

## ระดับความสามารถทางภาษาศาสตร์ในการสื่อสารบนพื้นฐานกรอบอ้างอิง ความสามารถทางภาษาของสหภาพยุโรป ของนักศึกษาชั้นปี 4 หลักสูตรภาษาอังกฤษ เพื่อการสื่อสารสากล

### Communicative Linguistic Competence of English for International Communication Undergraduates on the Basis of the Common European Framework of Reference for Language

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## บทคัดย่อ

การศึกษานี้มีวัตถุประสงค์ เพื่อศึกษาระดับสมรรถนะ ในการสื่อสารด้านภาษาศาสตร์ การสื่อสารบนพื้นฐานกรอบอ้างอิงความสามารถทางภาษาของสหภาพยุโรปของนักศึกษา สาขาวิชาภาษาอังกฤษเพื่อการสื่อสารสากล คณะบริหารธุรกิจและศิลปศาสตร์ มหาวิทยาลัยเทคโนโลยีราชมงคลล้านนา จังหวัดเชียงใหม่ ผู้เข้าร่วมวิจัย คือ นักศึกษาระดับชั้นปี 4 จำนวน 47 คน ผู้วิจัยได้เก็บรวบรวมข้อมูลโดยใช้แบบสอบถาม ประกอบด้วย 3 ส่วน ส่วนแรกคือ ข้อมูลประชากร ส่วนที่สองคือ ระดับสมรรถนะในการสื่อสารด้านภาษาศาสตร์ของนักศึกษาซึ่งได้แก่ ภาษาศาสตร์ทั่วไป คำศัพท์ ความถูกต้องทางไวยากรณ์ การควบคุมคำศัพท์ การควบคุมเสียง และการควบคุมการสะกดการเขียน ส่วนที่สามเป็นคำถามปลายเปิดที่เกี่ยวข้องกับความต้องการของนักศึกษาในการพัฒนาสมรรถนะในการสื่อสารด้านภาษาศาสตร์ ซึ่งผู้วิจัยได้วิเคราะห์ คำานวนหาค่าเฉลี่ย และส่วนเบี่ยงเบนมาตรฐาน

ผลการวิจัยพบว่า ระดับสมรรถนะในการสื่อสารด้านภาษาศาสตร์ของนักศึกษา โดยเฉลี่ยอยู่ในระดับดี ( $\bar{X} = 3.52$ ) โดยสองอันดับแรก ได้แก่ คำศัพท์ ( $\bar{X} = 3.65$ ) การควบคุมคำศัพท์ ( $\bar{X} = 3.64$ ) ในขณะที่ความสามารถสามด้าน ที่มีผลอยู่ในระดับเดียวกัน ได้แก่ ภาษาศาสตร์ทั่วไป ความถูกต้องทางไวยากรณ์ และการควบคุมเสียง ความสามารถที่น้อยที่สุดที่นักศึกษากังวลคือ การควบคุมการสะกดการเขียน นอกจากนี้ นักศึกษาส่วนใหญ่ต้องการที่จะปรับปรุงความถูกต้องทางไวยากรณ์ ก่อนที่จะฝึกประสบการณ์วิชาชีพ ซึ่งการพัฒนาจะช่วยให้นักศึกษาสามารถพัฒนาการควบคุม การสะกดการเขียนได้เช่นกัน สำหรับข้อเสนอแนะที่พบมากที่สุดคือ จัดกิจกรรมกับชาวต่างชาติ เพื่อให้ให้นักศึกษาได้พัฒนาทักษะการสื่อสาร และ จะทำให้มีความมั่นใจในการใช้ภาษาอังกฤษในช่วงเวลาการฝึกประสบการณ์วิชาชีพที่ดีขึ้น

**คำสำคัญ:** สมรรถนะในการสื่อสาร, สมรรถนะในการสื่อสารด้านภาษาศาสตร์, กรอบอ้างอิงความสามารถทางภาษาของสหภาพยุโรป

## Abstract

This study aimed to examine the level of the communicative linguistic competence on the basis of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages of the English for International Communication (EIC) program students, Faculty of Business Administration and Liberal Arts, Rajamangala University of Technology Lanna, Chiang Mai, Thailand. The participants were 47 EIC senior students who enrolled in the internship program in 2019 academic year. The data were collected by the questionnaire including three parts. The first part was the demographic data. The second part was a five point- rating scale items of communicative linguistic competence which were divided into six parts including the general linguistic range, the vocabulary range, the grammatical accuracy, the vocabulary control, the phonological control, and the orthography control. The third part was the open-ended questions, which involve the need of EIC senior students to improve communicative linguistic competence. The data were analyzed by mean and standard deviation.

The results revealed that the overall linguistic competence of EIC senior students was all at the A2 level based on the CEFR framework ( $\bar{X} = 3.52$ ). The core competency that EIC senior students are good at was vocabulary range ( $\bar{X} = 3.65$ ), followed by vocabulary control ( $\bar{X} = 3.64$ ). Moreover, most of them wanted to improve the grammatical accuracy. In addition, the most common suggestion was to participate activities with foreigners so as to enable EIC senior students to improve their English skills and gain more confidence to speak English while they are student-interns.

