

**A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF ADULT LEARNERS'
MOTIVATION FOR LEARNING ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN
LANGUAGE ACCORDING TO THEIR INSTRUCTION BY SINGLE
OR MULTIPLE INSTRUCTORS AT GEOS LANGUAGE CENTRE,
THAILAND**

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Abstract: The purpose of this quantitative study was to compare adult learners' motivation for learning English as a foreign language according to their instruction by either a single instructor or by multiple instructors over a period of six weeks at Geos Language Centre in Bangkok, Thailand. The sample population of this study consisted of 67 adult-learner students enrolled in private English as a foreign language courses during the period of April to July 2020. These students comprised two groups under investigation during the period of this study: 1) Those who received instruction from a single instructor, and 2) Those who received instruction from multiple instructors. The Questionnaire for Measuring Motivation for Learning English as a Foreign Language (QMMLEFL), adapted from the Attitude / Motivation Test Battery (AMTB) by Gardner (2004), was used to measure the level of adult learners' motivation for learning English as a foreign language (EFL). Descriptive statistics (means and standard deviations) were calculated, and statistical hypothesis testing (comparative analysis using paired samples *t*-tests and an independent samples *t*-test) was performed from data collected to pursue the research objectives and accept or reject the research hypotheses of this study. The research findings did not indicate that there was a statistically significant difference in the gain in motivation for learning English as a foreign language over a six-week period of study between adult learners who studied with a single instructor and adult learners who studied with multiple instructors. Recommendations for adult learners and instructors of English as a foreign language and language institute administrators and future researchers are provided.

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Introduction

The significance of a language instructor's role in an adult learner's motivation for learning a foreign language has been well established (Gardner, 2010). Meanwhile, Internet-based learning platforms have proliferated, and more language learners worldwide have been engaging in online language courses that employ multiple instructors over the course of study (Lederman, 2016).

One implication of a shift to multiple-instructor course types is that adult learners may have less chance of forming a rapport with their instructors. Moreover, a lesser degree of learner-instructor rapport has been found to be associated with a lesser degree of academic achievement (Yunus, Osman & Ishak, 2011). In addition, Dörnyei (2001) has found that a positive relationship between a learner and instructor can benefit the learner's motivation for learning a foreign language and lead to higher achievement in learning a foreign language.

Given the proliferation of online language learning platforms and large language schools that employ many instructors within the same institution, students have a choice whether to receive instruction by taking lessons with a single instructor or to receive instruction by taking lessons from multiple instructors over the period of a course of private language study (Lederman, 2018). Adult learners of English as a foreign language at Geos Language Centre may currently choose from courses taught by a single instructor and courses taught by multiple instructors. The learner's choice to receive instruction by either single or multiple teachers has seemed to impact three important aspects of their learning: their course completion rate, attendance rate, and language learning achievement rate. In order to investigate this apparent connection, this study compares the choices of adult learners enrolled at Geos Language Centre in Thailand to receive instruction from a single instructor or from multiple instructors on their motivation for learning English as a foreign language.

Objectives

1. To identify the level of motivation for learning English as a foreign language of adult learners taught by a single instructor who took private language lessons for a six-week period of study at Geos Language Centre as measured with a pretest and a posttest.

2. To determine if there is a significant difference in pretest and posttest scores of the motivation for learning English as a foreign language of adult learners taught by a single instructor at Geos Language Centre.
3. To identify the level of motivation for learning English as a foreign language of adult learners taught by multiple instructors who take private language lessons for a six-week period of study at Geos Language Centre as measured with a pretest and a posttest.
4. To determine if there is a significant difference in pretest and posttest scores of the motivation for learning English as a foreign language of adult learners taught by multiple instructors at Geos Language Centre.
5. To determine if there is a significant difference in the gain in motivation for learning English as a foreign language from the pretest to the posttest between adult learners taught by a single instructor and adult learners taught by multiple instructors at Geos Language Centre.

Literature Review

This study brought together three areas of research relating to the field of second language acquisition and motivation in particular.

Gardner's Socio-Educational Model of Second Language Acquisition

The socio-educational model of second language acquisition was originally created by Gardner and Lambert (Gardner, 1959a). Among the topics studied were the aspects of a learners' motivation to learn and how motivation for learning a foreign or second language could strongly affect the ability to acquire a language (Gardner, 1975). In the context of second language acquisition, Gardner (1985a) identified motivation as a primary factor in second language acquisition and made a distinction between integrative motivation and instrumental motivation. Integrative motivation involves the desire by the learner to interact and integrate with members of the target language community. Instrumental motivation involves the desire by the learner to achieve some practical objective, such as obtaining a qualification, receiving a higher salary, or passing a course (Gardner, 1985a).

