socialcultural, psychocultural and environmental
factors. Each of these influences how we interpret messages
encoded by strangers and what predictions we make about
strangers' behavior. Without understanding the strangers'
filters, we cannot accurately interpret or predict their
behavior.

The crucial importance of culture and the implied need to

understand cultural differences is made clear by Hall (1976, p. 14):

Culture is man's medium; there is not one aspect of
human life that is not touched and altered by culture.
This means personality, how people express themselves
(including shows of emotion), the way they think, how
they move, how problems are solved, how their cities
are planned and laid out, how transportation systems
function and are organized, as well as how economic
and government systems are put together and function.

The influence of culture on individuals is pervasive and powerful. While there are genetic differences between ethnic, racial and national groups, cultural and environmental factors have been demonstrated to be paramount in many areas, including, for example, the incidence rates of certain kinds of cancer:

> ...For example, cancers of the breast, colon and prostate are common in the United States but rare in Japan. Conversely, cancer of the stomach is common in Japan but rare in the United States.

> ...(The) hypothesis (of genetic differences) is refuted by the data on migration from one country to another. They show that the worldwide geographic variation in organ-specific cancer rates can be attributed to environmental factors rather than genetic ones. For example, within two generations Japanese immigrants in Hawaii and California had breast-cancer rates approaching those of the Hawaiian white population and significantly higher than those of native Japanese. Conversely, gastric-cancer rates became significantly lower among Japanese Hawaiians than among native Japanese. Increases in breast-cancer rates were also found in populations immigrating from Poland, where the risk is low, to the United States. (Cohen, 1987, p. 44)

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate the assumed differences between Thai and American speech instructors with respect to their judgment of the level of importance of selected competencies in informational speaking. In other words, the purpose was to determine, to the extent that a very limited sample would allow, similarities and differences between Thai and American speech instructors' judgments about selected competencies involved·in informational speaking.

The results of this study have implications for the broad questions that follow: (1) To what extent does graduate work in human communication in one culture apply in another very different culture? (2) Is theory and practice relative to a specific form of public address

applicable to another culture? (3) If the language, culture and communication behaviors of two national peoples are quite different, what are the similarities and differences in public communication performance expectations by experts? And (4) Do the Western canons of rhetoric apply to an Eastern culture?

Background of the Problem

The Speech Discipline

The discipline of speech is uniquely American. It was developed in the United States, and is not represented within the academic disciplines of colleges and universities outside the United States except by historically recent, direct influence of the American discipline of Speech Communication--by academics affiliated with the Speech Communication Association of America (Crisp, 1986). The development of the discipline is related to the importance of and the guarantee of free speech practice within the First Amendment of the United States Constitution: "Congress shall make no law abridging the freedom of speech. . . " Divisions or departments of speech emerged from departments of English in the 19th Century, and by the mid-20th Century, departments of Speech--under various names--existed in most universities and colleges in the country. Graduate degrees in Speech Communication are currently offered in 285 universities and colleges (SCA Directory, 1987, p. 203-204).

While the discipline of Speech is uniquely American, it is rooted in the classical rhetoric of Ancient Greece (Wallace, 1954; Linkugel & Buehler, 1975, and others). The foundations of theory and practice of

oratory and public speaking are Aristotle's three canons: ethos (the credibility of the speaker); pathos (the emotional elements of identification with the speaker); and logos (the logic and reason of the speaker). Classical rhetoric involves Aristotle's notion of "the good man, skilled in speaking," and there is now a vast literature of empirical and critical research generally confirming and extending the classical Greek conceptions (Littlejohn, 1978; Dance, 1982; Arnold, 1984; McCrosky, 1982; and others).

American and Thai Graduate Education

Within the past decade, Speech Communication has been introduced into the educational system of Thailand. It is but one of many academic areas imported into Thailand by hundreds of Thais who have obtained advanced degrees in American universities and colleges. According to The Royal Thai Embassy, Student Division (February, 1987), at the end of 1986, the number of Thai students in the United States was 3,000. However, according to the Institute of International Education, at the end of 1986 about 6,000 Thai students were then studying in the United States.

After graduation from American universities, most of the students go back to Thailand, and some of them pursue careers in teaching. There is no doubt that some of the knowledge they had been taught in the United States is transferred to Thai students. However, because of cultural differences, the knowledge they learned in the United States must be modified to the Thai way of life and belief. This attempt to adjust the knowledge to the Thai culture must result in considerable differences in emphasis, if not differences in the content or knowledge

itself. This study examines these assumptions within the narrow frame of expository or informational speaking.

Rationale of the Study

Importance and History of Education in Thailand

Formal education is an important issue to the people of Thailand, who believe that all people should be educated. In the past, boys went to Buddhist temples to learn reading, writing and Buddhism from the monks. Girls were excluded from formal education. According to Patya Saihoo (1973, p. 23), the state did not provide public education until after the reign of King Chulalongkorn (1869-1910).

The western educational system began to influence Thailand in the early 19th century through missionaries. The Presbyterians established the first missionary school in 1852. Missionaries also had introduced the Thai typewriter, wrote the first Thai dictionary, and founded the first girls' school. During the same period, there was also Western influence in other areas such as medicine, shipbuilding, navigation, printing, and the military (Franzen, 1959, p. 6).

According to Thailand in the 80s (1984, p. 265) only four million Thai children were being educated in public schools in 1960. Today more than eight million students are enrolled in public schools throughout the country, virtually all of the children in the country. The literacy rate in Thailand is over 85.8 percent. Nearly 80 percent of the population above the age of eleven has had some schooling, and 99.4 percent of children between the ages of seven and twelve attended primary school in 1983.

The government expenditure on education for the Fifth Five-Year
Development Plan (1982-1986) was set at 185,430,000 baht (the current
rate of exchange is 26 baht to the U.S. dollar) (1984, p. 265). At the
same time, the government has created institutions to teach the
specialized skills required such as engineering, computer technology,
environmental engineering, nursing and medicine. In addition, the Thai
government provides scholarships for Thai students to study aboard,
especially in the United States. According to Setti (1973, p. 4), the
United States aid agencies have directly supported the training of
approximately 900 Thais in the various professional fields of education.
Furthermore, many American educators have been involved in a variety of
pre-service and in-service training programs for teachers and adminis-
trators in Thailand.

Education is one reason why Americans and Thais have begun to have
closer cultural contact. Also, a combination of increased mobility,
modern technology and advanced communication systems has created closer
American-Thai tourist, business, and diplomatic contact. The exchange
of ideas, experiences, knowledge, attitudes and skills is increasing
dramatically, and increased contacts justify the need for increased
mutual understanding.

It is desirable to investigate the differences which exist between
American and Thai speech instructors because the results of this study
would be beneficial for people of both countries. On the one hand, it
might promote a better understanding of the needs of foreign graduate
students within American graduate programs. On the other hand, it might
enhance a critical attitude on the part of foreign graduate students in
the United States when the subject matter is culture-specific.

Implication of Cultural Difference

General information about the language and culture of Thailand is available in many sources: Allison (1984), Campbell (1968), Clarac (1981), Hass (1982), Hoefer (1980), Noss (1964), Segaller (1984), Warren and Rangsit (1984), Puangpit and Chirakraisiri (1973), Office of the Prime Minister of Thailand (1984), Ministry of Education, Thailand (1969), Mole (1973), Cooper (1981), Fieg (1980), Barret (1980), and Anurakrajmonthein (1981). Those aspects relevant to this study will be treated subsequently.

Since American and Thai cultures are different, behaviors or even expectations and predictions of other people's behaviors should not be the same. When people of both countries attempt to communicate, it is likely that there will be many misunderstandings resulting from cultural differences. It also follows that there should be differences between Thai and American speech instructors' judgments about competencies involving informational speaking. Specifically, the areas of expected differences are described below.

Differences Concerning Criticism

An important aspect in the Thai language is its reflection of Thai characteristics and Thai behaviors. Some Thai words may be easily un- derstood by Thais, but Americans might find them difficult to understand because there is no exact equivalent in English. For example, Mai Pen Rai, which means "never mind" or "that's all right," is the expression of forgiveness. Thais always say this expression when something has gone wrong in order to minimize the difficulty. Kreng Jai can be translated closely as "consideration." It is the way Thais feel when interacting with others. It involves the desire to be respectful,

extremely considerate, and the wish to avoid embarrassing other people or causing them any trouble.