**Keywords:** Communicative linguistic competence, Communicative competence, Common European Framework of Reference for Languages

## Introduction

Today's world is changing with globalization as a result of information technology development. The changes in the global economy caused many countries in the world to rely on each other and have more connections. Communication with the outside world has become a necessity which makes the role of English more important. Therefore, learning English is important and essential in everyday life because it is an important tool for communication, education, seeking knowledge, occupation, creating and understanding of the culture, and vision of the world community. In particular, many countries have declared that English is an official language and the language of their own country. Pushpanathan (2013) mentioned that the importance of English language in the globalization influences people around the world, and the mobility of people around the world has brought about the standardization of the English language to measure the language level. The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), an international standard that describes the level of language proficiency has been widely accepted in Europe and has increased its recognition throughout the world. The Council of Europe (2018) stated that the CEFR was established by the European Council in 1990 as a part to

support collaboration between language teachers in all European countries. The main purpose of the CEFR is to provide teaching methods and assessments that apply to all languages in Europe including English in the same direction. The CEFR divides the language expertise into six levels for use in the language level measurement: A1 (starter), A2 (elementary), B1 (intermediate), B2 (upper-intermediate), C1 (advanced), C2 (mastery). Most European ministries have identified CEFR-based goals for all students who have completed secondary schools such as level B2 for foreign languages as their first language and level B1 for foreign languages as their second language. Primarily, using CEFR in a resume for work reasons is the best way for studying abroad and working abroad because CEFR can identify criteria to indicate the skill level, show standard test scores, and examples of experience using language skills. Moreover, one part that CEFR places an importance on is communicative competence (CC).

The view of competence in the CEFR does not come only from applied linguistics but also applied psychology and sociopolitical approaches. Hymes (1966) states that communicative competence is the knowledge and ability to use the language to communicate appropriately according to the situation which he has applied from the concept of competence

and performance of Chomsky (1965). Moreover, Hymes (1966) also gave a reason to expand that in human communication, there is not only the knowledge in the rules of language but the speaker needs to have the knowledge and understanding about the social condition and culture of the interlocutor, especially, the knowledge about values, beliefs, and motivations of communication partners as well as having to know the social norms and principles of interpersonal interaction of the community. According to Hymes (1972), CC can be divided into four competencies which consisting of linguistic/grammatical competence, discourse competence, sociolinguistic competence, and strategic competence. For this reason, CC has become essential in the globalization because of having good CC level criteria plays an important role in various aspects.

For example, students might have the opportunity to get an international job, study abroad, work with international organizations, and increase chances to get a good position.

From the above mentioned that English is an official language to communicate around the world. Thailand is a member of the ASEAN Community (AEC) which is the integration of ASEAN member countries for activities in terms of economy, society, culture, technology, science, and administration.

Since each country uses a different language, English must be used to communicate with each other. When communication between countries increases, the competition in the labor market is increasing as well. This means that English is used all over the world making each institution trying to promote students to train in an international organization and study exchange. Due to Thai education focuses on learning in the classroom, students have problems in communication when going to work. Wuttiwongsa (2014) stated that English language competencies of Thai students were at a low level comparing to the potential of other national students. Hence, they need to improve and develop English language competencies urgently.

According to the finding from these studies, the problems are mostly related to the linguistic competence. The English for International Communication (EIC) program, Faculty of Liberal Art, Rajamangala University of Technology Lanna is the program that involves the use of English language skills. The EIC students require to pass the test which examines linguistic competence such as grammar, vocabulary, reading and listening. However, most TOEIC scores of EIC senior students (38%) were equivalent to elementary proficiency. From the TOEIC result, it seems that they had a problem with linguistic competence. More

importantly, they have to use linguistic competence when attending an internship. The reason was that the good level of linguistic competence enables students to work in international organizations smoothly and become more proficient in language. In addition, this competence will give them more confidence in using the English language, and they will gain more opportunities to work. Moreover, Talif and Noor (2009) described that language function at workplaces require the high level of English skills which undergraduates have to perform before going to work. Consequently, the objective of this research was to find the level of the communicative linguistic competence of the EIC senior on the basis of the CEFR framework so as to develop and increase the level of communicative linguistic competence in accordance with the needs of the labor market.

### Research Objectives

This research project aimed to examine the level of communicative linguistic competence on the basis of CEFR framework. This study was conducted with 47 EIC senior students, Faculty of Business Administration and Liberal Arts, Rajamangala University of Technology Lanna, Chiang Mai, Thailand.

## Literature Review

### Communicative competence's definition

Communicative competence was first defined by Chomsky (1965) which distinguishes between competence and performance. He identified these differences that the competence refers to the linguistic system whereas performance mainly concerns the psychological factors that are involved in the perception and production of speech. However, communicative competence defined by Hymes (1972), involves a sociolinguist concerned with language use in social interactions, subsequently used the term communicative competence to provide a broader perspective of language usage. Speakers need to know not only grammatical structures but also norms of usage and appropriateness in a given social context. Apart from that, Hymes (1972) explained his theory which involved four aspects necessary for communicative competence: possibility, feasibility, appropriateness, and occurrence. According to the argument of Chomsky and Hymes, Savignon (1983) described that communicative competence is the ability to function in a truly communicative setting. The used information to communicate must be adapted from both linguistic and paralinguistic (the language that expresses the feelings of that person).