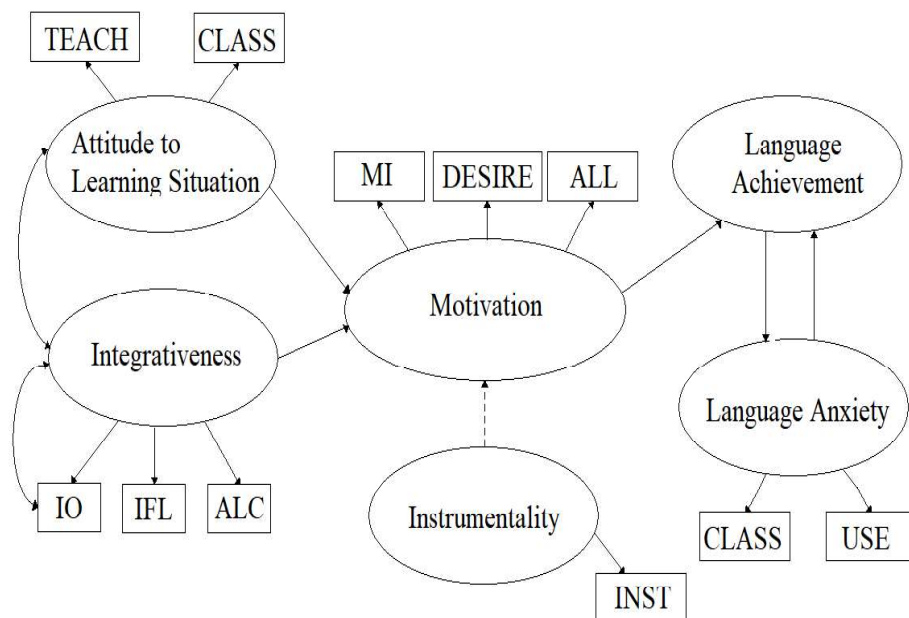


Figure 1. A Structural Equation Representation of the Socio-Educational Model. Reprinted From *Motivation and Second Language Acquisition: The Socio-Educational Model (P. 88)*, by R. C. Gardner, 2010, New York: Peter Lang.

Motivation is at the center of Gardner's socio-educational model of language learning and was found to be a factor in language achievement (Gardner, 2010). Figure 1 illustrates the interplay of these factors with motivation as the central element. Gardner defined three subscales of motivation for learning a foreign language. These included 1) the motivational intensity for learning a foreign language, which involved the effort that a student exerts in order to achieve language learning goals, 2) The desire to learn a foreign language, which involves the perceived rewards to the learner of achieving language learning goals, and 3) the attitude toward learning a foreign language, which can include the learner's attitude not only to the language of instruction but also to the culture and community of foreign language speakers (Gardner, 1985a).

Richards' Communicative Language Teaching

Richards (2006) defined Communicative Language Teaching in terms of its learning goals, which emphasize communicative competence over grammatical competence. Communicative competence focuses on 1) the knowledge of how to use language for a range of different purposes and functions, 2) the knowledge of how to adapt language according to the

circumstances of the setting or the participants in communication, 3) the knowledge of how to process and understand various types of text, such as reports, conversations, and news, and 4) the knowledge of how to achieve communication goals in spite of limiting factors such as a lack of lexical knowledge (Richards, 2006).

There are several implications of communicative language for the role of teachers and students engaged in learning a foreign language. Richards found that teachers play an important role as facilitators and monitors communication, rather than being a model for correct speech (Richards, 2006). This researcher has noted a connection with Richards' emphasis on the teacher's role as a language facilitator with Gardner's notion of Integrativeness according to his socio-educational model of second language acquisition. Integrativeness refers to the desire on the part of the learner to integrate, or interact in meaningful ways, with the foreign language community. (Gardner, 2004).