It is therefore easy to understand why face-to-face criticism in Thailand is very rare, especially between members of different social classes. As a result, Thai speech instructors may tend to be less critical of students following a student presentation than would an American speech instructor. For the Thais, criticism hurts and threatens the relationship; it is a negative concept which disturbs the peace. Cooper (1984, p. 112) points out that the act of criticism is at best a sign of bad manners, at worst a deliberate attempt to offend. In America, it is possible for two people to be very critical of each other at work, but still remain friends. In contrast, criticism of one Thai by another would never allow the two to become friends, as criticism is regarded as destructive of the social system. Cooper (1984) comments:

> The superior is supposed to decide, the inferior is supposed to obey. To criticize a superior is to question the idea that the superior is always right. To criticize an inferior would suggest either that the inferior is responsible for making decisions or that the orders given him by the superior were inadequate or that the superior had made a mistake in entrusting the job to somebody who was incompetent to do it. Criticizing an inferior in public would also impress on all present the superior's bad manners as much as the inferior's inefficiency. (p. 113)

If the Thai aversion to criticism is a cultural trait, particularly in a group or public setting, then Thai instructors should rate most speech competencies on a multiple-item measure lower than American instructors. Such a tendency would not mean that Thais necessarily judge the items less meaningful or important, or that they would be less able than their American counterparts to judge the relative competency of a student; rather, it may mean Thais would seek moderation in matters

implying critical evaluation of others. Thais would thus be more likely than Americans to avoid extremes on a rating or judgment scale.

The importance of the Thai value which underlines the common expressions Mai Pen Rai ("It's OK," "Don't worry," "Never mind," "That's all right") and Kreng Jai ("Concern for others," and "Consideration") implies a structural predisposition in matters which bear on judgment of others to moderate or ease the situation, independent of the issue or factor judged. The corollary of Cooper's analysis of Thai avoidance of negative criticism is avoidance of undue positive criticism, at least in public, because of concern for the feelings of others present. If so, Thais would likely rate more if not most informational speaking competency items lower than would Americans, assuming that most of the items are judged by both American and Thai speech instructors as relevant factors in public speaking. The reasoning would also be that Thai instructors would rate factors judged by both groups to be of little importance or less than average importance less harshly or higher than would American instructors.

The instrument used in the study, ratings or judgments about speaker competences, does not allow a direct test of the assumed differences regarding criticism. Rather, an assumption of the study is that such cultural differences exist between Americans and Thais, and the general hypothesis of this study stated subsequently is based largely on this cultural difference.

Eye Contact

In Thailand, children are taught from a very early age to respect elders. The oldest person always has the most power and influence in the house. The distinction between phu-yai (elders) and phu-noi

(juniors or subordinates) indicates the relationship between parents and children as well as between siblings of different ages (Thailand in the 80s, 1984 p. 62). To show their respect, children must keep their eyes down or keep their eye contact to a minimum while talking to elders, especially parents or teachers. As the result, it is likely that Thai speech instructors would place less emphasis on direct eye contact with an audience than would their American counterparts.

Language and Usage Differences

The respect for one's elders in Thailand is formulated in a system of titles used to distinguish between older and younger people, and between brothers and sisters. Phii means older brother or sister, and nong means younger brother or sister. Children must learn to use these words as a prefix of the name since it is regarded as impolite or bad manners to name older people without a prefix, except among friends. The rule of respect appears within and outside the family, and is a significant part of the Thai hierarchical system. In every social situation there is a distinction between superior and inferior positions. Younger people must pay respect to older people of the same or higher social status. However, older people of lower social status must pay respect to the younger of higher social status. Therefore the rule of respect outside the family depends on social status rather than age. As Fieg (1980) explains:

> When one Thai meets another for the first time, each
> must quickly and astutely ascertain the other's proper
> status in order to use the appropriate deferential language
> and personal pronouns. (p. 26)

For the Thais, the way to pay respect is not only to "wai" or use appropriate language, but also to obey and believe. It is inappropriate

for inferiors to question the order or even comment on the suggestion of superiors. Americans might find it difficult to understand the Thai hierarchical pattern because they believe in equality. This equality is easily seen in the English language--there is no way to refer to oneself with pronouns other than "I," "me," or "my." In the Thai language, there are many pronouns denoting "I" and "you." In fact, there are 17 different ways to say "I," and 19 different you's to be used in different situations (Thailand in the 80s, 1984, p. 58). Using the appropriate language is very important in Thai culture, depending on the status or rank between the speaker and the listener. The Royal family and the Buddhist monks are regarded as the highest rank. To show their respect, the Thais have a special language to use just with them. For example, to address "you" for the King one must use the word, tai-fa-la-ong-tu-lee-pra-bath, which is loosely translated as "in the dust under the sole of the royal foot."

As the result of prescribed language usage in Thailand, and other cultural differences reflected in the structure and usage of language between Americans and Thais, Thai instructors should place more emphasis on proper language usage than would American instructors.

Stress and Pitch Differences

Tone is of particular importance to the Thai language because it changes the meaning of a word. For example, the word ma can mean come, horse or dog depending entirely on tone. The five tones are middle level, low level, high level, rising level and falling level. Since changing the tone means changing the meaning of the word, one must be very aware of tonal level while speaking the Thai language. The Ministry of Education has shown its concern for the importance of this

task by requiring schools to teach children to differentiate the sound of the five tones starting at an early age.

Both the lexical and tonal differences of English and Thai should predispose American and Thai speech instructors to regard language usage differently. It is reasonable to expect that both lexical and pitch or tonal expectations would be greater for Thai speech instructors than for American speech instructors.

Loudness of Voice, Movement and Gestures

Corollaries of the status differences and the respect of elders in Thailand treated above are the issues of loudness of voice, and movement and gestures. The common American expression of adults often heard a generation or so ago, "Children are to be seen and not to be heard," is a fair statement of Thai attitudes, both past and present. Loud speaking is generally not considered polite in Thailand, and loud speakers are regarded as offensive. Low volume or soft speech is regarded as respectful of others. Similarily, body movement or gestures which draw attention are regarded as disrespectful and offensive by Thais. It is therefore reasonable to expect that Thai speech instructors would rate these two factors of public presentation lower than would American instructors because American mores or cultural rules about volume of speech and body movement or gestures are less restrictive than in Thailand.

Informational Speaking Competencies

While there are many speech criticism forms available and general agreement in the many texts about criteria, a search of the literature revealed no expository speaking competency forms, or no studies of

expert judgments about such competencies. For this reason, relevant current texts were reviewed for categories to include in a competencies judgment form. The texts reviewed are cited in the section below.

Once the competencies were identified they were grouped into the following categories: (1) selection of topic, (2) audience analysis, (3) organization and preparation of a speech, (4) vocal and physical delivery issues, (5) credibility of the speaker, and (6) other factors. This section covers each category.

Selection of Topic

In most informational speaking classes, students are generally allowed to speak on any topic or subject of their choice. As a result, students are faced with selecting a topic on which they wish to speak. Students could choose to speak on any number of topics; however, they will perform at different levels of competence depending on the topic chosen. As a result, selecting the topic is extremely important to student performance and instructor evaluation.

The first step in preparing for a speech is choosing a topic. According to Lucas (1983, p. 45), Powers (1987, p. 85), Rodman (1986, p. 55), Samovar and Mills (1976, p. 16) and Zolten and Phillips (1985, p. 20), there are two broad categories of potential topics. These are: a subject the speaker knows a great deal about, and a subject of interest to the speaker.

Powers (1987, pp. 88-89) also writes that a good topic may come from the speaker's hobbies and experiences. He explains that the speaker must be able to induce others to become interested in the topic, and the topic must fit the total situation in which the speech actually is given. In addition, he suggested that the first step in topic

selection is to inventory the speaker's interests so as to give the speaker an opportunity to select from among several options. Additionally, according to Dance and Zak-Dance (1986, pp. 54-55), a topic will be influenced by its importance to the audience, and by the speaker's expertise. Samovar and Mills (1976, p. 16) also suggest that time is a significant factor in choosing a topic because different topics require different lengths of time to be presented effectively. Finally, Rodman (1986, pp. 45-48) also stresses the Aristotelian notion of "invention" in his treatment of creativity in the selection of a topic:

> Creativity is important because it allows both speaker and audience to perceive the speech as "new"; therefore the speaker will be more enthusiastic in giving it and the audience will be more enthusiastic in listening to it.