Canale (1983) identified communicative competence as a synthesis language system (a language that are synthesized extensive vocabulary) that language user must have. Thus, they would be able to use knowledge and expertise in the real situations. Nevertheless, Berns (1990), a sociolinguist, who has focused on norms in the teaching of English as an international language, stresses that the definition of a communicative competence appropriate for learners requires an understanding of the sociocultural contexts of language use. In addition, the communicative competence requires an understanding of sociocultural differences in styles of learning. Curricular innovation is best in the learning development, but the involvement of classroom teachers is important as well.

From the discussion above, there are various terms of communicative competence. Chomsky (1965) focused on the linguistic theory which claimed that competence refers to the linguistic system. However, some researchers argued that communicative competence should include the sociolinguistic aspect. For instance, Hymes (1972) revealed that communicative competence does not only present the grammatical competence but also the sociolinguistic competence. As Sivignon (1983) defined that communicative competence as the ability that can

communicate in the real work environment. This means that her point is related to Hymes' view (1972) as no one can communicate in real life situation with only grammatical competence. Moreover, Canale (1983) defined that communicative competence as a synthesis of an underlying of knowledge and skill needed for communication. This view agreed with Hymes (1972) that communicative competence includes various competencies. In addition, Berns (1990) described that learners require an understanding of the sociocultural contexts of language use which is consistent to the sociolinguistic competence of Hymes' view (1972). Since then, the concept has developed over years and different models of communicative competence have been offered by different researchers.

### **The significance of communicative competence influence to the workplace**

Communicative competences were regarded as the important skills in the workplaces by the following researchers. Firstly, Crosling and Ward (2002) stated that the employees they investigated require to have strong oral communication skills and that they would be disadvantaged in the workplace if they lack these skills. Therefore, the main recommendations for

undergraduate curriculum are that students require to have experience in a range of oral communication. By running concurrently with such experiences, students require additional communication skills. Secondly, McAll (2003), a sociolinguistic perspective, discussed about the oral and written communication in the workplace and the relationship between different kinds of language use in the aerospace industry which there are operating instructions, process sheets and technical terms all in English. In order for English as a Second Language (ESL) engineers to advance into the areas where language use is most prevalent, they are required to have attained not only sufficient skills in their business but also a high level of proficiency in English. He explained that no one can deny the importance of language competence in order to function in areas of the labor market where language is necessary to the work process. More importantly, he also confirmed that language competence can increase chances of gaining or maintaining access to viable employment. Eventually, Dannels and Darling (2003) found in their surveys of workplace oral communication business, engineering has intensive communication, not necessarily in formal speaking events, but interpersonally, in small groups, and on teams almost daily. Moreover, researchers

also discovered that the most part of oral performances are conversational and informal. Thus, it can be seen clearly that communicative competence is one of the significant skills needed in the workplace.

### **The significance of linguistic competence influence to the workplace**

Many researchers and scholars mentioned about how linguistic competences are vital in the workplaces. First of all, Talif and Noor (2009) clearly indicated that speaking skill is the skill which is mostly needed to enable graduates to perform efficiently and effectively at the workplace. A majority of language function at workplaces require a high degree of speaking skill, and the writing skill is also rated highly. Besides, Siiskonen (2015) analyzed that language function is a source of power in an organization. She found that language proficiency gains employees have more encouragement and confidence to work independently. Importantly, language proficiency can change to power at the workplace. Moreover, she also suggested that the development of language ability can be seen as a tool of promoting intercultural communication in the organizations, and language skills can potentially provide employees with competitive advantages

## The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR)

As shown in Table 1, the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) is an international standard that describes the level of language proficiency. The CEFR was established by the European Council in 1990 as a part to support collaboration between language teachers in all European countries. The CEFR divides the language expertise into six levels for use in the language level measurement: A1 (starter),

A2 (elementary), B1 (intermediate), B2 (upper-intermediate), C1 (advanced), C2 (mastery).

According to Table 1, the basic user starts with A1 as students can understand and use familiar everyday expressions, and also interact in a simple way. For the proficient user at level C2, students should understand with ease virtually everything heard or read, and summarize information from different spoken and written sources. Moreover, they should express themselves fluently and precisely even in more complex situations.

