

Students' Motivational Orientations and Attitude toward English Learning: A Study in the Deep South of Thailand

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Abstract

This study investigates students' L2 motivational orientations and attitude which are major components of L2 motivation. The concepts of integrative and instrumental orientations and attitude in this study were adopted and adapted from Gardner's socio-educational model (1985). 219 M.3 (Grade 9) students in all six governmental secondary schools in the three southernmost cities in Thailand, namely Pattani, Yala, and Narathiwat participated in this study. The questionnaire with 10 items assessing the students' integrative and instrumental orientations and attitude was the main instrument. The results indicate that the students have strong instrumental orientation together with moderately high integrative orientation and favorable attitude. All three motivational components were found significantly different between the male and female students. In regard to the difference between the students with and without experience in English speaking countries, significant difference was on integrative orientation. Last, there was no significant difference on integrative and instrumental orientations and attitude between the students with the above and below average English grade.

Keywords: second language motivation, orientations, attitude, South Thailand

1. Introduction

Motivation is a concept that numbers of attempt to define it and to understand its mechanism have been carried out (Brown, 2000; Dörnyei, 2001a). Scholars have questioned and investigated what makes people decide to do certain things and keep pursuing them referring to motivation as a 'drive', 'goal', 'need', 'desire', etc. (De Bot, 2005; Dörnyei, 2001a; Gardner, 1985). Motivation was first approached psychologically in early studies, and since 1960s, it has become one of the major issues among studies in second language learning. Motivation in second language acquisition is regarded as a primary attribution directly connected to L2 (second language) achievement (Gardner, 1985; Gardner & Lalonde, 1985). Research conducted on the relationship between learners' motivation and their L2 achievement have proven that more motivated learners better achieve L2 and vice versa (Bernaus & Gardner, 2008; Gardner, 1959; Gardner & MacIntyre, 1991).

Motivation could be better understood through identifying the components influencing it and also knowing how it is formulated (Dörnyei, 1994). Maslow's (1970) hierarchical need theory notes that the desire to fill one's basic needs that exist hierarchically becomes a motive. Dörnyei and Ottó's (1998) process model of L2 motivation proposed that motivation is formed in accordance with the sequence of an action one might take, and influences the next step of the action. Dörnyei (2009) explains that if one imagines himself/herself as a person who fluently communicates with English native speakers, the future self image, then, becomes a motive to the person. Deci (2000) proposes that one's intrinsic and extrinsic orientations influence motivation. A similar but yet different motivational theory of Gardner (1985) introduces several components positively related to motivation in second language learning such as parental encouragement, integrativeness, instrumental orientation, and attitude toward learning situation, while language anxiety is introduced as a component negatively influencing motivation.

Gardner's (1985) L2 motivational concept has been one of the most outstanding L2 motivation theories in the second language acquisition world. He and his colleagues identified the components related to L2 motivation as mentioned above and the dynamics among the components, motivation, and L2 achievement. His theory has motivated many researchers to conduct similar studies in different context. These subsequent studies could

roughly be categorized into three groups: first, studies on identifying L2 learners' motivational orientations; second, studies on the relationship between motivation and L2 achievement; and third, studies on the dynamics among orientations, motivation, and achievement. And this study focuses on identifying what orientations and attitude the English learners in the deep south of Thailand have.

South Thailand, especially the three border provinces, has its unique context. The majority of the population is Muslim called Pattani Malay whose mother tongue is Melayu. Young children start learning Thai as well as English after enrolling in primary schools, which means, English is not their second language but the third language (Janchitfah, 2010). They are also encouraged to learn Arabic which is the language related to their religion. It is not difficult to imagine how much more the language learning motivation would be important for those who learn the third language in their studies.