Audience Analysis

An important element in the preparation of a speech is audience analysis. In general, audience analysis is a study of the specific audience in an attempt to determine, prior to the speech, knowledge and interest on the part of the audience concerning a certain topic. This information is important because it can be used to obtain desired responses from the audience members. Audience analysis is important because the speaker needs information about the specific audience to be able to adapt the message to the needs of the audience. Being able to analyze the audience members' knowledge and interest is therefore an important aspect of effective public communication. According to Civikly and Rinehart (1981), Dance and Zak-Dance (1986), Hart (1975), Lucas (1983), Powers (1986), Rodman (1978), and Ross (1983), audience analysis may cause the speaker to alter almost everything in a first

draft of a speech. Moreover, Hart (1975, p. 114) states that the public communicator must attempt to analyze and adapt to many diverse people simultaneously.

According to Civikly (1981, p. 210), Rodman (1978, p. 61), and Ross (1983, pp. 124-125), some general descriptive measures in audience analysis are:

1. sex
2. age group
3. education level
4. occupation
5. primary group membership
6. special interest of a particular audience
7. audience-subject relationships which concern the audience's knowledge of the topic, its experience and interest in the subject, and its attitude toward the specific purpose.

Powers (1987, p. 121) divides his audience analysis checklist into three catagories:

Demographic involvements
    1. Age of audience.
    2. Gender makeup of audience.
    3. Ethnic, cultural or national backgrounds of audience.
Social involvements
    1. Employment: places and types.
    2. Club or organizational memberships.
    3. Social or economic class.
    4. Educational level.
    5. Religious preferences.
Conceptual involvements
    1. Audience members' prior interest in the topic;
    2. prior knowledge about the topic; and
    3. prior attitudes or values concerning the topic.

Organization and Preparation of a Speech

Proper organization and preparation of a speech are necessary for the speaker to make the speech more understandable to an audience. An audience trusts and has greater belief in the speaker's competence when the speech is well organized and prepared. One can detect organization of a particular speech by looking at how well the audience understood.

A good speech should be organized into three parts: introduction, body, and conclusion. For effective communication, the speaker should write an outline and practice until the speech can be delivered according to the planned organization. Ross (1983, p. 135) states that the purpose of informative speaking is to inform people of something about which the speaker has more knowledge, or knows in a different or more specific way. Mills and Samovar (1976, p. 17) write that the purpose of informative speech is to increase the receiver's knowledge and understanding of a subject. In informative speaking, the main concern is having the audience members learn and remember information the speaker presents.

Rodman (1986) suggests that effective informative speaking should:

1. Define a specific informative purpose.
2. Create "Information Hunger" - create a reason for the audience to want to listen to and learn from the speech.
3. Emphasize Important Points
   a. Repetition - helps an audience to understand and remember main points.
   b. Signposts - warn the audience that what the speaker is about to say is important.
4. Use clear Informative Organization and Structure. The following principles of organization become especially important in the introduction of an informative speech.
   a. Establish the importance of the topic to the audience.
   b. Preview the thesis, the one central idea the speaker wants the audience to remember.
   c. If possible, preview the speaker's main points.
5. Use Supporting Material Effectively.
   The three purposes of supporting material are:
   a. to clarify;
   b. to make interesting;
   c. to make memorable.
   The speaker should be careful to support the speech in every way possible.
   - Use examples;
   - Provide detailed descriptions;
   - Define key terms if there is any chance the audience might be confused by them;
   - Use analogies to enable the audience to view the information from a different perspective;
   - Use quantification and statistics;
   - Use anecdotes;
   - Display visual aid(s).
6. Use clear language.

7. Generate audience involvement. (pp. 211-221)

Delivery

Delivery is the method of conveying the speaker's ideas to the audience clearly, interestingly, and without distractions. Effective delivery is described by Hart (1975), Lucas (1986), Powers (1987), Rodman (1986), Ross (1983), Rubin (1985), and Samovar and Mills (1976). According to Lucas (1986, p. 226-227), most audiences prefer delivery that combines a certain degree of formality with the best attributes of good conversation--directness, spontaneity, animation, emphasis, and a lively sense of communication. He also writes that a speaker should concentrate on such basics as speaking intelligibly, avoiding dis-tracting mannerisms, and establishing eye contact with an audience.

Hart (1975) divides the aspects of delivery into two parts:

1. Visual:
    1. Appearance of the speaker.
    2. Movement. Movement can help the speaker maintain contact with all members of the audience.
    3. Posture. Good posture helps control nervousness.
    4. Facial expressions.
    5. Eye contact. Eye contact is the most important nonverbal facet of delivery. To maintain eye contact the speaker might try to meet the eyes of each member of a small audience squarely at least once during any presentation.
2. Auditory:
    1. Volume - the loudness of voice.
    2. Rate - the speed of speaking.
    3. Pitch - the highness or lowness of voice.
    4. Articulation - saying all the necessary parts of words. (pp. 199-200)

Ross (1983, p. 142) points out that the characteristics of effective speaking should include: .

1. clear organization;
2. clear concept and precise language wording;
3. a clear, pleasant voice and articulation;
4. maintain eye contact;
5. enthusiasm;
6. flexibility of body action that reinforces meaning.

According to Rubin (1985, pp. 173-185), effective delivery competencies which should be required of students are the following: clear pronunciation and articulation, introduce self to others, facial expression and tone of voice, recognize misunderstanding, obtain information, answer questions, distinguish fact from opinion, clarity of ideas, and express feelings.

Credibility

Credibility for an audience is the feeling of trust and belief in the speaker. Credibility of the speaker plays a vital role in public speaking because there would be little effectiveness of communication without trust and belief in the speaker. As Hart (1975) explains:

> ...a speaker's credibility is always a potentially important force in oral communication. Because we as people always go with the words we speak, the student communicator can hardly avoid pondering the various components of source credibility. To dismiss the human dimension of communicative encounter is to ignore the single most important element that makes human communication human and which makes such encounters so varie-gated, unpredictable, and sometimes, even delightful. (p. 110)

Many researchers such as Lucas (1986), Rodman (1986), Ross (1983), and Zolten and Phillips (1985) agree that credibility is the audience members' perceptions of the speaker which vary over time and lead the audience to accept or reject the attitude, belief, and/or action the speaker proposes.

Other Factors

This category includes those competencies that do not fit into the other categories. Examples are the use of time appropriate to the topic and occasion, and adaption of delivery to the size and configuration of the audience, room or speech setting.

Research Hypotheses

There is one general hypothesis, five specific factor predictive hypotheses, and several incidental or exploratory analyses in this study. They are as follows:

H-I: The general predictive hypothesis tested in this study was that the American instructors would rate most items higher than would the Thai speech instructors.

There were, additionally, five factors wherein predictive hypotheses were tested in the analyses of data:

H-II: The American speech instructors will rate items related to eye contact higher than will the Thai speech instructors.

H-III: Thai speech instructors will rate items related to tone of voice higher than will American speech instructors.

H-IV: Thai speech instructors will rate items related to different language usage higher than will American speech instructors.

H-V: American speech instructors will rate items related to loudness of voice higher than will Thai speech instructors.

H-VI: American speech instructors will rate items related to movement and gestures higher than will Thai speech instructors.

The null hypothesis for this study was that there would be no significant differences between American and Thai speech instructors' ratings of the level of importance of selected competencies in informational speaking.

Limitations of the Study

The results of this study are qualified or limited in several important respects:

1. Small sample size. The smaller the samples, the greater the probability that the samples are not representative of the population from which they are drawn. Rejection of the null hypothesis is less likely to be correct with small samples than with large samples. However, clear trends in small samples in an exploratory study are instructive for future research. Because the influence of variability of scores is greater in small samples, trends may become real differences in larger samples.

2. Lack of random selection of subjects. Lack of randomization may result in samples that are not representative of the population from which the samples were drawn. Unrepresentative samples limit the ability to generalize the findings of the study. Random selection of subjects is important because it is a firm criterion of the statistical test used. Nevertheless, when language and language behaviors are the focus of study, any native speaker of a language represents in important respects the culture within which the language is spoken. Language and culture are inseparable. Neither group represents a random sample of Americans or Thais with doctorate degrees in Speech Communication. The group of five Thais was the total group of Thais who taught informational speaking in the only institution in Thailand which offered an academic program in Speech Communication.

3. Cross-cultural validity of measurement instrument. The measurement instrument must have validity if it is to provide a true measure of instructors' ratings of the level of importance of selected competencies in informational speaking. If an instrument does not measure what the researcher intends it to measure, then it has little meaning with respect to the stated purposes of the study. Even though

the Thai instructors participated in the construction of the instrument used in the study, it is not clear to what extent the items are valid for Thai culture. That is, the Thai instructors, both in their judgment about relevance of items and their ratings of the items later, were probably heavily influenced by their graduate educational experience in the United States.