**Table 1** The Council of Europe (1990)

CEFR Global Scale		
Language user	Level	Descriptors
Proficient user	C2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Can understand with ease virtually everything heard or read.</li> <li>- Can summarize information from different spoken and written sources, reconstructing arguments and accounts in a coherent presentation.</li> <li>- Can express him/herself spontaneously, very fluently and precisely, differentiating finer shades of meaning even in more complex situations</li> </ul>
	C1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Can understand a wide range of demanding, longer texts, and recognize implicit meaning.</li> <li>- Can express him herself fluently and spontaneously it out much obvious searching for expressions.</li> <li>- Can use language flexibly and effectively for social, academic and professional purposes.</li> <li>- Can produce clear, well-structured, detailed text on complex subjects, showing controlled use of organizational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices.</li> </ul>

CEFR Global Scale		
Language user	Level	Descriptors
Independent user	B2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Can understand the main ideas of complex text on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in his/her field of specialization.</li> <li>- Can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneously that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible without strain for either party.</li> <li>- Can produce clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects and explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.</li> </ul>
	B1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc.</li> <li>- Can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken. Can produce simple connected text on topics which are familiar or of personal interest.</li> <li>- Can describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes &amp; ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans.</li> </ul>
Basic user	A2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment).</li> <li>- Can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters.</li> <li>- Can describe in simple terms aspects of his/her background, immediate environment and matters in areas BASIC of immediate need.</li> </ul>
	A1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Can understand and use familiar everyday expressions and very basic phrases aimed at the satisfaction of needs of a concrete type.</li> <li>- Can introduce him/herself and others and can ask and answer questions about personal details such as where he/she lives, people he/she knows and things he/she has.</li> <li>- Can interact in a simple way provided the other person talks slowly and clearly and is prepared to help.</li> </ul>

### The linguistic competence in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR)

The view of competence in the CEFR does not come solely from applied linguistics but also applied psychology and sociopolitical approaches. However, the different competence models developed in applied linguistics since the early 1980s did influence the CEFR. Although the European Council organized competence models in

different ways, in general these models shared four main aspects: strategic competence; linguistic competence; pragmatic competence (discourse and actional competences), and socio-cultural competence. The linguistic competence was divided into six aspects which are general range, vocabulary range, grammatical accuracy, vocabulary control, phonological control, and orthography control. The descriptions of these six aspects are given in Table 2 as follows:

**Table 2** The Descriptions of Linguistic Competence

The linguistic competence		
No.	Aspect	Description
1	General range	This aspect concerns about memorized phrases to a very wide range of language to formulate thoughts precisely, give emphasis, differentiate and eliminate ambiguity.
2	Vocabulary range	This aspect concerns the breadth and variety of words and expressions used. Vocabulary range is generally acquired through using in everyday widely.
3	Grammatical accuracy	Focus on grammatical forms whilst articulating thought. This is difficult because when formulating thoughts or performing more demanding tasks, the user/learner has to devote the majority of their mental processing capacity to fulfilling the task.
4	Vocabulary control	This aspect concerns the user/learner's ability to choose an appropriate expression to unfamiliar situations. As competence increases, such ability is driven increasingly by association in the form of lexical chunks.
5	Phonological control	The focus is on how much effort is required from the interlocutor to decode the speaker's message including controlling sounds, prosodic features etc.
6	Orthography control	This aspect concerns the ability to copy, spell and use layout and punctuation.

## Research Methodology

The research approach in this study was the quantitative approach by using the questionnaire. The advantage of using the questionnaire is that the respondents can express their perspective toward their abilities without concerning. This study was to measure the level of communicative linguistic competence of EIC senior students who studying in English for International Communication program at Rajamangala University of Technology Lanna Chiang Mai and to explore the way how EIC senior students improve communicative linguistic competence before doing an internship. The participants were 47 senior students who study English for International Communication program, Liberal of Art Faculty, Rajamangala University of Technology Lanna Chiang Mai who were attending an internship program in the second semester. The sample and sampling technique of this study was a purposive sampling method. The TOEIC test that they have done covers grammar, vocabulary, reading, listening, which all these skills were in the linguistic competence, whereas most of participants (38%) had a TOEIC score of 255-400 which was less than half of the total score. It seems that they have the linguistic competence problem with corresponds to

the research approach. Moreover, researchers used the questionnaire as a research instrument for collecting data.

## Data collection

The questionnaire was divided into three parts as follows:

### Part I: General information

This part of the questionnaire was participants' demographic data. There were three items in this part such as gender, class, and proposed internship places.

### Part II: The level of communicative linguistic competence of EIC senior students

In this part, respondents had to rate their communicative linguistic competence level. This questionnaire aimed to find the level of linguistic competence. There were 42 items in this part which adopted from the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages. It also was subdivided into six parts: the first part was the general range (9 questions), for example, "I can express myself clearly without restriction what I want to say." The second part was the vocabulary range (10 questions), for example, "I can understand and use the specific vocabulary in my field, when discussing with other specialists." The third part was the grammatical accuracy (6 questions), for example, "Sometimes, I make a

little flaw in sentence structure, but I can correct it when I use it again.” The fourth part was the vocabulary control (4 questions), for example, “I get confused and choose the incorrect vocabulary when communicating, but this is not the problem of conversation.” The fifth part was the phonological control (10 questions), for example, “I can generally use appropriate intonation, place stress correctly and articulate individual sounds clearly.” The last part was the orthography control (3 questions), for example, “I can write the message which is easy to understand and follows standard of layout, spelling, and punctuation correctly, but probably showing signs of mother tongue language.”