Immediacy

Immediacy was defined by Mehrabian (1969) as communication behaviours that enhance familiarity and non-verbal communication. Immediacy has also been defined as a perception of closeness between persons (Frymier & Houser, 2000). Immediacy in the context of language learning can be divided into nonverbal immediacy and verbal immediacy. Nonverbal immediacy is thought to carry emotions or affective feelings such as familiarity, warmth and a sense of belonging. Nonverbal immediacy cues can include eye contact, body position, body movement and proximity (Velez & Cano, 2008a). Frymier and Houser (2000) summarized research on the field of instructional communication during the 1980s and 1990s and also cited several studies that indicated that both verbal and nonverbal immediacy had a positive effect on student learning and motivation to study (Christophel, 1990; Frymier, 1994; Kearney, Plax, and Wendt-Wasco, 1985).

The degree of immediacy that develops between the instructor and the adult learner of English as a foreign language underpins the independent variable of this study, which is the manner of instruction by a single instructor or by multiple instructors. Adult learners taught by a single instructor over the course of this study were exposed to a different pattern of immediacy behaviors than adult learners taught by multiple instructors.

Conceptual Framework

Figure 2 shows the conceptual framework of this study.

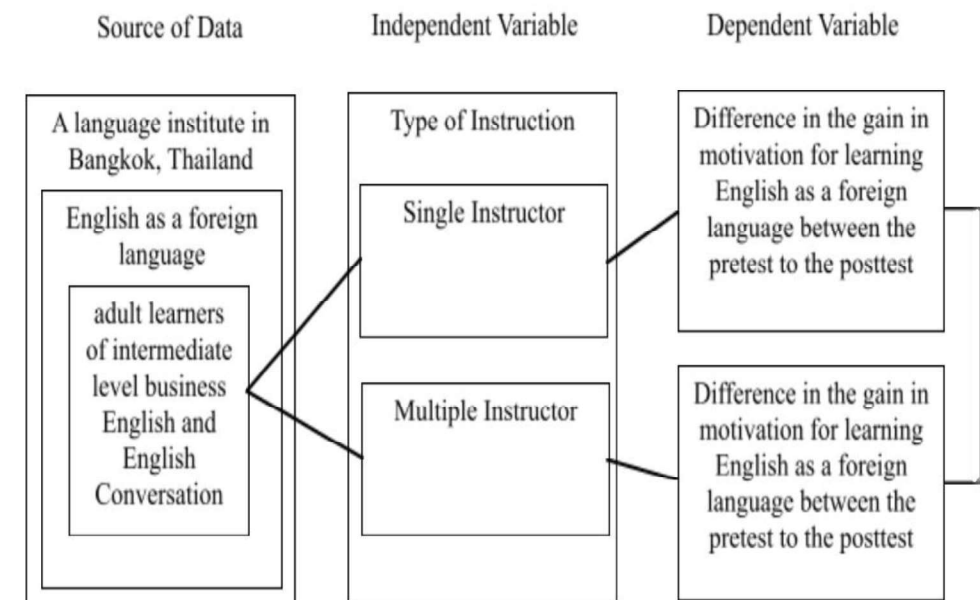


Figure 2. Conceptual Framework of the Study.

Scope of the Study

The purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between the nature of instruction by single or multiple instructors and adult learners' motivation for learning English as a foreign language at Geos Language Centre in Bangkok, Thailand. The study focuses on adult learners of Japanese citizenship who take private English as a foreign language lessons in a one-to-one setting with an English language instructor who holds a valid work permit to be employed as a language teacher under Thai law. Four individual English language instructors participated in this study, including the researcher. Three instructors are citizens of the United Kingdom, and one instructor is a citizen of Canada. The study focuses on a group of 36 adult students who studied with a single instructor and 31 adult students who studied with multiple instructors over a 6-week period.

The instructional material used in the lessons includes the Business Result series published by Cambridge University Press and Four Corners series published by Cambridge University Press. The content of the lessons was based on the curricula of each textbook series. This included topic based and skill-based learning objectives for business English and English conversation. Four modes of communication were addressed over the course of these lessons, including speaking, reading, writing, and listening.

In this study, Gardner's socio-educational model of second language acquisition formed the basis to measure the motivation for learning English as a foreign language. The researcher made use of the Questionnaire for Measuring Motivation for Learning English as a Foreign Language (QMMLEFL), adapted from Gardner's Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (2004).