    4. <u>Dimension, factor and category weightings</u>. The salience or relative weight of the items was not determined for two reasons: 1) the small samples involved, and 2) the likelihood that item-salience will differ between the two cultural groups studied. The most direct evidence supporting or denying the general hypothesis of the study would be a comparison of total instrument mean scores of the two groups. However, this could not be done because the values or weights of each item were not determined. Therefore, the exploratory nature of this study in this regard cannot be overstated.

<u>Summary</u>

    Chapter I began by presenting an overview of the study. The purpose of the study was stated along with a rationale for conducting the study. The cross-cultural justifications were then presented for several hypotheses requiring comparisons between the American and Thai subject groups. Informational speech competencies were identified and grouped into six categories: (1) selection of topic; (2) audience analysis; (3) organization and preparation of speech; (4) delivery; (5) credibility; and (6) other factors. These were drawn from a review of relatively current, relevant texts. The chapter concluded with a

statement of the one general hypothesis and five specific hypotheses, followed by a discussion of the limitations of the study.

This study explored assumed differences between two different cultural groups, one group of which had successfully accomplished graduate work within the culture of the other group. That is, the two groups were obviously different in shared cultural backgrounds, but similar in their academic specializations and experiences--all ten instructor-subjects hold doctorate degrees awarded by American educational institutions.

CHAPTER 2

DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the research design and
methodology used in the study. It is divided into sections as follows:
(1) the development of the instrument, (2) a description of the subjects
and data collection procedures, (3) statistical design, and (4) data
analysis techniques.

Development of the Instrument

A review of the literature and research on expository speaking
revealed that a research instrument had not been previously developed to
measure judgments of speech instructors on the importance of selected
competencies involved. As a result, it was necessary to develop an item
pool of competencies from primary sources. Items were generated from a
review of literature (Chapter 1). Additional items were generated by
interviewing five speech instructors in the Department of Speech Com-
munication at Oregon State University. All the instructors interviewed
held doctoral degrees in speech communication, and all had taught
expository speaking or speech to inform.

Once the items were generated from the six categories of the
literature review, they were edited and organized into the instrument
under the following four categories: (1) selection of topic, (2) speech
preparation and organization of content, (3) delivery, and (4) general
effectiveness. The instrument was then submitted to the thesis advisor
for judgments about both content validity and style. The final instru-
ment was a 35-item, 7-point Likert-type measuring device designed to

elicit speech instructors' judgments of the importance of selected competencies in informational speaking. In addition, the subjects of the study were asked to add items which they thought should be added to the list.

Each of the competencies was assigned a level of importance based upon a 7-point Likert-type scale as follows:

```
no                                                crucial
importance   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   importance
```

where 1 = no importance
       2 = slight or of little importance
       3 = somewhat less than average importance
       4 = average importance
       5 = somewhat more than average importance
       6 = considerably or very important
       7 = absolutely or crucially important (see appendix)

Reliability of the Instrument

The procedure used to compute instrument reliability in this study was the estimate of reliability technique described by Hoyt and Stunkard (1952) which utilizes analysis of variance. The Hoyt and Stunkard method for determining instrument reliability does not require comparable halves or unit scoring (p. 756). It provides a straightforward solution to the problem of estimating the reliability coefficient for unrestricted scoring items (Courtney, 1986).

In this approach, the total variance in a set of test scores is apportioned to three sources: differences between subjects, differences between items, and differences due to the interaction between subjects and items (residual). True score variance is estimated from the differences between subjects (mean square for subjects) and measurement error variance from the subject-by-item interaction (residual). The

estimate of reliability is obtained by calculating the mean squares of the items, subjects and residual, and then the mean square of the residual is subtracted from the mean squares of the subjects. The difference is divided by the means squares of the subjects (Hoyt and Stunkard, pp. 756-758). Using the Hoyt-Stunkard technique, the internal consistency of the instrument was found to be 0.91.

Subjects

Ten subjects, five American and five Thai speech instructors, were selected to participate in the study.

Thai Subjects

Thai subjects were selected by first determining which universities in Bangkok, Thailand, were offering speech communication courses. It was discovered that Chulalongkorn University, which is the oldest university in Thailand, was the only university in Bangkok which had a Speech Communication Department and offered an expository or informational speaking course.

The Thai culture is generally more formal than the American culture with respect to approaching an instructor at the university level. It was necessary, therefore, to contact the Dean at Chulalongkorn University to obtain permission before it was possible to give the instrument to the Thai instructors.

Dr. Surapol Virunrak, Dean of Faculty of Communication Arts, Chulalongkorn University in Bangkok, was contacted in person by the researcher and presented with a letter of introduction from the research adviser. Permission was asked to administer a survey to speech instructors who had doctorates in speech communication. The survey (see

Appendix) asked the speech instructors to indicate the courses they were competent to teach as well as their degree status, years of experience, and area of specialization. The responses to these questions were used in selecting subjects for the study. The Dean was also asked for permission to administer the instrument for measuring judgments about the importance of selected competencies in informational speaking. Permission was given by the Dean for both requests, and he then referred the researcher to the Chairperson, Department of Speech Communication and Performing Arts. The Dean sent a note along with the instruments asking for the Chairperson's cooperation.

Dr. Orawan Philunthovart, Chairperson of the Department, was contacted by the researcher in person. She was given the note from the Dean and copies of the instrument. Dr. Philunthovart agreed to cooperate, completed one of the instruments, and distributed or administered four others to members of the faculty who had earned doctorates in speech communication from the United States and who were competent to teach informational speaking. The completed questionnaires were returned to the Departmental secretary as requested by the Chairperson and were later collected from the secretary.

The doctoral degrees of the five Thai speech instructors were awarded by the University of Arizona, the University of Denver, the University of Minnesota, the Ohio State University, and the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Two of the Thai instructors were female, and three were male, with a range of teaching experience from three to 30 years.

American Subjects

Five American speech instructions who had earned doctorates in speech communication and who had competence in and were currently teaching courses in informational speaking were selected from Oregon State University, Western Oregon State College, and the University of Oregon. These institutions were selected because they offered courses in speaking to inform, had speech instructors who had earned doctorates in the United States, and were within easy commuting distance of Corvallis, Oregon. Also, since most of the Oregon State University Speech instructors had already participated in the instrument development phase of the study, speech instructors from the other two institutions were selected. However, only three speech instructors who met the necessary criteria were available from Western Oregon State University and the University of Oregon. Therefore, two speech instructors at Oregon State University were asked to participate even though they had taken part in the development of the instrument. The questionnaires and a self-addressed envelope were hand delivered to speech instructors at the three institutions. The completed instruments were returned by mail to the researcher for analysis.

The five American speech instructors held doctorates from the University of Arizona, Indiana University, Northwestern University (2), and the University of Missouri. They were four males and one female, with a range of teaching experience of nine to 46 years.

Statistical Design

The study was designed to determine the differences on the level of importance of competencies in informative speaking between American and

Thai speech instructors. The differences of the judgments between the two groups were determined using the t-test of the significance of the difference between mean scores, and the data were analyzed by using the Number Cruncher Statistical System (NCSS) personal computer program.

The inferential statistical procedure utilized to compare the two groups was used only as an indication of support for either accepting or rejecting assumptions and lines of reasoning about cultural differences, and implications of those differences. The fundamental question is this: When is an observed difference meaningful, and not simply non-systematic, random variation in responses? The t-test was used as an aid in exploring differences.

Attempting to establish the relative weight or value of items in a questionnaire for cross-cultural use would appear to be formidable, particularly with small samples of subjects. It is likely that salience factors will operate differently between cultural groups. This would appear particularly true when the subject of the ratings concern public communication--culture-specific verbal and nonverbal communication factors. For this reason, combinations of items and whole-test scores were not compared.

The t-test of difference between group mean scores was selected with knowledge that an important criterion in using the test could not be met. Therefore, differences between the populations represented by the subjects are not made; inferences about differences between the groups will be limited to the groups themselves. This limitation is imposed even though any native speaker is, with reference to language and language behavior and usage norms, representative of the culture at large in significant ways: to wit, the extent to which he or she can

meaningfully communicate with others in the culture, and is therefore different from a native speaker of another language group.