### Part III: The need of EIC senior students to improve communicative linguistic competence

The third part was two open-ended questions about the need for language function that students would like to improve. The first question was “Which part of communicative linguistic competences would you like to improve?”, and “What activities or courses do you want to learn for supporting the linguistic competence?” was the second question.

### Data analysis

In this study, the data was analyzed by using the statistical analysis. There were

various instruments that were used for analyzing data. The first part of the questionnaire was analyzed by the percentage to estimate the data. The second part of the questionnaire used the mean and the standard deviation (S.D.). The used scale in the second part of the questionnaire was to specify the data based on a five-point of Likert (1932) as shown in Table 3 and to measure the level of communicative linguistic competence of EIC senior students on the basis of the CEFR. The Likert scale meanings are as follow:

**Table 3** The Criterion Interpretation of Average from the Level of Likert Scale (1932)

Scale	Mean range	Interpretation
5	4.20 - 5.00	Very good
4	3.40 - 4.19	Good
3	2.60 - 3.39	Moderate
2	1.80 - 2.59	Low
1	1.00 - 1.79	Very low

Furthermore, the open-ended questions in the third part were to gain insights into the competence that students wanted to improve most and to find activities or courses they wanted to learn. Researchers collected the qualitative data; therefore, the data must be categorized in the themes and subthemes. Then, researchers counted the frequency of the answer and converted the data into percentages.

## Results

The findings were presented the communicative linguistic competence level of EIC senior students and their needs about the language function that they would like to improve by using a questionnaire which was divided into three main parts: demographic data, communicative linguistic competence in the workplace and open-ended questions.

### 1. The average of communicative linguistic competence of EIC senior students

According to Table 4, the average of linguistic competence of EIC senior students were at the good level ( $\bar{x}$  =3.52). The core competency that they are good at were vocabulary range ( $\bar{x}$  =3.65) followed by vocabulary control ( $\bar{x}$  =3.64). While three competencies including general range ( $\bar{x}$  =3.46), grammatical accuracy ( $\bar{x}$  =3.46), and phonological control ( $\bar{x}$  =3.46) were at the same level. The least competency was orthography control ( $\bar{x}$  =3.43)

**Table 4** The Average of Communicative Linguistic Competence of EIC Senior Students

Items	Aspects	Mean	SD	Level
1.	Vocabulary range	3.65	0.77	Good
2.	Vocabulary control	3.64	0.84	Good
3.	General range	3.46	0.81	Good
4.	Grammatical accuracy	3.46	0.92	Good
5.	Phonological control	3.46	0.79	Good
6.	Orthography control	3.43	0.79	Good
Total	3.52	0.44	Good	

#### 1.1 The data of vocabulary range

According to Table 5, the overall of the vocabulary range of EIC senior students were good ( $\bar{x}$  =3.65). Most of them were good in using vocabulary for coping with simple needs ( $\bar{x}$  = 4.02). It shows that they had a good range of vocabulary related to familiar topics and everyday situation ( $\bar{x}$  =3.85). They also had a sufficient

vocabulary for the description of basic communicative needs ( $\bar{x}$  =3.81). While a range of vocabulary that related to their field and general topics were in the moderate level ( $\bar{x}$  =3.36). The least competence of the vocabulary range was that they were able to create the appropriate collocations of many words according to the contexts ( $\bar{x}$  =3.32).

Table 5 Vocabulary Range

Item	Questions	Mean	SD	Likert
1.	I can understand and use the specific vocabulary in my field, when discussing with other specialists.	3.47	0.62	Good
2.	I have a good range of vocabulary which is related to my field and general topics.	3.36	0.85	Moderate
3.	I can choose to use a variety of vocabulary, but lexical gaps can still cause confusion in vocabulary usage.	3.64	0.67	Good
4.	I can create the appropriate collocations of many words according to the contexts.	3.32	0.73	Moderate
5.	I can understand and use the specific vocabulary in my field but have problems with the specific vocabulary in other fields.	3.72	0.77	Good
6.	I have a good range of vocabulary related to familiar topics and everyday situations.	3.85	0.78	Good
7.	I am confused in using difficult vocabulary; therefore, I need to use similar words to communicate in everyday situations.	3.77	0.79	Good
8.	I use limited vocabulary which is words involving familiar situations and topics.	3.55	0.65	Good
9.	I have a sufficient vocabulary for the description of basic communicative needs.	3.81	0.74	Good
10.	I have a sufficient vocabulary for coping with simple needs.	4.02	0.85	Good
Total	3.65	0.77	Good	

### 1.2 The data of vocabulary control

According to Table 6, the overall of the vocabulary control of EIC senior students were good ( $\bar{x}$  =3.64). It can be seen that most of them were at a good level in using a limited vocabulary to deal with routine needs ( $\bar{x}$  =3.83). Moreover, they were able to use a wide range of basic

appropriate vocabulary in familiar topics at a good level ( $\bar{x}$  =3.70). Nonetheless, they got confused and chose an incorrect vocabulary at a good level ( $\bar{x}$  =3.51) which was similar to the occurrence of the major errors when they were trying to express more complex or unfamiliar topics ( $\bar{x}$  =3.51).

