

**A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF TECHNOLOGY-BASED
MOTIVATION FOR LEARNING ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN
LANGUAGE AMONG THAI LEARNERS AT WALL STREET
ENGLISH BANGKOK ACCORDING TO THEIR GENDER AND
ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY**

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Abstract: The purpose of this study was to determine the extent to which new technologies, such as the Internet or social media, served as sources of motivation for Thai English language learners to learn English as a foreign language (EFL) at Wall Street English (WSE) Bangkok. The study also sought to compare learners' technology-based motivation for learning EFL based on their gender and English language proficiency. For these purposes, the researchers adopted a quantitative comparative research design, using a questionnaire that was developed, piloted, validated, and checked for internal consistency. The questionnaire was administered to 214 Thai English language learners from all four levels of proficiency (beginner, pre-intermediate, intermediate, and advanced) from 11 centers of WSE in Bangkok. After splitting the collected data by gender, an independent samples *t*-test was conducted to assess the significance of the results. At the same time, a one-way ANOVA test was used after splitting the collected data by English language proficiency to determine if there was a significant difference in technology-based motivation for learning EFL among the resulting groups. The research findings indicated that Thai learners were highly motivated to learn English to work with technology more effectively, regardless of their gender or English language proficiency. No significant difference in technology-based motivation for learning EFL between male and female Thai learners was derived from the data analysis. However, in relation to English language proficiency, it was found that the overall technology-based motivation for learning EFL was significantly higher in the beginner group

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than in the advanced group, as well as in the upper-intermediate group than in the advanced group.

Keywords: Technology-based Motivation; English as a Foreign Language; Thai Learners; Wall Street English; Gender; English Language Proficiency; Thailand

Introduction

Almost all human activities are triggered by incentives or “motivation.” Motivation is commonly considered an inner desire that moves an individual to engage in a particular action. Motivation for the second language (L2) learning can be defined as a combination of efforts and desire to learn the language and favorable attitudes toward learning the language (Gardner & Lambert, 1972). A considerable number of language learning experts seem to agree on the pivotal role of motivation in L2 learning (e.g., Block & Cameron, 2002; Dörnyei, Csizér & Németh, 2006; Gardner & Tremblay, 1994; Lukmani, 1972). In 1972, Gardner and Lambert introduced two types of motivation that explain language learners’ behaviors and how they pursue their learning goals: integrative and instrumental motivations. According to Gardner and Lambert (1972), when language learners wish to learn more about a cultural community because they are interested in it, they are integratively (or internally) motivated. However, suppose the purpose of language learning reflects more utilitarian values of linguistic achievement, such as getting ahead in their occupation. In that case, the learners are instrumentally (or externally) motivated.

Globalization introduced the English language as a powerful medium through technology, affecting many aspects of our life and westernizing the world (Doms, 2003). Hence, knowing English is a powerful tool that allows people to open the linguistic gates to worldwide business, technology, science, and travel (Kachru, 1986). Globalization of technology has highlighted the significance of the instrumental, or better said, utilitarian dimension of L2 motivation mostly in EFL contexts (Dörnyei et al., 2006; Lukmani, 1972; Shaaban & Ghaith, 2000; Warden & Lin, 2000). A “motivational renaissance” in second language acquisition has been underway in the last decades (Gardner & Tremblay (1994), which the researchers believe led to the emergence of new concepts, new needs, and consequently, new motivational attitudes toward language learning. According to the researchers, the more global the use of English as the language of technology, the higher people’s motivation to learn it.

As one of the promoters of English language learning worldwide, Wall Street