Hypotheses

H-I. The general and first hypothesis of this study was that American and Thai speech instructors would differ in their ratings of informational speaking competencies. More specifically, it was predicted that American instructors would rate most items higher than would Thai speech instructors (items except those relevant to H-III and H-IV below). The hypothesis was tested by comparing the overall means of the two groups for each of the 35 items.

Additionally, five specific factor predictive hypotheses were tested:

H-II. American speech instructors will rate items related to eye contact higher than will Thai speech instructors.

H-III. Thai speech instructors will rate items related to tone of voice higher than will American speech instructors.

H-IV. Thai speech instructors will rate items related to differential language usage higher than will American speech instructors.

H-V. American speech instructors will rate items related to loudness of voice higher than will Thai speech instructors.

H-VI. American speech instructors will rate items related to movement and gestures higher than will Thai speech instructors.

Null Hypothesis

The null hypothesis for this study was that there would be no significant differences between American and Thai speech instructors'

ratings of the level of importance of selected competencies in informational speaking item mean scores.

Confidence Level Accepted

A probability confidence level of .05 was established for this study as minimal warrant for the claim of significant difference between group mean ratings.

CHAPTER 3

RESULTS AND INFERENCES

The results of the various analyses related to the hypotheses and other comparisons are covered in this chapter, organized into the following three sections: general hypothesis, specific hypotheses, and incidental or exploratory findings.

General Hypothesis

Hypothesis I

The general hypothesis predicted that the American instructors would rate most items higher than would the Thai speech instructors. The mean ratings for each group for each item were analyzed by t-test comparison, and the one-tailed test results are presented in Table 1. Additionally, two-tailed p-values are also shown for all comparisons not predicted in hypotheses II-VI for the analysis of incidental findings subsequently. Significant p-Values are underlined.

Table 1
t-Test Comparison of 35 Items for
American (Amr.) and Thai Speech Instructors

Item	Competency Statement	Mean Amr.	Thai	t-Value	p-Value(s) one-tail	two-tail
I.	Selection of topic					
1.	A topic of potential interest to the audience	6.2	5.2	1.44	.094	.187
2.	A topic appropriate to the audience	6.4	5.2	1.90	.047	.094
3.	The speaker has some competence in the topic	6.0	5.8	.34	.370	.740

Item	Competency Statement	Mean Amr.	Thai	t-Value	p-Value(s) one-tail	two-tail
4.	A topic of interest to the speaker	5.6	5.0	.51	.279	.557
5.	Ability of speaker to distinguish purpose (e.g. to inform rather than persuade, entertain etc.)	5.4	5.2	.32	.380	.760
6.	Ability of speaker to analyze audience (interest, topics of importance to, etc.)	6.8	5.6	3.79	<u>.003</u>	<u>.005</u>
7.	Introduce new information to an audience	5.4	5.8	.73	.243	.486
8.	Stating an "old" topic in "new" and novel ways	5.4	4.4	1.77	.058	.115

II. **Speech Preparation and Organization of Content**

Item	Competency Statement	Mean Amr.	Thai	t-Value	p-Value(s) one-tail	two-tail
9.	Evidence of thinking and analysis about the topic and its development	6.0	6.2	.41	.347	.694
10.	Clear lines of reasoning	5.6	6.4	1.71	.063	.126
11.	Incorporation of evidence (relevant facts, statistics, opinions, etc.)	5.6	5.8	.37	.362	.724
12.	Specific examples from the speaker's experiences	5.4	4.8	1.10	.153	.305
13.	Comprehensive treatment of the topic as specified	4.8	4.6	.32	.380	.760
14.	Clear introduction to the topic	6.6	5.6	2.13	<u>.033</u>	.066
15.	Statement of main points early in the speech	4.4	5.4	1.39	.102	.203
16.	Clear divisions of issues and sub-units within the body of the speech	5.4	5.0	.78	.228	.455
17.	Clear conclusion or ending of speech	6.4·	6.0	.78	.228	.455
18.	Individual or unique contribution or treatment of the topic	5.4	4.2	2.19	<u>.030</u>	.060

III. **Delivery**

Item	Competency Statement	Mean Amr.	Thai	t-Value	p-Value(s) one-tail	two-tail
19.	Appropriate language or choice of words (for level of audience and topic)	6.0	5.8	.34	.370	.740

Item	Competency Statement	Mean Amr.	Thai	t-Value	p-Value(s) one-tail	two-tail
20.	Clarity of articulation (pronouncing individual speech sounds)	5.2	4.6	.67	.261	.521
21.	Avoiding pedantic, over-precise or unnatural articulation or usage	6.4	4.4	4.26	.002	.003
22.	Adequate variety of vocal inflection (pitch, stress, not monotone)	5.8	5.2	1.41	.098	.195
23.	Fluency: avoiding verbalized pauses (e.g. "ah," "uh") or prolonged pauses between words or ideas	5.2	4.4	1.26	.121	.242
24.	Loudness appropriate to size of room, noise, or other sound interference	6.0	5.4	1.00	.174	.347
25.	Appropriate use of gestures and/or movement	5.2	5.0	.27	.396	.792
26.	Appropriate (non-distracting) use of notes	5.4	4.4	1.77	.058	.115
27.	Appropriate visual aids (size, colors, use, etc.)	4.8	4.6	.32	.380	.760
28.	Avoiding destracting movements or behaviors	5.6	4.4	1.85	.051	.101
29.	Direct and comprehensive eye contact with audience (not directed to the floor or ceiling, or to the one or a few in the audience)	7.0	5.0	3.65	.003	.005
30.	Sensitive to audience reactions (indications of not understanding or boredom)	6.6	6.2	.63	.273	.545
31.	Speaker appears to be interested in sharing the information (for example, facial displays of feeling are positive rather than negative)	6.4	4.8	2.92	.010	.019
32.	Does not appear to be frightened or anxious about speaking	5.4	4.8	.77	.231	.461

IV. General

Item	Competency Statement	Mean Amr.	Thai	t-Value	p-Value(s) one-tail	two-tail
33.	Appropriate time—not too long or too short for topic and/or occasion	5.4	5.2	.37	.362	.724

Item	Competency Statement	Mean Amr.	Thai	t-Value	p-Value(s) one-tail	two-tail
34.	Adaptation of delivery to size of room or speech setting (loudness and "size" of gestures or behaviors)	5.8	5.4	.63	.273	.545
35.	Credible performance (topic, development, and behavior)	6.2	5.2	1.89	.048	.095

Table 1 reveals that American speech instructors scored higher on 30 of the 35 items; however, only eight of these items (items 2, 6, 14, 18, 21, 29, 31, and 35) reflect significantly higher ratings by Americans. Hence, the general hypothesis was not supported by the data. However, items 8, 26, and 28 failed to reach the .05 confidence level by fractions, and items 1, 10, 15, and 22 demonstrated clear trends within the .10 confidence level. Therefore, the trend is clear in the predicted direction for over half the items hypothesized to be higher for Americans.

Specific Factor Hypotheses

Hypothesis II

Hypothesis II stated that American speech instructors would rate items related to eye contact higher than would Thai speech instructors. Item number 29 of the questionnaire dealt with eye contact. The wording of this item was: "Direct and comprehensive eye contact with audience (not directed to the floor or ceiling, or to the one or a few in the audience)." Table 2 presents the results of the one-tailed t-test comparison of the mean difference in American and Thai instructor ratings of item number 29.

Table 2

t-Test Comparison of Eye Contact Item for
American and Thai Speech Instructors

Nationality	Mean	SD	SD$_{\overline{X}}$	MD	t-Value	p-Value
American	7.0	0	.548	2.0	3.651	.003
Thai	5.0	1.225				

From Table 2 it can be seen that the mean score of American in-
structors was 7.0 while Thai mean was 5.0. The t-Value was 3.651 with
p < .005. A t-distribution of 3.355 is significant at the .005 level,
with df = 8, on a one-tailed test. Hypothesis II was accepted, with a
confidence level of .003.

Hypothesis III

Hypothesis III stated that Thai speech instructors would rate items
related to tone of voice higher than would American speech instructors.
Item number 22 of the questionnaire dealt specifically with tone of
voice. The wording of this item was: "Adequate variety of vocal
inflection (pitch, stress, not monotone)." The results of the one-
tailed t-test for item 22 are presented in Table 3.