Table 6 Vocabulary control

Item	Questions	Mean	SD	Likert
1.	I get confused and choose the incorrect vocabulary when communicating, but this is not the problem of conversation.	3.51	0.88	Good
2.	My major errors of vocabulary occur when expressing more complex thoughts or handling unfamiliar topics and situations.	3.51	0.88	Good
3.	I use a wide range of simple vocabulary appropriately when talking about familiar topics.	3.70	0.83	Good
4.	I can use a limited vocabulary to deal with everyday needs.	3.83	0.76	Good
Total	3.64	0.84	Good	

### 1.3 The data of general range

According to Table 7, the overall of the general range of EIC senior students were good ( $\bar{x}$ =3.46). It can be clearly seen that most of them were in good level which they can communicate well in everyday situations ( $\bar{x}$  =3.89). Moreover, they were able to use basic sentence patterns for communicating ( $\bar{x}$ =3.66) as in a good level followed by being

able to express themselves clearly without restriction ( $\bar{x}$ =3.47) as well as they were able to express ideas or descriptions ( $\bar{x}$ =3.47). In contrast, the ability to express thoughts on cultural topics ( $\bar{x}$ =3.36) and expressing ideas with circumlocution on topics were in moderate level ( $\bar{x}$  =3.34). Finally, they were able to describe unpredictable situations in the lowest level ( $\bar{x}$ =3.09).

Table 7 General Range

Item	Questions	Mean	SD	Likert
1.	I can express myself clearly without restriction what I want to say.	3.47	0.69	Good
2.	I can use sufficient language to give descriptions, express ideas and develop arguments.	3.47	0.69	Good
3.	I can describe unpredictable situations such as impromptu speech.	3.09	0.80	Moderate
4.	I can explain the main points of ideas or problems reasonably.	3.40	0.80	Good
5.	I can express thoughts on abstract or cultural topics such as music and films.	3.36	0.76	Moderate
6.	I can express ideas with circumlocution on topics.	3.34	0.81	Moderate

Item	Questions	Mean	SD	Likert
7.	I can communicate in everyday situations such as personal details, daily routines, needs, and requests for information.	3.89	0.89	Good
8.	I can use basic sentence patterns and communicate with memorized phrases, groups of a few words etc.	3.66	0.81	Good
9.	I have limited memorized phrases or groups of words which result in communication breakdowns and misunderstandings even in non-routine situations.	3.45	0.80	Good
Total	3.46	0.81	Good	

#### 1.4 The data of grammatical accuracy

According to Table 8, the overall of the grammatical accuracy of EIC senior students were good ( $\bar{x}$ =3.46). This can be seen that they were good at using routine grammar patterns relating to the same situations ( $\bar{x}$ =3.77). Moreover, they were able to communicate in familiar contexts, but there may be errors ( $\bar{x}$ =3.62). Furthermore, they had a little flaw in

sentence structure, but they were able correct it when using again ( $\bar{x}$ =3.57). Although they used simple structures correctly, they still had basic mistakes ( $\bar{x}$ =3.51). In contrast, they were at a moderate level when use complex structures ( $\bar{x}$ =3.30). Finally, they used grammatical rules accurately without making mistakes at the lowest level ( $\bar{x}$ =3.00).

**Table 8** Grammatical Accuracy

Item	Questions	Mean	SD	Likert
1.	Sometimes, I make a little flaw in sentence structure, but I can correct it when I use it again.	3.57	0.95	Good
2.	I can use grammatical rules accurately without making mistakes.	3.00	0.81	Moderate
3.	I can use language structures correctly, but sometimes I use complex structures incorrectly.	3.30	1.02	Moderate
4.	I can communicate in familiar contexts. Although there are errors, it is clear that I am trying to express.	3.62	0.80	Good
5.	I can use routine grammar patterns relating to same situations.	3.77	0.79	Good
6.	I use some simple structures correctly, but still make basic mistakes.	3.51	0.95	Good
Total	3.46	0.92	Good	

**1.5 The data of phonological control**

According to Table 9, the overall of the phonological control of EIC senior students were good ( $\bar{x}$ =3.46). Most of them could pronounce familiar words correctly

at a good level ( $\bar{x}$ =3.75). They were able to convey the message clearly at a good level ( $\bar{x}$ =3.57), and followed by their ability that they were able to convey the message clearly at a good level ( $\bar{x}$ =3.55).

