

4. Data and Data Analysis

Data in this study were three sets of information about the English performance of 2,094 first year students in the Faculties of Engineering, Science, Medicine, Management Sciences, Natural Resources, Pharmaceutical Sciences, Nursing, and Dentistry at PSU (Hat Yai) in the academic year 1999. These students were required to take two English courses, namely FE I and FE II offered by the Department of Languages and Linguistics. The three sets of information included their EEE scores, their scores and their grades in FE I and FE II.

To analyse the correlations between the students' EEE scores and their scores in FE I and FE II, all the three sets of information about the English performance of individual students were required for the calculation of Pearson correlation coefficients. However, some of the students did not complete either FE I or FE II, or did not register for FE II resulting in their incomplete scores in FE I or FE II, or the unavailability of their scores in FE II. This is especially the case when the students did not take the mid-term and/or final examinations; they withdrew from the course; they dropped out; or they did not show up in the second semester for whatever reason, for example, they quit the university, they were expelled, or they held back from pursuing their learning of English. This made it impossible to obtain a complete set of these students' scores for the entry of data for analysis. Therefore, the data of only 1,782 students who completed both of the required courses were used for the computation of the correlation coefficients. The students' scores in FE I and FE II refer to their composite scores on the mid-term and final examinations.

It should, nonetheless, be noted that information about those students who did not complete any of the two FE courses or did not register for FE II which was excluded in the calculation of Pearson correlation coefficients mentioned above was included in the analysis of the distribution of the students' EEE scores and their grades in FE I and FE II. This means the data of the English performance of all the 2,094 students were used for the analysis. The inclusion of the data of all the students under study is important in that it would provide a complete and realistic picture of the students' success and failure in the FE courses. This would, in turn, be useful in establishing the cut-off points for the placement of the students into appropriate required English courses. The distribution of the students' EEE scores

and their grades in FE I and FE II were tallied for frequency and summarized in percentages.