Table 3

t-Test comparison of Tone of Voice Item for
American and Thai Speech Instructors

Nationality	Mean	SD	SD$_{\overline{X}}$	MD	t-Value	p-Value
American	5.80	.837	.424	.60	1.414	.097
Thai	5.20	.447				

The mean score of American instructors was 5.8 while the Thai mean
was 5.2. The t-Value was 1.414, which does not reach the .05 confidence

level. Thus, the null hypothesis was accepted, and hypothesis III was rejected. Additionally, the difference in mean scores was not in the predicted direction, with a .60 mean difference trend (p < .10) for the American instructors scoring the item higher than the Thai instructors. Therefore, the rationale for the predicted difference is in question.

Hypothesis IV

Hypothesis IV stated that Thai speech instructors would rate items related to different language usage higher than would American speech instructors. Items number 19 and 21 of the questionnaire dealt with appropriate language usage. The wording of item number 19 was: "Appropriate language or choice of words (for level of audience and topic)." The wording of item number 21 was: "Avoiding pedantic, over-precise or unnatural articulation or usage." The results of the one-tailed t-test for each item separately are presented in Table 4.

Table 4

t-Test Comparison of Language Usage Items for
American and Thai Speech Instructors

Item	Nationality	Mean	SD	$SD_{\overline{x}}$	MD	t-Value	p-Value
19	American	6.00	.707	.583	.20	.343	.370
	Thai	5.80	1.095				
21	American	6.40	.548	.469	2.0	4.264	.002
	Thai	4.40	.894				

For item number 19, the mean score of American instructors was 6.0 while Thai instructors was 5.8. The t-Value of .343 does not reach the minimal confidence level of .05. The difference in mean scores was not

in the predicted direction, however the mean difference was slight
(.20).

For item number 21, the mean score of American instructors was 6.4
while Thai instructors was 4.4. The t-Value was 4.264 with a confidence
level of .002, on a one-tailed test. However, the difference in mean
scores was again in the opposite direction of that predicted. There-
fore, this dimension of the factor as predicted in hypothesis IV, and
the null hypothesis, must both be rejected--lending considerable support
to an alternative hypothesis.

Hypothesis V

Hypothesis V stated that American speech instructors would rate
items related to loudness of voice higher than would Thai speech
instructors. Item number 24 and 34 of the questionnaire dealt with
loudness of voice. The wording of item number 24 was: "Loudness
appropriate to size of room, noise, or other sound interference," and
the wording of item number 34 was: "Adaptation of delivery to size of
room or speech setting (loudness and size of gestures or behaviors)."
The results of the one-tailed t-test for each item are presented in
Table 5.

Table 5

t-Test Comparison of Loudness of Voice Items for
American and Thai Speech Instructors

Item	Nationality	Mean	SD	$SD_{\bar{X}}$	MD	t-Value	p-Value
24	American	6.00	1.000	.60	.60	1.000	.174
	Thai	5.40	.894				
34	American	5.80	.837	.632	.40	.632	.272
	Thai	5.40	1.140				

For item number 24, the mean scores of the American and Thai groups were 6.0 and 5.4 respectively. The t-Value was 1.000 with p > .05, indicating no significant difference between the groups on item 24. For item 34, the mean score of American instructors was 5.8 while Thai instructors' mean was 5.4. The t-Value was .632 with p > .05. Therefore, the null hypothesis was accepted, and hypothesis V was rejected.

Hypothesis VI

Hypothesis VI stated that American speech instructors would rate items related to movement and gestures higher than would Thai speech instructors. Items 25 and 28 of the questionnaire dealt with movement and gestures. The wording of item 25 was: "Appropriate use of gestures and/or movement," and the wording of item 28 was: "Avoiding distracting movements or behaviors." The results of the one-tailed t-test for each item separately are presented in Table 6.

Table 6
t-Test Comparison of Movement and Gestures Items for
American and Thai Speech Instructors

Item	Nationality	Mean	SD	$SD_{\bar{x}}$	MD	t-Value	p-Value
25	American	5.20	1.095	.735	.20	.272	.396
	Thai	5.00	1.225				
28	American	5.60	1.140	.648	1.20	1.852	.050
	Thai	4.40	.894				

For item number 25, the mean score of American instructors was 5.2 while the Thai instructors' mean rating was 5.0. The t-Value was .272 which did not meet the minimum confidence level. For item number 28, the mean score of American instructors was 5.6 while that of the Thai instructors was 4.4. The t-Value was 1.852 with p < .05. A

t-distribution of 1.860 is significant at .05 level, with df = 8, on a one-tailed test. That is, the difference barely reached the minimal confidence level. Therefore, the data for the factor of movement and gestures are equivocal at best, and the null hypothesis of no difference was accepted.

Incidental or Exploratory Findings

Two-tailed probability values for all items for which predictive hypotheses were not formulated were listed in Table 1 (pp. 32-35) to allow discovery of differences between the groups.

From Table 1, it can be seen that the mean scores of American instructors were rated higher than those of the Thai instructors except for items 8, 9, 10, 11, and 15. However, none of these differences were significant.

There were two significant differences between the groups which were not predicted on the basis of factor or item content, with American instructors rating the items higher than did the Thai instructors: item number 6, "ability of the speaker to analyze the audience"--with a highly significant .005 confidence level; and item number 31, "speaker appears to be interested in sharing the information"--with the significance level of .019.

Discussion of the results presented in this section appears in the next and final section of this study.

CHAPTER 4

DISCUSSION AND SUMMARY

This section is organized in this manner: all findings of the study will be discussed in the order of previous sections--general hypothesis (H-I), hypotheses regarding specific factors (H-II - VI), and incidental or exploratory analyses. The discussion will include conclusions and implications, including recommendations for further research. A brief summary of all sections of the report will conclude the section.

Discussion, Conclusions and Recommendations

Hypothesis I

The first and general hypothesis of the study was that the American instructors would rate informational speaking competencies higher than would the Thai instructors. Although the American speech instructors rated 30 of the 35 items higher than the Thai speech instructors, only eight of these items (see Table 1) were significant beyond the .05 level of confidence. Hence, the general hypothesis was rejected. It was not possible to combine the 35 items and compare overall group mean rating because each item may be independent and may not have been of equal value, weight or salience. The finding is qualified severely by not knowing the relative weight of the individual items. The first recommendation for further research, therefore, is the development of a factored competency or evaluation form for use in both research and teaching informational or expository speaking.

The five American and five Thai speech instructors did not differ significantly on the the majority of competency items. However, the

trend is clear, with Americans rating 30 of the 35 items higher than the Thais. Had the items been factored and determined to be of equal weight, then a whole test mean scores comparison would probably reveal a significant difference between the American and Thai groups. The American mean was 201.2, and the Thai mean was 181.0. The t-Value of this difference is 2.086, with a significant p < .035.

The findings of this study must be qualified by small sample size. The Thai sample is the total population of Thai university instructors of speech who hold doctorates from American universities who teach informative speaking. However, the five American instructors in three Oregon universities undoubtedly do not represent the population of American university professors with doctorates in the field who teach informative speaking. Finally, it may well be that Thais who hold doctorates from American universities in rhetorical theory, communication theory or communication methodology do not reflect Thai cultural values, at least to the extent of a randomly selected group of Thais.

However, the differences that were found between the American and Thai speech instructors with respect to their judgment on items 2, 6, 14, 18, 21, 29, 31, and 35 can most likely be attributed to differences in culture rather than other variables such as gender, years of experience, age, and university education. Also, given the normal variability within groups, a significant difference between two groups of five individuals on any individual item is impressive; many of the trends, acknowledged as no difference, may well be significantly different with larger samples.

There are a variety of reasons for suggesting culture as the major contributor in the differences that existed between the two groups'

responses. First, females and males were represented in each group.
Second, both groups had a wide range of teaching experience. Third, all
subjects received their doctorates in the United States. Fourth, the
doctoral degrees in each group were from several different institu-
tions--the five Thai instructors received their Ph.D.
degree from five different institutions, and the five Americans received
their degrees from four different universities.

This discussion is applicable to all findings in the study, and all
subsequent comments in this section are made with these factors and
lines of reasoning in mind.

Hypothesis II

Hypothesis II concerning differences in ratings about eye contact
of speakers with audience members was confirmed at a high level of
confidence (p < .005). To have found no difference would indeed have
been surprising because of the clear cultural differences between
Americans and Thais concerning eye contact. Americans are known for
direct eye contact, and lack of such contact implies very negative
qualities such as "shiftiness," "untrustworthiness," and "dishonesty."
That is not the case in Thailand, and in many other Eastern countries.