Considering the situation that the children in south Thailand are in and the positive dynamics among the learners' orientations and attitude, motivation, and achievement, it might be worthwhile to take the first step of identifying L2 orientations and attitude of the students in south Thailand. Therefore this study aims to investigate what the students' L2 orientations and attitude are and whether the students' orientations and attitude are different according to their backgrounds. This study holds its significance since there are limited studies conducted on students' L2 orientations and attitude in the deep south of Thailand.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Theories of Motivation

Maslow's (1970) 'hierarchical needs theory' of motivation is one of the most well-known motivational theories with its pyramid shaped diagram. It categorizes human beings' needs which exist hierarchically into five levels: the essential physical needs, safety, love, esteem, and self actualization. People strive to get the needs in lower level filled first and move to the needs in the next level. When the needs in a certain level of the hierarchy are not sufficiently filled, people tend not to be motivated for the needs in the next level. Brown (1994) interprets hierarchical needs theory in the context of L2 learning classrooms saying that sometimes, an interesting and attractive activity might not work if basic classroom routines are not satisfactorily undergone.

While Maslow's 'need theory' is popular in terms of its general aspect of motivation, Deci and Ryan's (1985) 'self-determination theory' with its concept of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation has been widely adopted in educational settings (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Intrinsic motivation refers to the situation when one does something because it is interesting as itself or doing it is enjoyable. For example, if a student learns a language for his/her pure desire to achieve that language or because he/she values and enjoys learning the language itself, then the student is intrinsically motivated. On the contrary, extrinsic motivation refers to the situation when the reasons of taking an action or activity are not derived from the action or activity itself; the reasons are from outside of the action or activity. For example, if a person learns English to carry out business presentation in English, or if a student studies the science subject to come up to his/her parents' expectation, then, these are extrinsically motivated cases.

Gardner, whose motivational theory is regarded classic in the second language acquisition field as Dörnyei (2009) mentioned, started his investigations in 1959, and his motivational theory was, later, named 'socio-educational model' in 1985. His model mainly consists of five attitude and motivational components, which are integrativeness, motivation, attitudes toward the learning situation, integrative orientation, and instrumental orientation (Gardner & Masgoret, 2003). Orientations refer to how a language learner is oriented, whether integratively oriented or instrumentally oriented. An integratively oriented learner learns a target language with a pure interest and value in the language speaking group and their culture. And an instrumentally oriented learner learns a target language for other reasons such as getting a higher grade or a better job (Gardner & MacIntyre, 1991). These orientations relate to integrativeness in the sense that it implies the openness to the target language, the language speaking group, and their cultures (Gardner, 2005). Attitudes toward the learning situation are about how the language learners evaluate their English course and teachers (Gardner & Masgoret, 2003). Integrativeness and attitudes toward the learning situation are related to one another, and both directly influence motivation (Gardner, 2001) which refers to a drive in achieving one's goal. After all, more motivated learners better achieve the second language (Bernaus & Gardner, 2008).

Together with Gardner's 'socio-educational model' of L2 learning, Dörnyei's numerous studies have been inspirations to other scholars and language teachers. His theories named 'a process-oriented approach' and 'the L2 motivational self system' are among the most recent theories on L2 motivation.

Dörnyei and Ottó's (1998) process-oriented model delineates motivational influences along the action sequence, pre-actional phase, actional phase, and post-actional phase. The motivation related to the pre-actional phase is called choice motivation, because the motivation at this stage affects the choice of a task as one's goal (Dörnyei, 2003). Executive motivation which helps an individual to keep doing the task in spite of obstacles takes place while he/she is at the actional phase. The motivation at the post-actional phase named motivational retrospection influences an individual's evaluation of the task that has been carried out and the next task at the same time when the previous task has been terminated (Dörnyei, 2003).