**Table 9** Phonological Control

Item	Questions	Mean	SD	Likert
1.	I can generally use appropriate intonation, place stress correctly and articulate individual sounds clearly.	3.38	0.77	Moderate
2.	I can pronounce the words in the target language clearly, despite a few mispronunciations.	3.49	0.69	Good
3.	I can pronounce familiar words accurately. For example, word stress while reading.	3.74	0.92	Good
4.	I can use stress, intonation, and rhythm to support the message I intend to convey.	3.55	0.80	Good
5.	I can intonate and stress close to both utterance and word levels. However, accent is usually influenced by my mother language.	3.43	0.71	Good
6.	I can understand when hearing mispronunciation of individual sounds and words that I am less familiar with.	3.34	0.84	Moderate
7.	I can convey my message clearly in spite of a strong influence on stress, intonation and rhythm from my mother language.	3.57	0.71	Good
8.	My pronunciation is clear enough, but the interlocutor will probably ask for repetition from time to time.	3.28	0.83	Moderate
9.	My pronunciation is generally easy to understand when communicating in simple everyday situations, causing the interlocutor try to understand specific sounds.	3.47	0.75	Good
10.	I can only use words and phrases to stress, intonation, and rhythm in everyday situations.	3.36	0.79	Good
Total	3.46	0.79	Good	

### 1.6 The data of orthography control

According to Table 10, the overall of the orthography control of EIC senior students were good ( $\bar{x}$ =3.43). Most of them were able to write short sentences in everyday life correctly at a good level ( $\bar{x}$ =3.47). Moreover, they were also able to

write the message correctly by following the grammatical rule, punctuation at a good level ( $\bar{x}$ =3.45), and they were able to write an easy message following an English standard at a moderate level ( $\bar{x}$ =3.36) respectively.

**Table 10** Orthography Control

Item	Questions	Mean	SD	Likert
1.	I can write the message which is easy to understand and follows standard of layout, spelling, and punctuation correctly, but probably showing signs of mother tongue language.	3.36	0.67	Moderate
2.	I can write the message which is enough to understand and follows standard of spelling, punctuation, and layout.	3.45	0.72	Good
3.	I can write short sentences in everyday situations correctly.	3.47	0.97	Good
Total	3.43	0.79	Good	

## 2. The need of EIC senior students to improve communicative linguistic competence

In this part, there were two answers from open-ended questions in the third part of the questionnaire.

### 2.1 The data of EIC senior students that they would like to improve communicative linguistic competence

In Table 11, the data shows the needs that EIC senior students would like to improve in communicative linguistic competence. There were 68 responses. It can be seen that most of them would like to improve the grammatical accuracy (35%). Moreover, they prefer to improve vocabulary range (28%) and vocabulary control (15%), respectively. However, they would like to improve general linguistic range, phonological control, and orthography control as the least linguistic competence (5%).

**Table 11** The Need of EIC Senior Students to improve Communicative Linguistic Competence

Part of linguistic competence	Responses	Percentage (%)
1. Grammatical accuracy	24	35%
2. Vocabulary range	19	28%
3. Vocabulary control	10	15%
4. General linguistic range	5	7%
5. Phonological control	5	7%
6. Orthography control	5	7%
Total	68	100%

**2.2 The data about activities and course that EIC senior students would like to learn for supporting communicative linguistic competence**

As can be seen in Table 12. The most suggestion is to participate activities or courses with foreigners (29%), for example, they suggested to have activities cooperated with international students in Thailand and overseas. Next, they suggested that they would like to have courses involving four skills: speaking, listening, writing, and

reading (23%) such as, teaching the basic English language before starting the new semester. Moreover, they suggested about other activities or courses that they would like to learn (19%) such as watching movies, crossword, and TOEIC. Finally, they would like to join activities involving four skills: speaking, listening, writing, and reading (16%), for example, the activity that can improve English grammar and they want join English club/camp (13%).

**Table 12** Activities or Courses that EIC Senior Student would like to learn

Activities or courses	Responses	Percentages (%)
Activities or courses with foreigners	9	29%
Courses (4 skills: speaking, listening, writing, and reading)	7	23%
Other (Watching movies, crossword, TOEIC)	6	19%
Activities (4 skills: speaking, listening, writing, and reading)	5	16%
English club/camp	4	13%
Total	31	100%

## Discussion

There were two discussions from the findings which are the level of EIC senior students' communicative linguistic competence and the communicative linguistic competence improvement of EIC senior students.

### The level of EIC senior students' communicative linguistic competence

The findings of the level of EIC senior students' communicative linguistic competence on the basis CEFR framework refer to the Likert score which the overall of six linguistic competencies are at the good level ( $\bar{x} = 3.52$ ). It can be clearly seen that the highest score was the competency of the vocabulary range which is in the A2 level of CEFR framework ( $\bar{x} = 3.65$ ). The vocabulary range concerns the width and variety of words and expressions used. Also, vocabulary range is generally acquired through using in everyday widely. Due to EIC senior students have sufficient vocabulary ability to communicate, it causes them to have the highest score in this competency. Their strength is that they have enough vocabulary, so they can manage and deal with everyday situations precisely. The situations they encounter will be related to simple needs or familiar topics. They will choose to use a variety of vocabulary which depends on each

context for understanding communication. According to Kanoksilpatham and Khamkhien (2012), students will choose to use a limited vocabulary or common vocabulary in daily situations. Also, they will choose the vocabulary that they know the meaning exactly for using in the context correctly and appropriately. In addition, EIC senior students can understand and use the specific vocabulary in their field and whereas they still have problems when using difficult vocabulary or the specific vocabulary in other fields. With regard to the Council of Europe or CEFR (1990), A2 language user refers to those who are able to able to communicate in everyday situations with commonly-used expressions and elementary vocabulary. This corresponds to EIC senior student's vocabulary competence that they were confused in using difficult vocabulary, therefore, they need to use similar words to communicate in everyday situations as well.