Hypothesis III

Hypothesis III predicted that Thai instructors would rate "adequate
variety of vocal inflection (pitch, stress not monotone)" higher than
would American instructors, and no difference was found. However, the
trend was opposite that predicted.

The reasoning which led to the prediction was based on language
differences between Americans and Thais, namely the importance of pitch

and rising and falling inflection in the Thai language tied directly to the meaning difference of otherwise identical sounds. The trend of the data implies the original rationale was flawed. Upon reflection, it could be more soundly reasoned that American speech instructors would be more concerned than Thais about the issue: Thais probably know from the time they learn the language that the phonemes in ma mean either "come," "dog," or "horse" depending entirely on the level of tone when articulated. Pitch differences, in that regard, are taken for granted. However, Americans are not so instructed by their language regarding pitch; the meaning differences between "bear" and "bare," "to" and "too," "know" and "no," and others, are usually distinguished by context, not by pitch differences. Thus, pitch is a much more subtle signal of meaning in English than in Thai, and perhaps there is more latitude for individual differences. A monotone in English often communicates disinterest, so American speech instructors are perhaps more sensitive and concerned about the matter.

Hypothesis IV

Hypothesis IV predicted that Thai speech instructors would rate items related to different language usage higher than would American speech instructors. Two items in the instrument were judged to be related to this hypothesis. Responses to the first item relating to the use of appropriate language or choice of words was found not to be significantly different for the two groups. The responses to the second item relating to the avoidance of pedantic, over-precise or unnatural articulation or usage were significantly different for the two groups, but this was in the opposite direction from that predicted. Even though the ratings of item 19 were not found to be significantly different for

the two groups, an analysis of item 21 showed that Americans rated

language usage significantly higher than did Thai speech instructors.

This finding provides support for an alternative hypothesis; i.e.

American speech instructors are more concerned about pedantic, over-

precise or unnatural articulation in language usage than are Thai speech

instructors. Perhaps the reason is that American language usage is more

casual and less prescriptive than Thai language usage. Also, pedantic

and over-precise usage and articulation may be viewed more negatively by

Americans than by Thais.

Hypothesis V

Hypothesis V predicted that American speech instructors would rate

items related to loudness of voice higher than would Thai speech in-

structors. The American instructors rated the two items in the instru-

ment in the predicted direction, but the differences in ratings were not

significant at the minimum level of confidence. Apparently, the Thai

cultural norm of softness of speech does not apply in public speaking.

Both the American and Thai speech instructors are about equally con-

cerned that student speakers can be heard by members of an audience.

Hypothesis VI

Hypothesis VI predicted that American speech instructors would rate

items related to movement and gestures higher than Thai speech instruc-

tors. Again, the instructors' ratings were in the predicted direction,

but they were not significant. The basis for the prediction was the

different cultural norms in the United States and Thailand about move-

ment and gestures. The reasoning which led to the prediction was prob-

ably flawed by considering the cultural differences regarding movement

rather than the content of the dimensions involved. Item 25 was, "appropriate use of gestures and/or movement," and item 28 was, "avoiding distracting movements or behaviors." It is now quite easy to understand, in light of the evidence and reflection on the issue, that while there might well be differences in what would be regarded as "appropriate" and "distracting," the issue may be about equally important in both cultures.

Incidental or Exploratory Findings

There were only two items, of the 27 comparisons not directly related to hypotheses II to VI, with significant differences between the two groups: item 6, "ability of speaker to analyze audience" (p < .005); and item 31, "speaker appears to be interested in sharing information," (p < .019). The American group scored higher than the Thai group on both comparisons.

There is no apparent cultural difference between the two groups to account for the difference on item 6 except for the probability that Americans might be expected to speak to a far greater variety of audiences than would Thai students. That is, the cultural restraints about speaking in public are probably less in the United States as compared to Thailand, and the opportunities are probably greater. If that is the case, then audience analysis would be more relevant to Americans than Thais. This finding was among the highest confidence levels of difference in all of the analyses, thus deserves further research.

The difference found between the two groups on item 31 is more easily understood in terms of cultural differences. Passivity in either facial expression, posture or behavior is not rewarded in the United States while an active attitude and evidence of "paying attention" are

rewarded, particularly in an educational environment. Passiveness is not a negative characteristic in Thailand, and noncommittal, passive expression and behavior are often rewarded. Therefore, the difference between the two groups could have been predicted.

On all of the other comparisons, the American instructors' mean ratings were higher than the Thai instructors' mean ratings (although not significantly so) except for five items: items 7, 9, 10, 11, and 15. While all five may have simply been the result of random variation in scores, three of the five indicate a pattern which deserves discussion.

The Thai group mean was higher than the American group mean on the only three items which treated dimensions of critical thinking, analysis, and the use of supporting evidence. The trend is interesting primarily because Westerners in general and Americans in particular are known for stressing analytical and critical thinking, whereas Eastern cultures are thought to be more "process aware"; less concerned with logic, reasoning and evidence than with awareness of "process" sectors which account for feelings and behavior. The difference between the groups is most pronounced on item 10, "clear lines of reasoning."

In terms of cultural differences, then, there appears to be good reason to predict that American speech instructors would score such items higher than would Thai instructors. Perhaps this is one clear example where American higher education has had an impact on the Thai instructors; simply because analytical and critical skills are so highly valued in American higher education, and are not in direct conflict with Thai values, these "lessons" would have been learned well by Thais involved in graduate education in the United States. Or perhaps cultural

myth is involved; it may be that Eastern cultures value critical and analytical thinking even more than Western cultures, but simply embrace different definitions. Whatever the reason, these findings deserve further research.

Summary, Conclusion, and Recommendation of the Study

This study was designed to investigate the assumed differences between five American and five Thai speech instructors with respect to their judgment of the level of importance of selected competencies in informational speaking. On the one hand, it might promote a better understanding, in American graduate programs, of the needs of foreign graduate students. On the other hand, it might enhance a critical attitude on the part of foreign graduate students in the United States when the subject matter is culture-specific.

The general hypothesis or hypothesis I predicted that American instructors would rate most items higher than would Thai Speech instructors. There were also five predictive hypotheses, and several other exploratory comparisons were made.

The subjects for this study were five Americans and five Thais who had completed doctorates in speech communication in the United States and were currently teaching informative speaking courses. The Americans were teaching at Oregon State University, the University of Oregon, and Western Oregon State College. The Thais were teaching at Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok.

The instrument developed and used in this study was a 35-item Likert-type device designed to measure speech instructors' ratings of the importance of selected competencies in informational speaking. The

subjects were asked to add items which they thought should be added to the list. In fact, none were added. The internal consistency of the instrument was found to be 0.91, indicating a high degree of reliability.

The t-test was employed to determine the differences between American and Thai speech instructors with respect to their ratings of the level of importance of selected competencies in informational speaking. The .05 level of confidence was established as the minimal criterion for acceptance of a difference as significant, i.e., for acceptance of a difference as other than chance variability.

The results of the study revealed that when individual items were analyzed using the one-tailed t-test, Americans tended to rate items higher than did Thai speech instructors, but the higher ratings were significant for only eight of 35 items (see Table 1, pp. 32-35). However, when the two-tailed t-test was utilized, only four of 35 items were found to yield significant differences: ability to analyze audience (#6), language usage (#21), eye contact (#29), and apparent interest in sharing information (#31).

Definite conclusions regarding the differences in ratings between American and Thai speech instructors on the level of importance of selected competencies in informational speaking cannot be drawn from the results because of the limitations within which the study was accomplished. Additional research is needed. The questionnaire should be further tested by submitting it to a larger sample of speech instructors for their judgment as to the validity of the individual items, and the salience or relative weighting of the dimensions and factors should be determined.

The instrument should be administered to a larger random sample of American instructors, and the Thai group could be increased by broadening the criteria for selection, and perhaps including Thai graduate students in Speech Communication. Since the instrument was administered to a small non-random sample of American and Thai speech instructors, differences that were found could not be generalized to the populations represented. Further, the results could not have been generalized, even if the causes for the differences were known, because the relative weightings of the factors were not known.