The underlying background of Dörnyei's L2 motivational self system is somehow related to Gardner's notion of 'integrativeness'. Because this new motivational theory was proposed through the reconsideration of 'integrativeness'. Due to definitional ambiguity of 'integrativeness' and researchers' different points of view on it, it is regarded as the most classical motivational concept and, at the same time, criticized by other scholars because of (Dörnyei, 2009). L2 motivational self system consists of three components, ideal L2 self, ought-to L2 self, and L2 learning experience. Ideal L2 self is a self image one might have. For example, if a person has a future self image that he/she wants to be a person who has many English speaking international friends or wants to be an English teacher, then, this future self image becomes a driving force to fill the gap between the present self and the future self. Ought-to L2 self is that if a young child thinks that he/she ought to spend more time to learn English to come up to expectation of his/her parents or to avoid punishment, then, these self images are considered how they ought to be. Last, motivation is also influenced by L2 learning experience such as English teachers, classmates, and textbooks, so learners' motivation can be positively and negatively affected by how they experience L2 learning (Dörnyei, 2009).

Gardner's L2 motivational theory which is considered as one of the most classic and influential motivational theories introduced previously was adopted and adapted in this study. And Gardner's concepts of integrative and instrumental orientations and attitude are highlighted to investigate how the students in south Thailand are oriented and their attitude toward English, learning English, and the English classes and teachers.

1.2 Related Empirical Studies

Belmechri and Hummel (1998) recruited 93 French speaking Grade 11 students learning ESL who had not been exposed to native English areas for more than 4 months. And they carried out a questionnaire survey containing 57 items of reasons of studying L2, motivational intensity, and desire to learn a second language. 11 types of orientation were extracted through principal component factor analysis. . Then these orientations were named travel orientation, self-understanding orientation, instrumental orientation, career orientation, understanding/school orientation, school orientation, knowledge orientation, understanding orientation, politics orientation, influence orientation, and friendship orientation. The understanding orientation is different in terms of its meaning from understanding/school orientation. The former refers to understanding English art and the latter understanding English speakers' lives. It was found that the five orientations with the strongest effect on students' motivation were travel orientation, understanding/school orientation, friendship orientation, understanding orientation, and career orientation. According to multiple regression predicting motivation from the orientations, 41 per cent of motivation as a whole was predicted by these five orientations. In other words, the five orientations, namely travel, understanding/school, friendship, understanding orientation, and career orientations positively assist English learners to be motivated.

While Belmechri and Hummel's (1998) study extracted new motivational orientations of the students not bounded by certain types of orientations from previous theories, Rahman (2005) investigated L2 motivational orientations adopting the concepts of integrative and instrumental orientations of Gardner (1985).

Rahman's study (2005) was to examine how the participants, 94 Bangla native students in American International University in Bangladesh, are oriented in English learning. The results indicated that the students are, overall, more instrumentally oriented to a great extent rather than integratively oriented. Specifically, the gap between instrumental and integrative orientations of male students was more considerable than that of female students. For male students, 79 per cent of the students were found instrumentally oriented while 21 per cent were integratively oriented. For female students, 66 per cent of the students were found instrumentally oriented and 34 per cent were integratively oriented.

Belmechri and Hummel's (1998) and Rahman's (2005) studies are meaningful in that they figured out orientations of the students and the relationship between orientations and motivation in L2 learning, although it did not seek to explain how motivation formulated by orientations affects the students' achievement in L2. In this sense, the study by Bernaus and Gardner (2008) shed further light on the dynamics of orientations, motivation, and students' L2 achievement.

Bernaus and Gardner's (2008) research was carried out in Catalonia, Spain involving 694 EFL students. They examined relationships among integrativeness, attitudes toward the learning situation, instrumental orientation, parental encouragement, language anxiety, motivation, and English achievement using path analysis. The results of path analysis indicated that integrativeness, attitudes toward the learning situation, instrumental orientation, and parental encouragement correlated with one another. The variables positively correlated with motivation were integrativeness, attitudes toward the learning situation, and instrumental orientation. Furthermore, students' motivation was found a positive predictor of English achievement. For the relationship between attitudes toward the learning situation and English achievement, if motivation did not mediate between attitudes toward the learning situation and English achievement, these two variables negatively correlated. But with motivation as a mediator, attitudes toward the learning situation became positively influential to English achievement. Language anxiety, however, had no relationship with motivation but had a negative influence on English achievement. A consistent result was presented by hierarchical linear modeling analysis predicting that integrativeness, attitudes toward the learning situation, and instrumental orientation were the precursors to motivation.