As EIC senior students have sufficient vocabulary, they also have a good level of vocabulary control which is in the A2 level of CEFR framework ( $\bar{x} = 3.64$ ). The vocabulary control ability is to concern an appropriate expression to unfamiliar situations. Owing to they have a wide range of vocabulary; they can choose vocabulary that is suitable for those situations. This means that they can choose easy words to

communicate instead of using difficult words. Despite their major vocabulary problems occur when they encounter unfamiliar situations, they can use a limited vocabulary to deal with those situations. The above-mentioned findings show that if students found difficulties in choosing the appropriate meaning of the words, they tried to find the words that best fit the sentence semantically. Thus, they tried to pick up the word which is closest in meaning. However, if the choice that they choose is not correct, the whole meaning of the word may be distorted. These will make students get confused in choosing vocabulary (Rohmatillah, 2014). In contrast, the finding of orthography control was the least linguistic competence which is in the A2 level of CEFR framework ( $\bar{x}$  =3.43), it concerns the ability to copy, spell, use layout, and punctuation. EIC senior students commented that they can write the message which is easy to understand, but they probably showed signs of mother tongue language when writing. That may be consistent with the research of Kalhong (2016) who described that when students write the essay in Thai grammar, they can begin with any word or sentence or even a sentence without a subject. Therefore, students may become accustomed to these structures, and make their writings still have the characteristics of a Thai

grammar. According to the mentioned researcher, this corresponds to the ability of EIC senior students which they rated that they can write short sentences in everyday situations correctly, but if they have to write long sentences or unfamiliar sentences, it may be wrong writing. It can be seen that their low writing ability is consistent with the grammar development needs that they proposed in the second research question.

### **The communicative linguistic competence improvement of EIC senior students**

The purpose of the research is also to investigate the activities that the EIC senior students interested in to improve their linguistic competence. The data revealed that the EIC senior students need to improve their grammatical accuracy. From the CEFR, this competence is explained that it is focused on grammatical forms whilst articulating thought, but it is difficult when performing more demanding tasks. However, if the learners have this ability, it will make them accomplished in other competencies as well. According to the result, it is found that EIC senior students would like to improve this competence to get ready before they attend an internship in the second semester. They also commented that if

they have the ability to use English grammar, it will make them understand other English language skills such as writing and speaking skills. In addition, Haussamen (2003) stated that grammatical knowledge not only helps the writer understand the English standard but also reduces their use of non-standard English. Moreover, grammatical errors in subject-verb agreement, indirect questions, and parts of speech can cause big troubles in writing (Herrero, 2005). Similarly, Richards and Renandya (2002) claimed that without complete knowledge of grammar, learners' knowledge development will be limited. Therefore, this clearly shows that grammatical knowledge was a fundamental skill that respondents should know before other skills for full effectiveness learning. These seem to be important for the respondents to know about grammar rules to avoid mistakes in oral communication or even in writing. Because the respondents rated that they are weak at the writing skill or orthography control, therefore; if they can improve grammar competency, it might help them to improve orthography control.

Consequently, there are many ways to improve linguistic competence these were activities and courses that EIC senior students suggested. The most common suggestion was to participate in the activity with foreigners to make the respondent

improve their communication skills by joining activities involved four skills (listening, speaking, writing, and reading). These activities would enable them to get used to the English phrases, vocabulary or even the grammar rules. Moreover, it may gain their confidence to speak English in a real situation, and also change the way to learn English by using the activities to motivate the respondents to learn in a different atmosphere. According to Zhang (2009) explained that students who study English as a foreign language (EFL) usually have limited opportunities to speak English outside the classroom. Thus, they believe that if they have more opportunity to speak English with foreigners, they might enhance the chance to improve their listening, speaking, including understanding how to use the grammar at the same time.

## Conclusion

The finding of this study revealed that EIC senior students perceived themselves as confidence in their use of linguistic competence on the basis CEFR framework at a good level which the vocabulary range and vocabulary control will support them in their work. Although they are good in the vocabulary, their grammatical accuracy and orthography control still be somewhat limited which still leads to problems in work. More

importantly, the orthography control is an important part of work and has many work benefits such as writing correspondence: letters, e-mail, and memos, progress report, resume, etc. Therefore, it can be concluded that Students should be prepared before internship, both the lowest competence: orthography control and in the grammatical accuracy that they would like to improve. The development of grammatical accuracy will help to support the orthography control which this development will give them more confidence in using these competencies in the workplaces.

However, when comparing the ability from a student's perspective to the CEFR level, it was found that the highest scores for each competency they rated themselves were all at the A1 level. Most European ministries have identified CEFR-based goals for all students who have completed at B1 level for foreign languages as their second language. This means that even they are confident in using vocabulary range and vocabulary control, but there should be lessons or activities that can help them develop all competencies to make them have more confident and prepared to work.

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