Method

The purpose of this research was to compare adult learners' motivation for learning English as a foreign language according to their instruction by either a single instructor or by multiple instructors over a period of six weeks at Geos Language Centre in Bangkok, Thailand. The research study was a quantitative comparative analysis that compared the mean level of motivation for learning English as a foreign language for each group of adult learners as measured on a pretest and posttest. The study then compared the average difference in the pretest and posttest means for both groups. The research instrument used to measure adult learners' motivation for learning English as a foreign language was the Questionnaire for Measuring Motivation for Learning English as a Foreign Language (QMMLEFL). This research study made use of descriptive statistics (means and standard deviations) and inferential statistics, including paired and independent *t*-tests to obtain a comparative analysis of the data collected

Population

The target population of this research study was adult private English language students enrolled in English language learning lessons for a continuous six-week period during May and June of the year 2020. In addition, the target population of this research study was limited to adult learners enrolled in business English and English conversation courses at the intermediate level to upper-intermediate language level. While this study was conducted in Thailand, the target population of this study was composed of entirely Japanese citizens, as Geos Language Centre is a Japanese owned and operated school that caters especially to Japanese expatriate business people and their family members who were residents in Thailand.

Sample

The sample of this research study was 67 Japanese citizen adult learners of English as a foreign language of intermediate language level at Geos Language Centre enrolled in May and June of 2020 was the target of this research study. The population sample of 67 adult learners consisted of one group of 36 adult learners taught by a single instructor and one group of 31 adult learners taught by multiple instructors.

Instrument

For this research, the researcher used the Questionnaire for Measuring Motivation for Learning English as a Foreign Language (QMMLEFL), adapted from Gardner's Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (Gardner, 2004).

Originally, Gardner and Lambert (1972) created a research instrument called the Attitude/Motivation Test Battery that consisted of a series of items that measure a student's motivation, desire, and attitude with 98 items. Each item was a statement relating to language learning accompanied by a seven-point Likert scale choice of responses, and these items were divided into 11 subscales.

The Questionnaire for Measuring Motivation for Learning English as a Foreign Language (QMMLEFL) is a shortened questionnaire adapted from the original AMTB. This questionnaire consists of 30 items that are divided into three subcategories that measure: attitudes toward learning English, desire to learn English, and motivational intensity to learn English. The questionnaire employs a six-point Likert scale of responses ranging from 1) strongly agree, 2) moderately agree, 3) slightly agree, 4) slightly disagree, 5) moderately disagree, and 6) strongly disagree. Each subscale consists of 5 positively keyed items and five negatively keyed items.

Validity and Reliability

The original Attitude/Motivation Test Battery was validated and standardized using data from Canadian native speakers of English secondary school students (Gardner, 1985b). This questionnaire contained items that measured the attitudes of these students towards learning French as a foreign language as well as their attitudes regarding the francophone community. This battery of items has since been adapted and applied to many populations of students of English as a foreign language in several countries around the world. Dörnyei (2001) found that the AMTB had an acceptable level of predictive validity as a standardized test for motivation for learning English as a foreign language. Moreover, Gardner found that Cronbach's alpha coefficients calculated for the three subscales on the QMMLEFL supported the questionnaire items' internal consistency used in research studies in Brazil, Japan, and Romania (Gardner, 2010).

Procedures

A total of 67 adult private English language learners registered at the institute, Geos Language Centre (Thailand), were selected as candidates to participate in this study. A total of 36 adult learners were selected from the group of adult private English language learners who a single instructor taught. A total of 31

adult learners were selected from the group of adult private English language learners who multiple instructors taught. A total of 4 instructors participated in this study. Each instructor was designated with a letter of the alphabet from A to D.

Of the total of 36 adult learners taught by a single instructor who participated in this study, nine were assigned to instructor A, ten were assigned to instructor B, seven were assigned to instructor C, and ten were assigned to instructor D. These adult learners received instruction from the same instructor over the six-week period of this study. The assignment of any particular adult learner to any particular instructor was made based on schedule availability. There was no bias in the selection process other than which instructor's schedule happened to match the adult learner's desired day and time for lessons.

All four instructors shared the instruction of a total of 31 adult learners taught by multiple instructors. These adult learners were assigned to each instructor on the basis of schedule availability. These students did not have a fixed day and time for their lessons. Instead, each adult learner taught by multiple instructors booked their lesson via an Internet-based lesson booking application that matched instructors who were available with adult learners by random assignment.