Considering the positive relationships among orientations and attitude, motivation, and L2 achievement, the first step of investigating orientations and attitude of students in south Thailand should be taken since such studies in this particular context of the country are still limited.

3. Purposes of the Study

This study investigates what the students' integrative and instrumental orientations and attitude are and whether there is a difference on the students' orientations and attitude according to their different demographical backgrounds.

4. Methodology

4.1 Participants

Two hundreds and nineteen M.3 (Mattayom 3, equivalent to Grade 9) students in all six governmental secondary schools in the three southernmost cities in Thailand which are Pattani, Yala, and Narathiwat participated in this study. These six schools differ from one another in kinds of class such as English program class, special program class, class for students with high proficiency, and ordinary class. The kind of class all six schools have in common is ordinary class, which became the subject of this study and later one ordinary class in each school was selected by random sampling.

For the students' demographical details, 138 students are female and 81 are male. 18 students reported that they have been to English speaking countries and 201 have never been. Among the 18 students, all of them visited Malaysia which is a border country of Thailand, and 2 visited Singapore as well. For the question asking their English grade, their grades of the last semester in Fundamental English which is one of the major subjects for the students in that age in Thailand were used as the variable for English grade. 194 out of 219 students responded to this question, and in particular 30 students were given 1.0 (equivalent to the score between 51 and 55 when 100 is the perfect score), 14 students given 1.5 (56 to 60), 20 students given 2.0 (61 to 65), 23 students given 2.5 (66 to 70), 30 students given 3.0 (71 to 75), 25 students given 3.5 (76 to 80), and 52 students given 4.0 (81 to 100).

4.2 Instrument

A questionnaire was the main instrument of this study. It consists of two parts. The first part elicits the students' demographical information; and the second part, their integrative and instrumental orientations and attitude using a five-point Likert scale.

Mini-AMTB, Attitude/Motivation Test Battery, used by Bernaus and Gardner (2008) was adopted for the second part of the questionnaire, which originally consists of 12 items assessing L2 learners' motivation, integrativeness, attitude toward the learning situation, instrumental orientation, language anxiety, and parental encouragement. Two items not relevant to the purpose of this study from the original version were deleted, and the rest were revised to extract students' integrative and instrumental orientations and attitude toward English, learning English, and their English classes and teachers. In detail, the second part of the questionnaire contains 2 items for integrative orientation, 4 items for instrumental orientation, and 4 items for attitude out of 10 items. Table 1 shows the statements of all 10 items together with its targeted motivational component. The questionnaire was, however, composed in English first and later translated into Thai, and reviewed by 3 experts for validity.

Table 1. Statements of items in the questionnaire

No.	Statement	Motivational component
1	I learn English in order to make friends with English-speaking people.	Integrative
2	I learn English in order to know the culture of English-speaking people from various countries.	Integrative
3	I learn English to read English writings.	Instrumental
4	I have favorable attitude toward learning English.	Attitude
5	I have favorable attitude toward my English teacher.	Attitude
6	I learn English to get a high score.	Instrumental
7	I like English.	Attitude
8	I look forward to English classes.	Attitude
9	Studying English is important to me for further studies.	Instrumental
10	I like learning English to communicate with foreigners.	Instrumental

4.3 Pilot Survey

Forty five M.3 students in an ordinary class in Hatyai Wittayalai School which is a governmental secondary school in Songkhla, a city in southern Thailand, were recruited for the pilot survey. Students were briefly informed of the purpose of the study and the contents of the questionnaire, and instructed how to mark on each item before the survey started. Understandability of each item in regard to its own purpose was also interviewed after surveying. The items were found highly reliable ($\alpha=.71$, $N=45$).