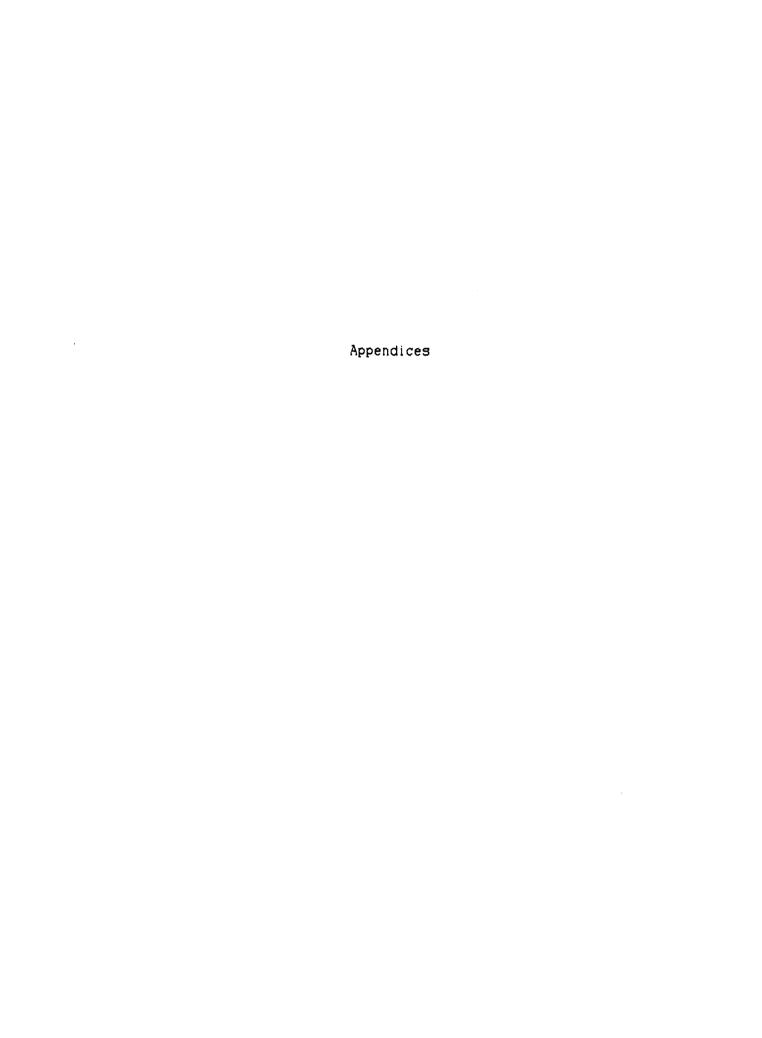Within the limitations of the study, analyses revealed considerable evidence of differences between the groups which can reasonably be attributed to differences in the cultures of Thailand and the United States. These differences may have clear implications for the relevance of educational programs in the United States involving students from Eastern cultures, particularly when the subject matter is Western-culture-specific.

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Appendices

TO: Chulalongkorn University Speech Communication Faculty

FROM: Sukkarnya Kulthongkham, M. A. Candidate, Oregon State University

RE: COMPARABLE GROUP CHECK-OFF FORM.

My Master's thesis research needs to establish a small group of faculty who have competence in one or more areas of Speech Communication. Below are a list of courses offered by Chulalongkorn University. Please check those courses where you feel competent to teach.

Courses	Competent to Teach
Public Speaking	_____
Oral Interpretation	_____
Voice and Articulation	_____
Bases of Speech Production	_____
Speech Composition	_____
Interpersonal Communication	_____
Discussion, Conference and Parliamentary Procedure	_____
Argumentation and Debate	_____
Speech for Business	_____
Introduction to Speech Communication Research	_____
Rhetorical Theory Criticism	_____
Persuasive Speaking	_____
Psychology of Speech and the Audience	_____
Intercultural Communication	_____
Speech Communication in Organizations	_____
Principles of Language Behavior	_____
Individual Study	_____
Speech Communication Practicum	_____

Part of my research will compare responses of a group of faculty selected on the basis of the check-off form above with a comparable group of faculty at a university in the United States. The following data will allow matching the groups.

1. Highest degree held.   Ph.D. ____   M.A. ____   B.A. ____
   Awarded by _____
                      (University or College)
2. Your sex: Female ____   Male ____
3. Years you have taught Speech Communication in Thailand after your highest degree was awarded _____.
4. Total years of teaching, including Graduate Teaching Assistant teaching: _____
5. Area or areas of specialization:
   a)_____

   b)_____

   c)_____

ESTABLISHING COMPETENCY LEVELS ON VARIOUS ASPECTS OF
INFORMATIONAL SPEAKING

Research Project by: Sukkarnya Kulthongkham

Purpose.of Questionnaire: To determine the opinions of professors in
Speech

                           Communication departments about various
aspects of

                           informational speaking.

Instructions for Completing the Questionnaire

    The questionnaire asks your opinion on the level of importance for
each of the 35 statements relating to competencies in informational
speaking. Please indicate your judgment for each of the 35 items, and
add items which you think should be added to the list.

Rating Scale

    Please make an evaluation for each of the items below on a
continuum from "none or no" importance, to "absolute or crucial"
importance. The positions are indicated by numbers, thus:

```
        no                                              crucial
    importance    1    2    3    4    5    6    7    importance
```

For example. assume one of the items was "use of statistics as
evidence."

    - If you thought statistics were of no importance circle the 1;

    - if slight or of little importance, circle the 2;

    - if somewhat less than average importance, the 3;

    - if average importance, the 4;

    - if somewhat more than average importance, the 5;

    - if considerably or very important. the 6;

    - if absolutely or crucially important, the 7.

    For this task. assume that all items refer to instruction related to
informational speaking: where the purpose of speaking is to inform the
audience rather than other purposes such as entertainment, ceremony or
persuasion. A speech to inform could include one to explain, describe
or demonstrate (a process on procedure. for example) or to inquire into
a problem.

```
                    no                                          crucial
                importance    1    2    3    4    5    6    7   importance
```

I. Selection of topic

    1. A topic of potential interest to the audience   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

    2. A topic appropriate to the audience   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

    3. The speaker has some competence in the topic   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

    4. A topic of interest to the speaker   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

    5. Ability of speaker to distinguish purpose
(e.g. to inform rather than persuade,
entertain etc.)   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

    6. Ability of speaker to analyze audience
(interest, topics of importance to, etc.)   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

    7. Introduce new information to an audience   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

    8. Stating an "old" topic in "new" and novel ways   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

List other(s): _____

    _____

    _____   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

    _____

    _____

    _____   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

	no importance	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	crucial importance

II. Speech Preparation and Organization of Content

9. Evidence of thinking and analysis about the topic and its development   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

10. Clear lines of reasoning   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

11. Incorporation of evidence (relevant facts, statistics, opinions, etc.)   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

12. Specific examples from the speaker's experiences   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

13. Comprehensive treatment of the topic as specified   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

14. Clear introduction to the topic   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

15. Statement of main points early in the speech   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

16. Clear divisions of issues and sub-units within the body of the speech   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

17. Clear conclusion or ending of speech   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

18. Individual or unique contribution or treatment of the topic   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

List other(s): _____

_____

_____   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

_____

_____

_____   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

III. Delivery

19. Appropriate language or choice of words
    (for level of audience and topic)   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

20. Clarity of articulation (pronouncing individual
    speech sounds)   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

21. Avoiding pedantic, over-precise or unnatural
    articulation or usage   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

22. Adequate variety of vocal inflection (pitch,
    stress, not monotone)   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

23. Fluency: avoiding verbalized pauses (e.g. "ah",
    "uh") or prolonged pauses between words or
    ideas   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

24. Loudness appropriate to size of room, noise, or
    other sound interference   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

25. Appropriate use of gestures and/or movement   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

26. Appropriate (non-distracting) use of notes   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

27. Appropriate visual aids (size, colors, use,
    etc.)   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

28. Avoiding distracting movements or behaviors   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

29. Direct and comprehensive eye contact with
    audience (not directed to the floor or ceiling,
    or to the one or a few in the audience)   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

30. Sensitive to audience reactions (indications of
    not understanding or boredom)   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

31. Speaker appears to be interested in sharing the
    information (for example, facial displays of
    feeling are positive rather than negative)   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

32. Does not appear to be frightened or anxious
    about speaking   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

List other(s): _____

_____

_____   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

```
             no                                        crucial
        importance   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   importance
```

IV. <u>General</u>

   33. Appropriate time--not too long or too short for
       topic and/or occasion   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

   34. Adaptation of delivery to size of room or
       speech setting (loudness and "size" of
       gestures or behaviors)   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

   35. Credible performance (topic, development, and
       behavior)   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

List other(s): _____

               _____

               _____   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

                 _____

               _____

               _____   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

                 _____

               _____

               _____   1 2 3 4 5 6 7