Table 6
Assignment of the Number of Adult Learners to Each of Four Instructors at Geos Language Centre in Thailand

Instructor	Adult learners taught by a single instructor	Adult learners taught by multiple instructors
A	9	31
B	10	31
C	7	31
D	10	31
Total	36	31

The researcher administered the 30 item Questionnaire for Measuring Motivation for Learning English as a Foreign Language (QMMLEFL) to all 67 adult learners in the research population. After the 6-week study period, the researcher administered the posttest of this study.

Findings

In terms of the four research objectives, the main findings are given below.

Research Objective 1 was to identify the level of motivation for learning English as a foreign language of adult learners taught by a single instructor

who took private language lessons for a six-week period of study at Geos Language Centre as measured with a pretest and a posttest. The research finding showed that the level of motivation for learning English as a foreign language of adult learners taught by a single instructor at Geos Language Centre was slightly high as measured by the pretest (Mean =4.07, $SD = 1.09$). The research findings also showed that the level of motivation for learning English as a foreign language of adult learners taught by a single instructor at Geos Language Centre was slightly high as measured by the posttest (Mean = 4.17, $SD = 1.09$).

Research Objective 2 was to determine if there is a significant difference in pretest and posttest scores of the motivation for learning English as a foreign language of adult learners taught by a single instructor at Geos Language Centre. The research finding showed that there was no significant difference in mean scores of the pretest and posttest of adult learners taught by a single instructor at Geos Language Centre ($t = .967, p = .000$).

Research Objective 3 was to identify the level of motivation for learning English as a foreign language of adult learners taught by multiple instructors who took private language lessons for a six-week period of study at Geos Language Centre as measured with a pretest and a posttest. The research finding showed that the level of motivation for learning English as a foreign language of adult learners taught by multiple instructors at Geos Language Centre was slightly high as measured by the pretest (Mean = 4.21, $SD = 1.03$). The research findings also showed that the level of motivation for learning English as a foreign language of adult learners taught by multiple instructors at Geos Language Centre was slightly high as measured by the posttest (Mean = 4.21, $SD = 1.06$).

Research Objective 4 was to determine if there is a significant difference in pretest and posttest scores of the motivation for learning English as a foreign language of adult learners taught by multiple instructors at Geos Language Centre. The research finding showed that there was no significant difference in mean scores of the pretest and posttest of adult learners taught by multiple instructors at Geos Language Centre ($t = .962, p = .000$).

Research Objective 5 was to determine if there is a significant difference in motivation for learning English as a foreign language from the pretest to the posttest between adult learners taught by a single instructor and adult learners taught by multiple instructors Geos Language Centre. The research finding showed that a significant difference was not found between the gain in mean motivation for learning English as a foreign language for the group of learners

who were taught by a single instructor and the group of learners who multiple instructors taught ($t = .985, p = .079$).

Discussion

It was noted by Gardner (2010) that a teacher could have positive traits such as dedication, enthusiasm and credibility that can enhance a student's motivation for learning a language. Therefore, it was of interest to this researcher how a student's level of motivation for learning English as a foreign language might change over a period of study with repeated exposure to a single instructor.

It was also noted that Gardner's socio-educational model of second language acquisition identified Integrativeness as a factor in motivation for learning. This refers to the desire to learn a language, not just for instrumental purposes, but to integrate into the culture of the speakers of the target language and to meet and interact with their instructors (Gardner, 1975). Based on a connection identified by Richards (2006) between the instructor as a facilitator of meaningful communication and not just a model of grammatical speech for the student, this researcher also was interested in the possible effect that instruction by a single instructor would have on a student's motivation for learning over the course of this research study. In addition, this researcher identified the notion of immediacy between an instructor and a learner as a possible factor in the learner's motivation for learning a foreign language. Immediacy was defined as communication behaviours that enhanced familiarity and were linked to motivation (Mehrabian, 1969). This implies that the familiarity that could be expected to develop between an instructor and a learner over the course of this research study could be a possible factor in overall motivation for learning English as a foreign language.

A significant gain in motivation for learning English as a foreign language of adult learners who were taught by a single instructor. Such a gain in motivation for learning English as a foreign language was the focus of this research study based on the previously cited theoretical background work involving Gardner's socio-educational model of second language acquisition (2010), Richards' communicative language teaching (2006), and the notion of immediacy between an instructor and learner (Velez & Cano, 2008a). However, a significant gain in motivation for learning English as a foreign language was not found in adult learners who a single instructor taught. While this research study did not collect sufficient data to find such a significant gain in motivation for learning English as a foreign language, this may have been due to limitations of this study in scope and scale. The number of participants in this study was limited to 67, and the duration of the study was limited to 6

weeks. A more thorough research study may find more evidence of a positive relationship between instruction by a single instructor and motivation for learning English as a foreign language.