4.4 Data Collection

Data collection took place during the first semester of Thailand's academic year of 2013, which was from June to September. The researcher visited all six subject schools in the three southernmost cities, namely Pattani, Yala, and Narathiwat, and gave a short introduction on the purpose of the study, the contents of the questionnaire, and how to mark on each item before distributing questionnaires to the students.

4.5 Data Analysis

The SPSS program was used for data analysis to answer the two research questions. For the students' integrative and instrumental orientations and attitude, descriptive statistics was run and the mean values of their levels of agreement on motivational orientations and attitude were interpreted using the criteria shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Criteria for the interpretation of the mean value of the students' level of agreement on integrative and instrumental orientations and attitude

Mean Value (\bar{x})	Level of Agreement
4.21 – 5.00	Strongly agree
3.41 – 4.20	Agree
2.61 – 3.40	Uncertain
1.81 – 2.60	Disagree
0.00 – 1.80	Strongly disagree

5. Results

5.1 The Students' Integrative and Instrumental Orientations and Attitude

Based on the descriptive statistics shown in Table 3, the students' integrative orientation and their attitude fall into the range of 'agree' ($\bar{x} = 3.99$ and $\bar{x} = 3.81$ respectively) while their instrumental orientation falls into that of 'strongly agree' ($\bar{x} = 4.37$). Instrumental orientation holds a higher mean value than integrative orientation in this

study confirming other researchers' assertion that instrumental orientation is generally more dominant than integrative orientation for students learning English as a foreign language (Belmechri & Hummel, 1998).

Table 3. Students' motivational orientations and attitude

Motivational component	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	S.D.
Integrative	219	2.50	5.00	3.99	0.59
Instrumental	219	2.50	5.00	4.37	0.48
Attitude	219	2.25	5.00	3.81	0.60
Total	219	2.50	5.00	4.07	0.47

The students' level of agreement on each questionnaire item is presented in Table 4. As it is shown, the students' instrumental orientation was stronger than their integrative orientation. Furthermore, most items demonstrating instrumental orientation occupy the highest rankings in terms of level of agreement. For the students in this study, learning English is important for practical reasons such as further studies, reading writings in English, and communication. They do not seem to have relatively favorable attitude toward English itself, learning English and English classes in comparison to their practical needs related to English.

Table 4. Students' level of agreement on each statement assessing orientation or attitude

No.	Statement	Mean	Motivational component	Level of agreement
9	Studying English is important to me for further studies.	4.51	Instrumental	Strongly Agree
3	I learn English to read English writings.	4.50	Instrumental	
10	I like learning English to communicate with foreigners.	4.30	Instrumental	
6	I learn English to get a high score.	4.15	Instrumental	
5	I have favorable attitude toward my English teacher.	4.07	Attitude	
2	I learn English in order to know the culture of English-speaking people from various countries.	4.07	Integrative	
1	I learn English in order to make friends with English-speaking people.	3.91	Integrative	Agree
4	I have favorable attitude toward learning English.	3.90	Attitude	
7	I like English.	3.75	Attitude	
8	I look forward to English classes.	3.51	Attitude	

5.2 Difference on the Students' Orientations and Attitude Based on Their Backgrounds

T-test was adopted to investigate difference on the students' orientations and attitude according to their different demographical backgrounds, such as gender, experience in English speaking countries, and English grade.

Table 5 shows the results of t-test on the male and female students' integrative and instrumental orientations and attitude.

As shown in Table 5, the mean values of all three motivational components of female students are higher than those of male students. It means that the female students in this study have stronger integrative and instrumental orientations and more favorable attitude than the male students. These differences between male and female students' orientations and attitude are significant at 0.01 level ($p < .01$).

Table 5. Difference on the students' orientations and attitude based on gender

Motivational Component	Male		Female		t-test	Sig.(2-tailed)
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Integrative	3.81	.70	4.09	.49	-3.156**	.002
Instrumental	4.21	.51	4.46	.44	-3.779**	.000
Attitude	3.61	.68	3.93	.53	-3.637**	.000

**Significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Table 6 displays the difference on the three motivational components between the students' with and without experience in English speaking countries.