It was noted by Gardner (2010) that a teacher could have positive traits such as dedication, enthusiasm and credibility that can enhance a student's motivation for learning a language. Therefore, it was of interest to this researcher how a student's level of motivation might change over a period of study with repeated exposure to multiple instructors as opposed to exposure to a single instructor over the same period.

As noted in the theoretical framework of this research study, a relative lack of familiarity between instructor and learner might imply that learners would not experience the enhanced motivation for learning that would result from the familiarity that would develop with repeated exposure to a single instructor over the course of this study. Therefore, this researcher was interested in comparing the level of motivation to learn English as a foreign language of adult learners who multiple instructors taught with the level of motivation for learning English as a foreign language of learners who a single learner instructor taught. It was found that overall motivation for learning English as a foreign language among adult learners taught by multiple instructors was similar to that of adult learners taught by a single instructor. Namely, both groups exhibited motivation levels for learning English as a foreign language that could be interpreted as slightly high according to the Questionnaire for Measuring Motivation for Learning English as a Foreign Language.

A significant gain in motivation for learning English as a foreign language of adult learners who multiple instructors taught was not found. The relative absence of such gain in motivation for learning English as a foreign language was the focus of Research Objective 4 of this research study. While, indeed, no significant gain in the motivation for learning English as a foreign language was found, this may also have been due to limitations of this study in scope and scale.

The findings of this research study did not reveal a significant difference in the gain in motivation for learning English as a foreign language between adult learners taught by a single instructor and adult learners taught by multiple instructors over the course of this study. As mentioned in the discussion of the findings of Research Objective 2 and Research Objective 4, the limitations in scale and scope of this study may have precluded conclusive evidence of a difference in the dynamics of motivation for learning based on the nature of instruction by a single instructor or by multiple instructors. While a significant

difference in the gain in motivation for learning was not found, this researcher noted that a marginal and positive gain in motivation for learning English as a foreign language was found in adult learners taught by a single instructor. In contrast, no gain in motivation for learning was found the group of adult learners who multiple instructors taught. Therefore, the possible relationship between the nature of instruction by single or multiple instructors remains of interest to this researcher. It was also useful and informative for this researcher to note that overall levels of motivation for learning English as a foreign language of all adult learners who participated in this study were on average only slightly high, and to note that training and instruction to address ways to increase motivation for learning English as a foreign language could be a valid goal for improving instruction at Geos Language Centre in Thailand.

Recommendations

Recommendation for Adult Learners

This researcher recommends that adult learners be allowed to choose a favoured single instructor from whom to receive instruction. However, this researcher also recommends that adult learners engage in lessons with a variety of instructors. There does not appear to be a detrimental effect on motivation for learning English as a foreign language by receiving instruction from multiple instructors as opposed to single instructors based on the findings of this research study.

Recommendation for Instructors

This researcher recommends that instructors engage in communicative language teaching and develop a close relationship and rapport with the adult learner to foster learners' motivation to learn even when sharing the instruction of an adult learner among a group of instructors. In addition, this researcher recommends that instructors encourage adult learners of English as a foreign language to receive instruction from multiple instructors. There does not seem to be a detrimental effect on learners' motivation when receiving instruction from multiple instructors based on the findings of this research study.

Recommendation for School Administrators

This researcher recommends that language institute administrators encourage both adult learners and instructors of English as a foreign language to allow instruction of individual learners by multiple instructors, as there can be more opportunities to schedule lessons that accommodate each learner's schedule. There does not seem to be a detrimental effect on learner motivation for learners who engage in receiving instruction from multiple instructors.

Recommendation for Future Researchers

This researcher recommends that, while marginal differences were found in adult learners' motivation for learning English as a foreign language over the period of this study, the time span of the study and a limited number of lessons experienced by each participating adult learner in this study might not have been sufficient to address the research objectives of this research study. A more thorough research study with a longer duration and a greater number of scheduled encounters between adult learners and instructors may reveal a significant relationship that this research study was not sufficiently designed to reveal.

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