Table 6. Difference on the students' orientations and attitude based on experience in English speaking countries

Motivational Component	With		Without		t-test	Sig.(2-tailed)
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Integrative	4.42	.58	3.95	.58	3.264**	.001
Instrumental	4.51	.56	4.35	.47	1.373	.171
Attitude	3.96	.77	3.79	.59	1.102	.272

**Significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

The results indicate that the mean values of integrative and instrumental orientations and attitude of the students who have been to English speaking countries are higher than those of the students without experience in English speaking countries. Especially, the students with experience in English speaking countries have higher integrative orientation than those without. The results of t-test show that the difference on integrative orientation between the students with and without experience in English speaking countries is statistically significant at 0.01 level ($p < .01$).

Difference on integrative and instrumental orientations and attitude between the students above and below the average English grade is presented in Table 7.

Table 7. Difference on the students' orientations and attitude based on English grade

Motivational Component	Above		Below		t-test	Sig.(2-tailed)
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Integrative	4.01	.57	4.01	.64	-.025	.980
Instrumental	4.46	.40	4.34	.53	1.760	.080
Attitude	3.93	.58	3.78	.58	1.697	.091

194 out of 219 participant students responded to the questionnaire item asking their English grades of the last semester. The students with the above average English grade were 87 while those with the below average were 107. The mean values of integrative and instrumental orientations and attitude of both students above and those below the average grade fall into similar ranges. The results of t-test is also consistent showing that there is no significant difference on the three motivational components of the students above and below the average English grade as presented in Table 7.

6. Discussion and Implications

This study investigated integrative and instrumental orientations and attitude of students in the deep south of Thailand in EIL context. It was found that the students have strong instrumental orientation together with moderately high integrative orientation and favorable attitude. Statistically significant difference on integrative and instrumental orientations and attitude was found between the male and female students with the female

students possessing stronger integrative and instrumental orientations and more favorable attitude than the male students. In regard to the difference between the students with and without experience in English speaking countries on these three motivational components, the difference on integrative orientation was significant. The students with experience in English speaking countries were found to have higher integrative orientation than those without. Last, no significant difference was found on integrative and instrumental orientations and attitude of the students above and below the average English grade.

Integrative orientation means openness to the target language, the language speaking people and the culture (Gardner, 2005), so learners with integrative orientation learn the target language with pure interest on the language, the language speaking people, and the culture. The results of this study suggest a need to strengthen the students' integrative orientation and attitude. In classroom settings, it is necessary for English teachers to arouse pure interest in the language among students. For example, taking more time to get to know English speaking people's lives and culture, and exposing students to more cultural products such as films, music, and TV programs in English as teaching materials and so on. In terms of students' relatively less favorable attitude toward English classes, English itself, and learning English, teachers should try to make up for this by making their lessons more interesting and creative, and introducing different ways of learning English strategies some of which might well suit the students.

In regard to the statistically significant difference on integrative orientation between the students with and without experience in English speaking countries, English teachers should take an advantage of geographical proximity to Malaysia which is a border country of the south part of Thailand by sending them as exchange students or encouraging them to visit the country. These experiences are expected to be a strong impact on the students' integrative orientation.

7. Recommendation

Analyzing the reasons why students' certain aspects of attitude or orientations are not favorable or strong if they have been found so through both quantitative and qualitative surveys might be interesting. After a quantitative survey on students' orientations and attitude, a qualitative survey should be conducted on the same students interviewing them for what reasons they have less favorable attitude and orientations. This mixed survey method could inform the teachers of how to strengthen their students' L2 orientations and attitude, and might consequently enable them to boost their students' motivation.

It is also suggested that further studies compare L2 motivational orientations and attitude of students in urban and rural areas. Since there seems to be richer English learning environment in urban areas than in rural areas, investigating whether students in urban areas have higher orientations and more favorable attitude than those in rural areas would provide some meaningful insights.

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